

Jenny-Jack Sun Farm

"good food news"

We needed the thunder shower that came hustling through our farm last night, dropping less than half an inch but soaking the soil enough to delay irrigation for a day and brighten the somewhat thirsty plants. Now soil tilth is absolutely perfect for tillage, a farm chore totally dependent on weather. If the soil is too wet, tilling can destroy soil structure by squeezing out important air pockets found between soil aggregates, leading to long term damage and a less inviting home for future crops. Tilling when too dry creates clouds of topsoil dust, which is unhealthy for the tractor, the farmer on the tractor, and the field below where we are constantly working to build and maintain soil. Not to mention when the soil is clenched like a fist from baking in the sun, a tiller's tines cannot penetrate as effectively causing repeated, more compacting runs. When it comes to soil disruption, less is certainly more.

With the five foot tiller hitched securely on the back of the cub tractor, we will take advantage of perfect soil conditions and prepare fields for both upcoming succession planting and cover crops. On the margins of the field receiving our second planting of tomatoes we will seed a mixed cover crop of sunflower and sorghum to be used as a trap crop for squash bug and leaf-footed bug. The plan is to sow this seed now intending on it being established and in optimal trapping shape when the second and third tomatoes begin to mature. On the whole-field, cover cropping front, we will sow some unplanted summer fields with sorghum sudangrass, millet, and cowpeas. These fine fields of foliage will hopefully hold soil in place, act as a refuge for beneficial insects, increase organic matter, add nitrogen, and benefit the overall well-being of soil conditions. We have already begun to seed buckwheat in some fields that will receive a late planting of cucurbits and beans or along the edges of unused, cash crop rows. Buckwheat is magnificent, a multi-dimensional broadleaf revered for its beauty, nectar source, rapid growth, and ability to cycle both calcium and phosphorous.

This last week of May has us continuing to maintain the tail end of spring while watchfully encouraging the first of summer. We will completely empty the field of onions by mid-week, transferring the red and yellow alliums to the barn where they will cure on winter-built drying racks. The ones we have already pulled are big and solid, ready to garnish a front porch plate of peas, squash, green beans, and cornbread. The greens are still upstanding, verdant, and expecting to be plucked, bunched, and enjoyed by all us people with bodies in need of their richness. Some rows of late beets are carefully becoming plump while across the way baby bean pods, yellow squash, and the first blueberries have emerged, beckoning our attention deeper into the gaze of a southern summer.

Chicken-Raising Farmers @ Market Tomorrow!

Our friends Julie and Justin Jordan from Coverall Farms in Ellerslie will be selling a few (10-15) of their much anticipated, highly-coveted broilers tomorrow morning. They had a few birds remaining from the on-farm processing Saturday and will not have any more until the next batch is ready in five weeks. So come by, talk chicken farming with them, ask deep questions, and buy a beautifully-cleaned, healthy, humanely-raised, pastured bird. We have already eaten one fried and it made us better people.

What's available at On-Farm Market...

Green Garlic, Green Onions, Kale, Asian cooking greens, Lettuce, Rainbow Chard, Arugula, Collards, Basil, Dill, Kohlrabi, **Strawberries**(but only a few!), Honey from Foster's, Eggs, Stone Ground Grits, Bulger Creek Goat Cheese and Soap, White Oak Pastures Ground Beef and Roasts, Olive Oil, and an assortment of canned goods made at the farm.

Organic fertilizers, pesticides, and compost are also for sale at our market!

Sue B's fresh baked sourdough breads, Cane Syrup, and granola bars will be at market tomorrow.

Pictures of the Week



Our friend Chad Kimbrough has generously shared his 1950's Farmall Super A with us allowing for a quick, thorough, appropriate, and might I add fun weeding experience.



Here comes the squash, y'all!



The eggplants in the first row are growing up to be handsome, productive members of farm field #16. The five rows of sweet and hot peppers look stunning and ready to give us lots of fruit unlike last year's poor display. For the new and improved trellis I routed notches in the middle of 24 in. 2x4's and attached each one horizontally to the t-post with an inexpensive,

long-lasting pipe u-bolt. We will add another "trellis floor" eighteen inches above the initial, lower run in order to support the fruit-heavy (hopefully!) tops.

Our produce may be found at the Market on Broadway in Columbus from 9-12 on Saturdays, our On Farm Market Wednesdays from 9-12, and the FDR Market in Pine Mountain through the summer on Saturdays 10:30-12:30. 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.

Take good care,
Chris and Jenny