

Jimmy Acres: A Tommerdahl Family Farm

Vol. 7
August 2016

Hello friends and neighbors!

Time for another update of things going on around the farm! This month has been a little slow. And hot. But we've still gotten a lot accomplished:

- ❖ Most of the month has been dedicated to reclaiming the garden from weeds...not always a fun job, but the plants are very thankful for it!
- ❖ Progress on the chicken coop project is unexpectedly way ahead of where we thought it would be...that's what happens when someone gives you 21 chickens with a one week notice.
- ❖ Although we've had a lull in our vegetable supply the past week or two, the late summer crops of tomatoes, beans, yellow squash, cucumbers, and melons are looking good. Our current supply is low, but we have lots of new growth, blossoms, and not-quite-ready vegetables. We're still learning how to best time things to keep a steady stream of veggies rolling in all summer.
- ❖ It's time to plant fall crops! If you have any requests for what you'd like to see in the coming months, let us know soon. Things like broccoli, cauliflower, kale, cabbage, lettuce, spinach, radishes, turnips, rutabaga, mustard greens, kohlrabi, bok choy, swiss chard, beets...any other cool and unusual crops you'd like me to try!
- ❖ New vegetables to get excited about: banana melons, eggplants, and winter squash/pumpkins (see below).

Learning the Lingo

Being newbies to farming, it's not unusual that we come across words and phrases we've never heard before. When we learn a useful one, we'll share it with you here. This month, we heard a good one from multiple farmstand customers:

Mess (noun)—according to our expert southern dialect consultants (aka grandparents), this is a unit of measurement referring to the amount needed for a meal. Most commonly used to measure beans, but can be used in reference to any type of food.

Used in a sentence:

"I reckon I'll take a mess of them string beans for supper tonight."

Meet Our Workers

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This month, we meet by far the most friendly face around the farm, LANCE (aka Lancelot, Snert, Buddy, Hey!, Dog, Killer, Twinkle-Toes).



Job title: Farm supervisor, official customer greeter and farmstand manager, small mammal trapping expert, customer service expert

Favorite Garden Food: watermelon and grass

Hobbies: sleeping, eating hot dogs, chasing insects, rolling in the mud after swimming, driving the tractor, hopping after rabbits, chasing cars (record sustained speed 30 mph)

Unique Talents: Sleeping with my eyes open, wagging my tail in a circle

Favorite part of your job: Greeting customers! Also taking breaks to eat hot dogs, going for walks around the property, and swimming in muddy water right before it's time to get in the car.

Hardest part of your job: Getting Anna to take breaks and go in at the end of the day. She never listens when I tell her it's time to leave. Even when it's thundering.

Personal goals: Learn how to be a cow. I'm currently working on eating grass and regurgitating it. I have not yet grown a rumen, but I'm working on it. I'm also learning how to trample and flatten grass and weeds in the garden to act as soil armor. And not to brag, but I'm really good at sleeping in the shade during the hottest part of the day.

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VEGETABLE SPOTLIGHTS

We like to grow varieties of veggies that you might not normally see in the store. Sometimes it's because they're easier to grow than conventional varieties, sometimes it's because they taste better, and sometimes it's just because the plant is really cool. So we like to share with you why we grow what we grow, and why you should be super excited about them!

SEMINOLE PUMPKIN



In my opinion, one of the coolest and most versatile plants that we grow. A native of the Everglades, these plants know how to deal with heat, humidity, and bugs. Their tree trunk like stem is completely impermeable to squash vine borers, and the squash bugs don't seem to be able to kill them, either. Besides being good at growing, these plants are prolific producers of small, 3ish lb, round pumpkins that taste like, and can be used like, butternut squash. But that's not all! They can also be eaten when they're still green and taste like zucchini. So it's a pumpkin, winter squash, and zucchini, all rolled up into one, on a vine that is impervious to just about everything besides frost. What more could you ask for?

UPPER GROUND SWEET POTATO SQUASH



Like the Seminole pumpkin, these squash plants are resistant to anything nature throws at them. Unlike the Seminole pumpkins, these squash get HUGE! Supposedly up to 20 lbs, our max so far is 17 lbs. The flesh in these is more similar to a sweet potato, but lighter in color and a little more squash-y. The plants aren't quite as prolific as Seminole pumpkins, but that's probably a good thing because I wouldn't know what to do with that many 20 lb squash.

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Goals for the farm: Have as many people here as possible to scratch my head. And if they want to bring me hot dogs, that would be great, too. But I mostly want people to be happy with the quality of the product we are providing to them so that they come back again and again to see me. I'd also like to see the pastures continue to grow soil and become healthier with lush green grass so that I don't have to tip-toe over brambles and sharp sticks while chasing deer, rabbits, and groundhogs.

Favorite Quote: "There's always more to do, so might as well quit now!"

As always, please pass along to your friends and neighbors. And let us know if you have any questions, comments, concerns, suggestions, ideas, critiques, or thoughts...we'd love to hear them!

"Without hard work, nothing grows but weeds."

--Gordon B. Hinckley

"Weeds don't care how hard you work. They still grow."

--Anna