

April 2, 2004

Volume 2, Issue 3

food for thought

The occasional newsletter of J.L. Hawkins Family Farm

Seedtime and Harvest

In the 8th chapter of *Genesis* we read, "As long as the earth endures, seedtime and harvest...shall not cease." Soon the prophecy is yet again fulfilled; soon seedtime begins!

I am getting a bit impatient to sow seeds and plant seedlings, though without good reason. Perhaps I am allowing myself to join those gardeners who feel like they are in some kind of contest to be the first to plant. It is early yet and the soil is not warm enough for most crops. Even lettuce takes soil temperatures of 40 degrees. So I will watch and wait.

Speaking of lettuce, I'm hoping to work up one garden bed next week to sow some "early greens," placing them under a ten-foot long row cover. This will likely

include small plantings of our popular "All-Star Gourmet Lettuce Mix," an "All Greens Mix" (brassica salad greens), spinach, romaine, and arugula - just to get us started, ready for harvest by the first week in May!

I also hope soon to plant peas—both garden-variety and sugar-snap. Peas take 50-60 days to mature for harvest.

Finally, let me mention another harvest that is anticipated in about 8 weeks (and one in about 12 weeks): pastured poultry! Three hundred chicks and one hundred turkeys arrived on the farm March 30. Think chicken-on-the-grill for Memorial Day and turkey-on-the-grill for Independence Day! (I'll have extras to sell, so let your friends know.)

Question and Answer

How do you cook **chicken** on the grill? This is *soooo* easy! Wash one whole chicken. Place it on the grill using *indirect* heat. (I pile coals around the edges of our grill and use a drip pan under the bird.) Put lid on grill. Cook for 3 hours, replenishing the coals at about the half-way mark. The skin gets crusty and holds in the juices. Easy and excellent! (If you'd like to know about roasting a whole **turkey** on the grill, ask Dave and Renee McFadden who do this each year for Thanksgiving. I think the process is similar.)

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Buckets and more...

I am a "re-user" by temperament and necessity. For example, recently I went to my neighbor, a dairy farmer, and scrounged 80 feet of plastic used to cover silage for the sides of the turkey brooder. I turned an aluminum blackboard frame and an old, holey tarp into a hover for the chickens. As a frustrated Kathy readily notes, I find it hard to throw anything away. I re-use it!

Some years ago I had a meeting at a hotel/conference center in Indianapolis. They had done some remodeling work and had a lot of 5-gallon paint and drywall-compound buckets sitting in a trash pile. I thought I had found true treasure! (One could argue that our farm runs on 5 gallon buckets.) Those buckets are deteriorating rapidly. If you happen to have or run across any, especially white ones, please consider bringing them to the farm! Thanks!

HOPE CSA

(Hands-On Pastoral Education using Clergy supporting Agriculture)

Oh, Adam was a gardener, and God who made him sees
That half a proper gardener's work is done upon his knees.

—Rudyard Kipling

Two clergy groups are currently meeting monthly on the Hawkins Family Farm – one on Monday and one on Friday. I scheduled Wednesdays for a third clergy group and had no takers, learning by trial and error that Wednesdays are unattractive to clergy as a full-day-away-meeting-day. So I am listening more carefully to those who have encouraged me to form a group of non-clergy leaders of organizations to meet on Wednesdays. In order to test this idea, I've scheduled Wednesday, April 21, 10am-1pm as a time to gather interested persons to talk about joining a "Pilot Group" for the coming year. If you have interest in this or if you know of someone who may be interested, please let know right away! (Incentive: a lavish meal of farm-raised food will be served at noon, well worth the sacrifice of time to attend yet another meeting!)

MORE INFORMATION

- ✓ Shares are still available for sale.
- ✓ ORDER FORMS for shares and products are available online at our web site.
- ✓ If you desire, you can choose to have payments automatically withdrawn from your bank account, or use a credit card, by making use of "PayPal" from our website
- ✓ We still have about 30 frozen whole chickens available @ \$2.10/lb
- ✓ We also have plenty of steakburger, frozen in 1 lb packages @ \$3.25/lb (or 2lb packages of patties @ \$3.50/lb.