

Jimmy Acres: A Tommerdahl Family Farm

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November 2016

Hello friends and neighbors!

Happy Thanksgiving! From all of us at Jimmy Acres, we hope that you had a fantastic Thanksgiving filled with delicious food and great company.

- ❖ We closed down the farm stand for the year last weekend. Thanks to all who came and visited us! It was a pleasure to meet so many new people and we hope to see you again in the spring. We'll let you know when our vegetables start coming in again...one of these days we'll get a hoop house up so we can provide vegetables throughout the winter. But until then, having some extra time to work on other projects around the farm isn't a bad thing.
- ❖ There's not much left in the garden, so we have more time to read seed catalogs and start planning next year's crops! *If you have any requests or suggestions for things you'd like to see at the farm stand next year, or things you really enjoyed this year, please let us know!* Purple sweet potatoes? Golden beets? Giant kohlrabi? Red okra? Purple beans? Orange watermelon? This also includes plants, as we are planning on selling transplants in the spring again—any particular varieties of tomatoes or peppers? Even though we're most excited about growing interesting varieties with unique flavors and characteristics that you might not find in a grocery store, we might be persuaded to plant some hybrids next year if there is interest...
- ❖ We're working on getting a new greenhouse set up to start transplants and maybe grow a few things through the winter. The construction phase has stalled at "watching shadows" as the sun sinks lower in the sky, but we hope to start actual construction before the end of the year.
- ❖ This month, Jake made the long trek back from California to begin his new job at Summerfield Farms, just outside of Greensboro, NC. We're excited that he's going to be closer to our farm and might even be able to help out with farm chores on the weekends.
- ❖ We picked up our new trees from Century Farms this month. Fifteen new varieties of apples, plus a few new fig, peach, and pear trees have found a new home in our soil...now we only need to wait 3-5 years to see how they taste!

Meet Our Workers

MOW

If you've been around the farm or ordered produce from us, you've probably seen this face before. In this MOWing edition, let's get to know Anna!



Job Title: Manager of Annual Produce and Sales/Outreach

Job Description: Grow, pick, store, transport, and sell vegetables. I also write the monthly newsletter and do what I can to educate our customers and community and get them excited about fresh vegetables!

Favorite Vegetable: My grandma always says that her favorite kid is the one that she is with at the moment...my favorite vegetable tends to be the one I'm currently eating, as long as it came out of my garden!

Hobbies: Napping, hiking, cooking, reading seed catalogs

Education: Masters in Marine Biology...you'd be surprised how much marine biology relates to farming.

How are marine biology and farming related? You'll have to wait until next month's newsletter for that answer.

Favorite part of your job: I love that there are always so many different things to do! If I get tired of one job, I can just move on to something else that needs to be done. Also providing people with quality food, learning new things, and always having fresh veggies around to eat.

Least favorite part of your job: There are always so many things that need to be done and never enough time to do all of them!

Most influential thing driving you into this career: A cubicle filled with fresh air, sunshine, and tasty vegetables, where it's usually ok to go to work barefooted.

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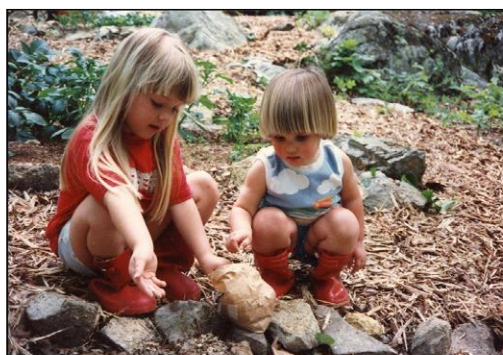
How did you get interested in farming? I've always loved working in the garden. When I was in grad school, my landlords let me put a garden in the backyard, and for the first time, I had a garden with full sun and saw that you can get more than one tomato off of each plant. Unfortunately, plants aren't happy living next to a saltwater creek when the tides are super high and the whole backyard floods. When my dad bought the farm (non-metaphorically), it gave me an opportunity to grow things in full sun out of range of saltwater, and I've been learning how to scale up in a way that is beneficial to the soil, to the plants, and to the people who eat the plants.

My interest in farming also stems from my 10 years of personal experience with chronic pain and related health problems. As part of my recovery, I've learned that it's not just what you *don't* eat that makes you healthy, but also what you *do* eat. Every calorie is not equal--your body needs micronutrients (vitamins, minerals, amino acids, etc) in order to repair and sustain itself, and food from plants grown in healthy soil contain significantly higher concentrations of micronutrients than food from the same plants grown in degraded soil. Unfortunately, the majority of food available today is depleted of nutrients because our soils are depleted of nutrients due to conventional farming methods: tilling, erosion of the soil, using chemical fertilizers, pesticides and herbicides that kill soil biology and ecology, and neglecting the soil microbes and fungi that feed and support the plants. Besides wanting a source of food for myself that I trust and that provides me with the nutrients I need to recover, I want to be able to provide others with food that both tastes good and will help them to repair their bodies and get or stay healthy and more functional in life.

Most beneficial thing you've learned from farming: Mimicking nature is usually the best option. Everything is connected and nothing works in isolation, so even seemingly small, insignificant factors cannot be neglected. Conventional methods are very rarely the best way to do things, in farming and in most other aspects of life. Always be open to thinking outside the box!

Advice for people wanting to start a garden: Keep your earthworms happy. If you have sun and happy worms, your plants should be happy. And never squish a squash bug that's pointed straight at your eye.

Main goal for Jimmy Acres: Create a healthy ecosystem that produces quality food to feed us and our community, while also nurturing and healing the land and the organisms that live here.



As always, please feel free to pass this along to all of your produce-loving friends and neighbors. And if you have any questions, comments, concerns, ideas, critiques, complaints, or suggestions, please let us know, we'd love to hear them!



"What if today, we were just grateful for everything?" -Charlie Brown