

Simply Abundant Farm

...raising livestock and poultry naturally since 1989

September 2008



SUMMERTIME... the living is easy

...and the eating is good!

What a glorious summer we have had! Could the weather have been any nicer? As I type this, the dogs are snoozing at my feet, the chickens, turkeys and ducks are all tucked in and roosting for the night, there is a wonderful, gentle breeze coming through the open window and all of the bugs - and on those occasional rainy nights, the peeper frogs down in the creek - are singing their late summer songs.

The tomato plants are heavy with fruit, the first batch of chickens are butchered and ready for sale, our layers are slowly getting themselves up to speed and our tiny little turkey flock is out on pasture.

Life is good, indeed!

Just a reminder... Hours are by Chance or Appointment

In other words, we are usually here weekends and evenings, but we still strongly suggest that you call ahead before driving out to see us.

Please call the 24-hour recorded message line at (888) 535-7387 for the latest updates and details on hours and product availability. We hope to see you soon!

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Finally! After a few 'speed bumps' along the way...we are up and running and open for the summer!

As some of you already know, although we have been raising animals naturally for nearly two decades, this is the first year that we decided to open to the public and to offer our products to more than just family and friends.

Just like everything else here...from planting to lambing...when raising and growing things, we must always 'begin with the end in mind'.



Doing just that, we had ordered our chicks back in February for delivery the first week of April. This would have allowed our chickens to grow to just the right size by mid-to-late June and just in time for the start of the summer BBQ season. Well...as can happen sometimes...things did not go quite as well as planned. The original hatchery we were working with went out of business...the very week that our baby chicks were to arrive!

I quickly hurried to find the same variety of high quality chicks...chicks that would grow well naturally and on pasture...and within a few weeks, I discovered an absolutely wonderful hatchery practically right in our own back yard. Because they are so close to home, I was able to drive up to the hatchery in Lancaster County and pick them up a few hours after they were hatched - much easier on the little chicks than having them jostled through the mail for a day or two - and very much in alignment with our personal philosophy surrounding the humane treatment of the livestock and poultry in our care. Additionally, with our chickens being processed a little later in the summer, you now have even more opportunities to enjoy your chicken with fresh, locally grown produce that wouldn't have been available earlier in the summer.

All has turned out well...as things usually do...it just took us a little extra time to get up and running this year and we thank you for your patience with us over these past few weeks and months!

To thank you for your patience with us, we are including the coupon below.

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This coupon good for 10% off  
One (1) Whole Simply Abundant Farm Broiler  
(while supplies last)  
Limit 1 coupon per customer  
Offer Expires October 31, 2008  
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SIMPLY DELICIOUS RECIPES

If you're reading this newsletter, chances are pretty good that you are already including at least some locally grown foods into your daily or weekly meal planning. The end of summer is the perfect time to start as local fruits and vegetables ripen and farm stands and farmers' markets are overflowing with the natural and delicious bounty that only fresh, local foods can provide.

To help you jump start your local eating, in each issue we will include some of our favorite recipes based on in-season foods that we have raised or grown right here at Simply Abundant Farm.

We are always looking for new recipes to share, so if you have one of your own that is especially delicious and which are based on either our poultry, lamb or vegetables, please email it to: mary@simply-abundant.com.

If your recipe is selected for publication in an upcoming newsletter, we will say 'thank you' with a special gift!



GOAT CHEESE STUFFED BANANA PEPPERS



- 🍴 8-10 fresh banana peppers (hot, sweet or mild)
- 🍴 1 cup fresh feta cheese
- 🍴 1 cup fresh shredded mozzarella cheese
- 🍴 3 oz soft cream cheese or chevre
- 🍴 1 teaspoon Italian seasoning
- 🍴 2 tablespoon olive oil

Note: If using hot banana peppers, you may want to wear gloves while cleaning, cutting and stuffing to avoid burning your hands.

Gently run sharp knife lengthwise, from top of pepper to tip of pepper. Open pepper to clean out seeds and membrane (especially important if you are using hot banana peppers). You can cut stem off or (my preference) leave it on so that you have a little handle. Rinse and set peppers aside after cleaning.

In a small mixing bowl cream all cheeses and seasoning. (My personal preference is homemade mozzarella and feta cheese made from goats' milk.) Gently open each pepper and stuff mixture inside. Place in a greased baking dish. Drizzle olive oil or flavored oil over the top of all peppers in baking dish.

Bake in preheated oven 350 degrees for 30 minutes. Remove from oven and serve.

One final note: If you use hot peppers, any leftovers will be even hotter the next time you serve them.



HERBED OVEN-DRIED TOMATOES

If you love the rich and robust flavor of sun-dried tomatoes, but don't like the price you have to pay for them in the store...why not try making your own? They're especially easy to make and such a wonderful addition to so many recipes!

Preparation time: 15 minutes

Drying time: 10-12 hours (I put mine in the oven overnight.)

Yield: Approximately 3 cups of dried tomatoes

Any type of tomato will work, but most people prefer plum or Roma tomatoes, as they have fewer seeds and more fleshy area than many other varieties. Try to choose tomatoes that are somewhat uniform in size so that they all take about the same amount of time to dry.

Ingredients

- Two pounds (2#) plum or Roma tomatoes
- 1 teaspoon sea salt
- ¾ teaspoon sugar (I prefer coarse, raw sugar)
- 1-½ teaspoon fresh basil, finely chopped
- 1 tablespoon olive oil

Equipment

- Oven (gas, electric or convection)
- Cake racks (preferred) or cookie sheets
- Zip lock or vacuum sealable bags

Preparation: Preheat oven to 170°F (or lowest possible oven temperature. Gently cut tomatoes into quarters or strips depending on the size of dried tomato you want in the end. (Note: dried tomatoes will end up to be approximately one quarter the original size.) Gently scoop out seeds and excess pulp. Removing the seeds will result in a tastier dried tomato. Lightly oil cake rack or cookie sheet.

Drying: Arrange tomato pieces skin side down on rack/cookie sheet being careful not to let them touch. If using a cake rack, make sure to arrange them in a way that they will not fall through the rack as they dry and become smaller. If using a cookie sheet, turn occasionally to ensure even drying and air circulation. Lightly sprinkle with salt, sugar and basil. Drizzle lightly with olive oil. Start checking at 9-10 hours if tomatoes are small. **Do not let tomatoes dry out completely.**

How to tell when they are done: The dried tomatoes should be leathery, but not brittle. (If a tomato begins to dry out before the other pieces are ready, remove it and continue with the rest until all are dried.) The amount of time it takes depends on the water content of the tomatoes, the thickness of the slices, and how well the air is able to circulate around them. When done, the tomatoes should be flexible, like a raisin from a fresh bag; not brittle -- leathery with a deep red color, without free water or a tacky feeling.

Cooling/Packaging: Let tomatoes cool to room temperature (approximately 30 minutes) before filling bags. Do not overfill bags – leaving a little room for expansion. Vacuum bags are best, but zip lock bags with the air removed work well, too.

Conditioning: Always condition prior to storage to distribute moisture evenly and to prevent mold growth. Condition tomatoes by placing in a plastic or glass container, sealing and storing for 7 to 10 days. The containers should be shaken daily to distribute moisture. If condensation occurs, place the tomatoes in the oven for more drying, watching to ensure that they do not dry out completely.

Storage: The freezer is best. There the dried tomatoes will retain their color/flavor for 9-12 months. The refrigerator is ok for the short term (a few weeks only). After that, you run the risk of molding. The olive oil will solidify in the fridge, but melts to a nice golden color when returned to room temperature. **NEVER store at room temp in oil. There is too much of a risk of molding/food-borne illness.**

Let's Talk Turkey!

Last November we received a number of calls and emails from potential customers seeking local turkeys for their holiday dinners and, at the time, we weren't even raising turkeys for sale. Unfortunately – neither did anyone else in the area, because as these folks learned, November is generally too late to be looking for a locally grown Thanksgiving turkey.

If you want to make sure you have a naturally raised locally grown turkey reserved for your 2008 Thanksgiving, now is the time to put down that deposit so that we can hold a bird for you. We are only raising a few this year and several of them are already reserved. We expect to sell out within the next few weeks.



Reserve your turkey today!

Our turkeys will be processed the day before Thanksgiving and can be picked up fresh that Wednesday afternoon/evening just in time for your Thanksgiving feast!

MARK YOUR CALENDAR



Moveable Feast – Dining out for Life

Just dine out at one of the participating restaurants to help raise money to fight breast cancer, HIV/AIDS and other life-threatening diseases.
September 18th (www.mfeast.org)



Homegrown School Lunch Week

September 22-26 (www.farmentoschool.org)



Twilight Farmers' Market (last one of the season)

Rockfield Manor, 501 Churchville Road, Bel Air, Maryland
Friday, September 26th: 5 p.m. – Dusk
(www.harfordcountymd.gov/agriculture)

THE 100-MILE DIET: A TERRIFIC LOCAL EATING CHALLENGE!

(www.100milediet.org)



What is the 100-mile diet? It's a great way to get started eating locally and to become very aware of just how far your food has traveled to get to you. The longer it travels, the greater the negative impact on the environment and the less fresh it is. Visit the 100-mile website and take the challenge today!

It is not only healthy and good for the planet...it's also a fun, local-sourcing adventure!
JUST TO SHOW YOU HOW EASY IT IS TO EAT LOCALLY...HERE IS A SAMPLE OF AN EASY AND TASTY GREAT LOCALLY GROWN SUMMERTIME MEAL:

Onion stuffed chicken legs
Mashed potatoes and farm-fresh green beans, mushrooms and onions...
All available locally right now!

Recipe (two servings)

1/8 c. finely chopped onion (Bel Air (MD) Farmer's Market - 10 miles)
1 Tbsp melted butter (Trickling Springs Creamery, Chambersburg, PA 94 miles)
1 Tbsp fresh chopped rosemary (Homegrown - 0 miles)
1 clove garlic, minced (Bel Air (MD) Farmers' Market - 10 miles)
2 chicken legs (Homegrown - 0 miles)
1/2 c. chicken stock (Homemade from our own chickens - 0 miles)

Potatoes (Bel Air (MD) Farmers' Market - 10 miles)
Fresh green beans (homegrown - 0 miles)
Fresh onion (Lohr's Farmstand, Churchville, MD - 8 miles)
Fresh mushrooms (Kennett Square (PA) Farmers' Market - 37 miles)

Preheat the oven to 375 degrees.

Mix onion, butter, rosemary, garlic. Season with salt and pepper.

Carefully loosen the skin on the chicken leg. Rub half the onion mixture under the skin and mound the other half over the skin.

Place chicken in a roasting dish. Pour the chicken stock over the legs, being careful not to knock the onion off.

Roast for 50 minutes, basting every 10 or 15 minutes.

Serve with mashed potatoes and fresh sautéed green beans, onions and mushrooms.