

# Jenny-Jack Sun Farm

## "good food news"

Our camera is broke but use your imagination if you will and picture swarms of vengeful, persistent pests munching and defacing innocent, unarmed green leaves. The picture should display in black and white with ominous cumulus clouds as a sky backdrop hovering over desperate farmers with cell phones calling other farmers searching for answers. The tagline below the photo might read, "What's with the cabbage worm and the aphids and the white flies and the fire ants and the mysterious black fungus camping randomly on the swiss chard stems?" Our solutions to this somewhat exaggerated scenario have been both hands on and hands off. We steadily creep alongside each of the cabbage, broccoli, and cauliflower plants each week squishing the gooey, green worms, relinquishing them from future crop destroying duties. We have sprayed *Bacillus thuringiensis (Bt)*, which is a bacteria that only kills leaf feeding worms, so our beneficial insect population is not diminished. The black fungus, still a mystery, has stunted the usually charismatic chard plants, minimizing their output to just a few bereaved leaves. Jenny pricked the most distressed leaves from each plant, hoping that a fresh start and cooler temperatures might overpower their current, dismal predicament. As for the white flies and aphids we did nothing, obvious to those of you who have received Kale from us this fall. The tiny, white sap-sucker clings tightly to those delicious greens even surviving the water baths given to each kale bunch, but not to worry, just think of it as additional protein, or better yet, think of your aphid ingestions as philanthropic work for stressed out farmers. Luckily, our abundant ladybug population makes multiple, meaty meals on aphids, quelling some of the incessant pressure though not, as of yet, completely solving the problem. Organic pesticides like pyrethrin are intended to eradicate aphids, but the pesticide will also kill ladybugs and honeybees along with many other good, helpful insects. Growing a wide variety of fruits and vegetables is probably more labor-intensive than mono-cropping, but diversity is necessary during times like these when pests do as they are designed. We may lose the chard and the broccoli won't outperform the spring crop, but the lettuce and the collards and kohlrabi and carrots are thriving. The turnip roots are growing perfect in shape with leaves untouched by hungry, criminal critters. We live in affluent times when anything we want is always available. The natural economy works counter to convenience with balances shifting rhythmically, winners and losers cycling as often as a breath. By choosing to imitate nature our farm is graciously accepting rows of chewed chard leaves adjacent to the county-fair worthy field of cabbage. We believe it's the most rewarding, long-term solution available, even if it means sharing field space with obnoxious, bad bugs.

### What's Available at Wednesday Market?

Peppers, Garlic, Okra, Butternut Squash, Asian Mustard Greens, Kale, Sweet Potatoes, Eggplant, Local Honey(Columbus), and free range eggs. Yippee! Rachel will be here with her baked goods. Come on out and see us.

Our produce may be found at the downtown Columbus Market on Saturdays from 9-12 and our On Farm Market Wednesdays from 9-12. We have a 125 member CSA with drop-off locations in Lagrange, Columbus, and On-farm. You can also find our produce on the menu of Food Blossoms Catering out of Hamilton and the Bakery and Café in Pine Mountain.

Take good care,  
Chris and Jenny