

## Jenny-Jack Sun Farm

### "good food news"

This week will be a very productive planting week for gardeners and farmers across this region of the south as this week marks our frost-free date, meaning the debilitating cold is very likely a thing of the past and the beloved summer cash crops may be planted safely into the outdoor soil. One of the many benefits of our two plastic-wrapped tunnels is that we can confidently plant tomatoes and cucumbers inside their protective embrace weeks before it is safe outside allowing us the satisfaction of an earlier, extended summer harvest. We still have plenty of beds inside the tunnels consumed with cooler weather crops like onions, lettuce, kale, arugula, carrots, and radish, but they are constantly being transitioned to the tables of local eaters and being replaced with heat-loving fruits. Actually, over half of the beds in each tunnel hold the first round of tomatoes and cucumbers, the more traditional, trellis-trained crops that the people are already asking for, hoping just maybe we learned some fancy new technology tricks over winter allowing us to outsmart the order of things. (Our coziness with the big box groceries have brainwashed our sensibilities; seasons are agriculturally outdated and the world and all its edible treasures are readily available and abundant.) Once the heat's rapturous rays overcome the spring-seeded greens and roots growing beautifully beneath the tunnel, they will be replaced with the more non-traditional, but popular, ginger and turmeric. We tried our hand at growing these two tropical, medicinal rhizomes last year and were met with success in both growing and marketing. Currently, we are propagating the seed pieces in the greenhouse, and will transplant them into the richly-composted, warm soils of the tunnels in a few weeks. We certainly have our problems with disease and pest in this region of the world, but we are grandly fortunate to operate in a climate so accepting of incredible diversity. We could certainly be more profitable focusing on fewer crops, but there are so many enduring, enchanting crops it's hard to look away.

As I was saying earlier, the big push to plant outdoor summer crops happens this week here at the farm. Our first round of bush beans was seeded too early and the cooler temperatures prevented adequate germination, so we will re-seed this week. Before the last deluge of rain, we prepared beds with compost and amendments for this week's planting of eggplant, peppers, and the first round of summer squash. When adding amendments we always consult our soil tests taken in the fall. This year we sprinkled down each row feather meal for nitrogen, potassium sulfate, Epsom salt and Azomite, which is a collection of micro-nutrients added for overall well-being. Sometime mid-week, after today and tomorrow's full days of harvest, post-harvest packaging, and weeding, we will begin steps to transplanting; running drip tube down each bed and covering and stapling each elevated bed with durable, reusable landscape fabric. Finally, the roots are packed beneath the loose, inviting soil, fingers cross, and we hope for vitality and longevity.

As most of you know, nothing is guaranteed when dealing with nature. It's violent and painfully unpredictable. A farmer can love a soil with a lasting, long term affection, provide it with all the right microorganism multiplying additives, annually ice it like a cake with chocolate-colored compost, and still get a disappointing crop. There are forces at work that can scatter the patient part of a farmer's mind into dizzying disillusionment. Equations systematically performed on paper do not translate to the mysterious, magical world transpiring beneath our feet. Real reality, like in the economy of nature, grounds in a torturing, head-banging sort of way, and the myth of certainty blatantly settles across our fields every season. And the response, the only available rebuttal, "so it goes..."

## Spring Farm Dinner

The annual farm dinner is happening on Saturday May 14<sup>th</sup> this year. For details check our website or the dinner Facebook page, [www.facebook.com/dinneronthefarm](http://www.facebook.com/dinneronthefarm). Cost this year is \$45/adult paying with check or cash and \$50/adult paying with credit card at <https://squareup.com/market/jenny-jack-sun-farm>. Children under 12 years old are \$25.

## Wednesday On-Farm Market

**What to expect this week on the table:** Kale, Collards, Arugula, Spinach, Rainbow Chard, Mustard Greens, Green Garlic, Green Onions, Lettuce, Sunchokes, Japanese Lettuce, Radish, Pickled Sunchokes, Collard Kimchi, Farm Eggs.

**Vegetable & Flower Transplants:** Tomatoes, Eggplants, Peppers, Basil, & Flowers.

**NEW farm items:** Comfrey-Aloe Cream, Elderberry Tincture, Ginger Tincture, Turmeric Tincture, Hibiscus/Lemongrass/Mint Tea. Olive Oil and Balsamic Vinegar.

**Farm Pork:** Sliced, smoked ham, link & patty sausage, roasts, pork chops.

**White Oak Pastures** beef marrow bones and roasts, **Comerford Farms** ground beef.

ALSO, Sue Batistini will be here with her **homemade sourdough breads and tasty baked goods**.

This market tends to be small but festive; folks shop while catching up with old friends, exchange recipe ideas, talk with the farmers and chef, and stroll through the fields where all the produce is grown. We would be honored to be a part of your weekly good food grazing routine.

## Pictures of the Week



Micah, Chris, and Brandon tucking the first 180 tomato plants into their home for the next few months. Before planting, we use a post hole digger to remove about eight inches of soil from each hole, add high-cal lime, Epsom salt, worm castings, and potash from the wood stove. The lanky transplant is placed into the hole and covered with the amended soil.



On Farm CSA member picking up her first share of the season last week.

Where to find our produce and products:

**Our produce may be found at:**

**Market on Broadway in Columbus from 9-12 on Saturdays**

**On Farm Market Wednesdays from 9-5 (Help yourself service after 12!),**

**We have a 120 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 153 Main Bistro in Pine Mountain.**

Take good care,  
Chris and Jenny