

# Blackberry Meadows Farm



*Water Wheel - ho!*

We can transplant about 600 seedlings (a 350' double row) in 15 minutes with this contraption. Unfortunately, with this wet year, we've mostly been transplanting by hand; 3 people making holes, watering and transplanting 350' takes about 1 hour!

## WEEK 7- July 24/27

On the Menu: *(This is a loose projection of what you may find in your CSA share this week. Don't hold us to it!)* Herbs, Garlic Scapes, Leafy Greens (probably Chard), scallions, Summer Squash, Cucumbers.

### GROWING NUTRITIOUS FOOD FOR A HEALTHY COMMUNITY

What good timing! On Friday evening the boys were able to squeeze in almost a dozen rows of plastic in our Hillside #9 field before the sun set. We've cauliflower, broccoli, cabbage, and kale just at it's prime in the greenhouse -the little seedlings are at their best at just this moment. Another week and they'll be turning yellow and wishing they could stretch their "legs" and grow. So, this week, at the crack of dawn and late into the evenings, we'll be transplanting our fall brassicas during the cooler parts of the day. Typically we use a piece of machinery, called a Water Wheel - which allows two people, 18 trays of seedlings and 250 gallons of water (and fish + kelp fertilizer) to drag behind a slow moving tractor. The machine pokes and waters holes, while the people glide along in cushy chairs, jamming seedlings into muddy, fishy holes. The

seedlings love it - and most of the interns do too - there's not too many jobs on the farm that you can just sit and coast along!

We hope to have a better brassica season in the fall than we did in the spring. Our broccoli 'bolted' (turned bitter and went to seed), and the cabbage is coming along slowly. The biggest challenge for fall brassicas is that the deer pressure is considerably worse in the fall. Which is really saying something!

We also planted a bunch of White Egg Turnips (or Haukeri Turnips) which are divine when boiled, then sauteed with butter, and then drizzled with maple syrup. Alas, you'll have to wait 45 days before we can harvest them!

# Jameson Altott - Farm Apprentice

Somewhere in between dangling from a harness, screwing down the last few sheets of roofing on the new animal barn and driving the tractor to prep the fields for planting, is the silver lining I have found here on Blackberry Meadows Farm.

My name is Jameson Altott and I am very proud to be a part of such an exciting and true system of farming and life here on the farm. Every day, there is something new to learn, explore or fix, which in turn has given me more of an education and sense of purpose than most can imagine.

I was born and raised in Connecticut and graduated from Slippery Rock University with a Park and Resource Management Degree in December of 2012. During my last year at SRU, I completed my internship at the university run Macoskey Center for Sustainable Systems and Research where our director at the time, Thomas Reynolds, took us on a field trip to Greg and Jen's farm. We helped to pound stakes and trellis grape vines and had some of the best brick oven, wood fired pizza



that I have ever tasted. When I learned that the farm had apprenticeships, I knew where I would be the following season. I fell in love with the farm and now have a great relationship with Greg and Jen as well as the rest of the apprentices. We work extremely hard to keep the farm in working order and to provide every week for CSA members and the Farmer's Markets. It is amazing to work with everyone here and learn from each other's differences every day, knowing we all have a common goal to work toward. Being on the farm, I have learned aspects of planting, harvesting, running a tractor, construction, animal care, mechanics, connecting with the community and much more. I value my time here very

much and couldn't be in a better place.

My future plan is to remain on the farm and help Jen and Greg provide great produce to the local community. I have already expanded my knowledge and capabilities in the last three or so months and know wherever I go, I can take this experience and what I have learned with me. I see the importance of supporting local farms and knowing where our food comes from. We hope you all enjoy this season's produce and continue to appreciate and support our hard work. Without all of you making the right choice, this wonderful experience would not be possible for any of us. Thank you and enjoy!

Sincerely your farmer,  
Jameson.

# The Pigs are Out!

**T**he pigs are on the move! This week our three pigs (Francis Bacon, Pork Chop and Tenderloin) graduated from their nursery into the wide green pasture. We packed up their pigpen with their feed trough, watering bucket and fence and headed out onto pasture.



As many of you know, meats raised on open pasture contain high levels of omega-3 fats and many trace minerals that are not available to grain/feed lot animals. When they have access to a diversity of roots, bugs, and forage, those critters will have a balanced diet - which means the best in nutrition for us! Mmmm healthy bacon....

Patrick Keddie was in charge of all things animal this week and took the lead on moving the pen, setting up the pasture fence and installing their water bucket. The pigs like to knock over their bucket and wallow in the muddy mess. So it needs some good reinforcement.

Since their move, the pigs have been quite content. They are now on the edge of our woods and the cool ground and shade is making them snooze a bit longer than they did in the nursery. Maybe it's the amount of good food they've been stuffing down. We take at least one full 5 gallon bucket per day of veggies, milk, grains and of course, leftovers!

Heaven help us that one box of blueberries got jammed in the back of the fridge and wasn't eaten before the softness began. We walked the box out there (Evelyn carried it) and tossed those berries around the pigs. They proceeded to hunt down and devour every blueberry on the ground. Those pigs have an unbelievable sense of smell to root out all of those tasty treats!



# Things you ought to know about . . . .

**A couple of items of note this week:**

**The next Potluck is July 27th.** All are welcome to come and enjoy the farm from 4 - 7 pm! Bring games, blankets, drinks, and have fun! **We'll be cranking out fresh pizza from the wood oven. Bring a side dish to share, and your own chairs and place settings. Please RSVP if you think you'll make it.**

**We have Blueberries! Fresh, big, tasty, and organic blueberries from Hunter Farm in Erie, PA. We'll have a few on hand for sale - and you're welcome to order a flat for next week. Pints are \$5.50 and flats of 12 are \$60.**

Dana roasted some **amazing coffee** - we buy fair trade, organic green coffee beans from [Sweet Maria's](#). She'll roast a fresh batch each week - try it out!

We bought a half a hog (**Pasture raised pork**) from Kevin Jarosinski -and we're reselling it by the piece. Kevin runs a pasture based operation,

raising chicken, pork, beef, hay and grain. Bacon, chops, steaks, ground - it's all there. If you're at one of our drop off locations - just shout out and we'll bring down what you're looking for.

We also bought a **half a cow** from Showman Farms, up in Erie Co. Jen's folks live up there and buy their raw milk and eggs from this farm - they are a grass fed, organically based dairy. This is meat from a holstein cow - and it's great!

Lastly, we have partnered up with [Una Biologicals](#), a Pittsburgh based herbalist. We have lip balm, healing hand salves, and more for sale in the barn. Try it out and let us know what you think. We think she's got a top quality product!

**The barn is open on Wednesdays from 11 am - 7 pm.** If you think you might be running late - just give us a call (724 226 3939). **The Phipps Market/CSA runs on Wednesdays from 2:30 pm - 6:30 pm, and we'll be at the Boyd Center on Saturdays from 9 am - 11am.**

**Be sure to bring your own bags.**

Please remember to **check in** when you show up to pick up your share. If you're new to our CSA, we'll gladly give you the run-down on the operation and answer any questions you may have.

If you'd like something delivered to the Phipps or Boyd drop off locations - just give a holler - we'll gladly send it on down to you.

Once a month (the last Saturday of each month 4 - 7 pm), we typically have a CSA potluck picnic - a very casual event. The goal is to give you an opportunity to come to the farm, relax, enjoy the countryside, and get to know each other. We'd also like to you to help plan for our annual CSA picnic extravaganza - **we're looking for folks who would like to help plan activities, speakers, games, etc.. We'll discuss this ideas at each monthly picnic. Let us know if you're interested in helping.**

Thanks for supporting local organic agriculture!!