

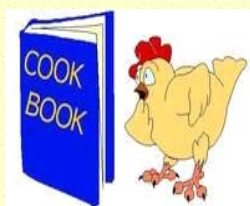


Newsletter
March 17, 2011

Spring at last?

The days are getting longer, the sun is getting stronger, the birds are singing louder and the corned beef and cabbage is on the stove. Can the *sweet season* be far behind?

We'll be firing up the grille and reopening the café Wednesday, April 6 for the 2011 season. I might have to ask Colonel Grinnell to activate the National Guard and remove the massive amounts of snow still blanketing the parking lot and surrounding areas but we will open on time. We installed a new wood stove late last fall in the dining room making for a more inviting and cozy dining experience. So don't let the cold get you down and enjoy the warmth of real American wood. While we prepare the farm for the growing season, our spring hours will be Wednesday through Sunday 6:30 AM till 2:30 PM for breakfast and lunch and Friday and Saturday nights till 8 PM serving dinner. We look forward to seeing all our valued customers and friends and thank you for your continued support.



Spring Fever Coupon
Buy One Breakfast, Lunch or Dinner
Get One Half Off!

Half off applies to meal of equal or lesser value.
Cannot be combined with other offers. Does not include beverages or dessert.
Valid through 4/17/11

Ice Cream Shoppe & Takeout Ready For 2011 Season.

Our new ice cream shop and take-out window is raring to go. This expansion allowed us to triple the amount of flavors we now carry from Round Top Creamery. In addition to the ice cream, we'll be offering seafood, burgers, dogs, fries, onion rings, and all the traditional summer fare at the take-out window. Be prepared to bring the kids and celebrate the season. Don't worry we'll still be offering our sit down dinners in the café with a new exciting menu, Friday and Saturday nights. Also while visiting the café, check out the farm store. We've added many new Maine

made products that we think you'll enjoy. Please support these vendors and keep your hard earned dollars in Maine. It will be the only stimulus package they will be receiving again this year.

The Farm Front.

I placed my orders for our spring planting. Hopefully all the snow will be gone and the fields dry enough to plant the third week of April. Hopefully we'll have it all completed before the black flies arrive.

Unfortunately we lost our resident farmers to bigger and better things and will no longer offer a CSA this year. We will however have many new hands coming on board this season. With a new agricultural well in place this spring for all our irrigation needs and a new high tunnel to grow our produce well into the fall, we should be exempt from the worst of Mother Nature's tantrums and have plenty of produce. Keep your fingers crossed.

Blueberry Update.

Blueberry expansion continues again this spring, with plantings of a variety called Elliot. Elliot is a late season variety that will not start ripening until the first of September and continue until the first freeze. Although Elliot's berries are small to medium in size and not as easy to pick as the summer varieties they are still wonderful for eating and will extend the u-pick season. We will also be planting a variety called Chandler. Chandler is a late mid-season variety with the average berry the size of a quarter and with excellent flavor. Both these varieties will be available for picking in the 2013 season and now with close to 1,000 bushes coming along picking should be great from July through September.

Raspberry Update.

We'll be adding a new field of raspberries containing my new favorite Joan J, with additional plantings of the variety Prelude. Prelude ripens around June 26 in a typical year here in zone 5 with an additional smaller crop ripening in late September. Joan J will ripen 2 weeks later around July 9 with huge red sweet berries.

We learned a lesson after a severe thunderstorm last summer and will be devoting more time and energy on a beefier trellising system. All of our new plantings are now being trellised with steel posts and wire to save on the yearly maintenance that goes along with wooden posts. The only disadvantage is the massive amount of electrical current one could encounter while picking our premium organic berries during an electrical storm. But have no fears we'll give advance warning of impending doom during picking season and if all else fails Washington's Volunteer Fire Department and defibrillator are less than a quarter of a mile away.

Strawberry Update.

We will also be adding a replacement field of strawberries also named Jewell. This is a mid-season variety that ripens around June 26 here in Washington. It has very large fruit with wonderful flavor and is our primary strawberry variety. We will also be planting a variety named Cabot. It will ripen a week later, is one of the largest varieties available with a great flavor and aroma. Additionally, we will be planting a late season variety called Ovation and a day neutral variety named Sea Scape, both of which we've never grown and I'll let you know the results. FYI, most strawberries grown are called June bearers with the ripening of the fruit concentrated in three or four weeks the second year after planting. In our neck of the woods, we begin harvesting around June 21. I do not bother growing early varieties, which would normally ripen a week earlier because of the unpredictable weather and crop failures resulting from frosts and freezes. Strawberry growers in our area lost most of their crops last year from a late season freeze. Day neutral or "ever bearers" will produce berries the first year of planting in June and continue until the first fall frost. The disadvantage of day neutrals to me is the less flavorful berries and lower yields but since we continually have customers in late July and August coming to the farm looking for strawberries, we'll be giving them another try.

Bush Cherry Update.

For our customers still waiting for bush cherries. Our test plot planted in the spring of 09 failed to produce any fruit in the summer of 10. We'll see what happens this year. Let us know if we can grow something for you. There has been limited interest in elderberries and kiwis and we might test them out in the years to come.

Again, I'd like to take this opportunity to thank everyone for supporting our venture. We would be honored for you and your family to consider Sweet Season Farm your farm. If you have any questions, comments or ideas, please take the time to get back to us either in person, by phone 845-3028 or via e-mail info@sweetseasonfarm.com.

Quote of the Month.

"Believe that life is worth living and your belief will help create the fact."

– William James