

# Jenny-Jack Sun Farm

## "good food news"

Ah, the road to a marketable vegetable is littered with sore backs, over punched time cards, and lots and lots of vigilant observation. Any farmer growing on our scale probably spends hours each week walking down rows of plants studying for signs of stress, potential disease, bug devastation, deer snacking signs, irregular growth patterns, and the list goes on and on. I think this is why Wes Jackson says a farm should operate with a proper eye to acres ratio, because beyond a certain size, walking fields of row crops becomes unthinkable. Unfortunately, within the current American, industrial farm scene machines and poisons have replaced eyes and minds creating an indecent food system where the food is perfect and cheap and the costs hidden.

Jenny spent parts of Saturday and Sunday walking down aisles of our summer plots, attempting to diagnose some sort of internal stem death happening amongst a few tomato plants. It could be Fusarium Wilt or Early Blight or God knows what? Tomatoes are pickier than a toddler and more demanding than money and if conditions aren't ideal they get disagreeable. Hopefully, these issues will only have diluted effects on some of the plants and the overall harvest will be abundantly unaffected. Bacterial Spot has shown up in the peppers for the second year in a row. Last year we didn't catch it in time and it devastated our entire pepper crop. This year, it has presented itself much later in the season than last year, so the plants are much larger and have set tons of fruit already. We're hoping the losses will be small for this reason. Jenny also sprayed Bt for fruit worm damage and copper to minimize bacterial/fungal spread and pulled out visibly tortured pepper and tomato plants so as not to get the whole group down. Much like school detention for crops except the "bad apples" are never reinserted.

So this summer we will continue to watch closely the food we all depend upon, and do our best to maintain order and hope while working alongside an unreserved, unforgiving mother nature. Answers on our farm are not formulaic. They are simply what we deem thoughtful responses to the mysterious present. Experience helps, but when normal changes daily and unpredictable patterns act as the easel from which we paint, the only salve sometimes seems like a sincere, unending devotion to the work. And even that often falls way short. Failure might be a farmer's close companion, but the journey of a crop well done and its inexact impromptus make farming painfully wonderful; a juxtaposition worth inhabiting.

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

First Tomatoes!: small red slicers, 'Juliet' salad tomatoes, and 'Sungold' cherry, Kale, Collards (last of the greens for this season!) Kohlrabi, Summer Crisp Lettuce, Beets, Green Beans, Green sweet peppers, Anaheim Chili Peppers (mild heat), Squash, Zucchini, Cucumbers, Blueberries, Eggplant, Honey from Foster's, Eggs, Stone Ground Grits, Bulger Creek Goat Cheese and Soap, White Oak Pastures Ground Beef and Roasts, Olive Oil, and Balsamic Vinegar.

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.

### FDR Farmers Market in Pine Mountain...

Running each Saturday morning from 10:30-12:30 now through Labor Day is Pine Mountain's very own food-focused farmers market. Local vendors selling canned goods, cheese, fruit, veggies, and baked goods are set up across from the Liberty Bell Pool in the comfort of big shade trees. We'll be there along with several other local farmers, gardeners, and cherished food producers. Come with an empty stomach and a full wallet!

### Pictures of the Week



Jenny (and Mitch and Marcellus in the background) is laying out sweet potato slips that we grow in the corner of our high tunnel as well as in flat, shallow trays inside our greenhouse. We should begin harvesting our three successions of sweet potatoes in August and continue through September.



Marcellus is using an age-old farm tool, a bamboo stick, to gently push the root end of each sweet potato slip into the soft soil. This ancient technology moves us swiftly and effectively down the rows and prevents us from bending over to plant. Our friend, old-time farmer, and current community legend, Perry Williams, shared this bit of stick-pushing wisdom.

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