



Eagle Crest Farm

Working alongside our sons and daughters to provide healthy, locally-grown food for our family, friends, and community.

Issue 8 - December 2015

www.eaglecrestfarmva.com

Pastured Chickens

We raised the chickens on the pasture with fresh grass. Our chickens are antibiotic-free, hormone-free, GMO-free.

Farm Fresh Eggs

Our layers are totally free-ranged. Their diet is supplemented with GMO-Free grain.



Homemade Breads

Made with freshly-milled organic flour and natural ingredients. We have a variety of breads to choose from.

Pastured Turkeys



Reserve a pastured turkey for next year.

Organic Jams

We have low-sugar raspberry jam made with our organically grown berries and local honey.



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Merry Christmas

Caleb, Grant, Ben, Quinn, Kelly, Elise, Claire

What's Happening on the Farm?

Quiet Pastures

We have to admit that by late fall, we look forward to this time of year when the pastures are empty and quiet without any pastured chickens or turkeys in them. We had a great year and raised 476 meat chickens and 60 turkeys. This was quite an increase from last year, and that was obvious to us as we realized the amount of time and energy we spent farming this year. Whew, we're tired!

We were very pleased with the Thanksgiving turkeys, and have begun to receive good feedback from our customers. It's always a blessing to know that our customers enjoy the food.

Next year, our goal is to maintain our current production and customers (we really like you all), but not focus on growing the farm so we can instead focus more on our family this coming year. Therefore, we tried to come up with ways we could work hard, but work smarter with less time spent farming. These are our goals and plans for next year:

- Raise 400 pastured chickens
- Raise 60 pastured turkeys
- Deliver eggs bi-weekly instead of weekly to Strasburg and Winchester
- Deliver monthly to Gainesville instead of to Herndon
- Build and set up more efficient feeding and watering systems
- Not do the Farmers Market

Bees

We've had an up and down year with the bees this year. We started with four hives and were able to split to five hives. They did well and were strong, but didn't produce enough



honey for us to harvest (bummer!). We also lost two hives late fall that absconded (all the bees left, leaving behind their honey,

brood, and eggs). The only explanation we received from various bee keepers was that perhaps there were some African bee genes in the hive and once the weather got cold, they left. We're hopeful those genes are now gone and that we can get our remaining hives to survive the winter (though realistically we would probably lose 1-2 hives).

Our plans next year are to continue with any hives that survive the winter. We'll focus on trying to split them into more hives. Then we'll focus on keeping them strong and getting them ready for the winter so that they will survive. IF we can get any honey, that would be great, but not a goal for next year. It will hopefully be a goal for the following year with the increased, stronger hives.

Egg-cess of Eggs



We have 130 egg layers that are currently laying eggs. They are egg-cellent layers and we are getting around 50 dozen eggs every week.

We also have 150 more egg layers that will begin laying eggs in February. This means we're going to have twice as many eggs!

We're hoping to increase the number of egg customers we have and to sell more eggs. If we don't, then we will plan to sell some of the egg layers to other farmers.

As a family, we've really enjoyed the farm fresh eggs every day. The kids love the hard-boiled eggs and we also like having scrambled eggs for breakfast.

Growing Family

God has not only blessed our farm this year, but He has also blessed our family. We are so excited and thankful to be expecting our sixth child in April. The kids are even more excited for another baby in the house.

We're not quite sure how this will affect our farming next year, but it might mean that we need to monitor our time and energy more carefully. We'll have to look at the time spent in the fields, baking, doing deliveries, at the farmers market, and all the other work that goes into the farm.



The good news is that as our family grows, the children become more and

more helpful, and we have more helpers eventually. Claire has already begun to take over a large part of the baking. And Caleb has been apprenticing with Ben to learn the daily care and routines of caring for the chickens. As the kids help carry these responsibilities, we'll hopefully be able to expand our farm over the years to include grass-fed beef and dairy.

Fresh from the Farm

"Good food for your body and soul"

To order email eaglecrestfarm724@gmail.com



Pastured Chicken

We have sold over half of the chickens we raised this year. When raising the chickens, we planned to hopefully have enough chickens in the freezer to supply the needs of our customers from November-April until we have fresh chickens available again. The taste is excellent, and it's nice to have the broth for winter soups.

All of our chickens are antibiotic-free, hormone-free, and GMO-free. They were raised on fresh pasture. We also have a few chickens that were supplemented with a soy-free, certified organic grain.

GMO-free chickens \$4 per pound

Soy-free chickens \$5.25 per pound

Cut-ups (breasts, legs, tenders, wings) are also available.



Farm-Fresh Eggs

Farm eggs are very different than commercially produced eggs you'd find in a store. You'll notice that the yolks are a much darker orange. And the taste is better. The eggs themselves are also healthier and less-susceptible to bacteria due to the environment they raised in.

Our egg layers have unrestricted access to our entire property, and they love it. Their diets are also supplemented with a GMO-free grain.

Our eggs are not washed, which means you can store them at room temperature for up to three months. This way you can stock up on eggs if that makes purchasing easier for you.

Eggs are \$3.50 per dozen



Breads and Jam

Using our grain mill, we freshly-mill organic wheat berries to make our breads. We also use honey, olive oil, and our eggs in our breads. The nutritional value of breads made with freshly-milled wheat far exceeds the breads in the stores. 40 of the essential nutrients are found in freshly-milled breads.

We also have a small stock of homemade low-sugar raspberry jam made from our organically grown raspberries. The ingredients are raspberries, pectin, and a small amount of local honey.

Sm. jar of jam - \$3.50

Lg. jar of jam - \$7

Ezekiel bread - \$9.50

Wheat bread - \$7

Banana bread - \$7

Dinner rolls - \$6

Pumpkin bread - \$6

Claire's Corner: A Christmas Acrostic

Written by Claire, age 10

A is for Advent, a thing we do to celebrate

B is for Birthday, the one for Christ you know

C is for Christmas, a happy time of year

D is for Deliverance, He saved us from our sin

E is for Everlasting, a life we will always have

F is for Forever, this child has lived forever

G is for God, that's who this baby is

H is for the Holy One, the character of God's son

I is for Immanuel, the name of this Holy one

J is for Jesus, the most popular of His names

K is for King, the position He gave up

L is for Love, that's what this baby was

M is for Mary, who treasured up all

N is for Noel, that's what the angels sang

O is for Odd, it was an odd place for a king to be born

P is for Peace, that's what Jesus brought

Q is for Question, on every shepherd's mind

R is for Remarkable, this Christ child was

S is for Shepherds, the first to hear

T is for Time, it's time for Him to come

U is for Understand, the wise men understood the star

V is for Virgin, that's what they mother was

W is for Wonderful, this birth was

X is for eXclaim, what the shepherds did

Y is for Yellow, yellow starlight streamed in

Z is for Zeal, what's what we have now.

Keeping Christ in Christmas

We LOVE Christmas. It's our favorite time of year! In last year's December newsletter we shared some of our special Christmas traditions we do as a family. This year we'd like to share some ways we try to focus on the true meaning of Christmas and keep Christ at the center of our celebrations.

- 1) Jesus and the nativity takes the place of Santa Claus in our house. It's not about being naughty or nice in order to receive gifts, instead it's about receiving the gift of forgiveness for all our naughtiness.
- 2) We study the names of Jesus throughout the advent season.
- 3) All of our decorations, including our tree, are symbolic of Christ and His character. We talk about these symbols throughout the season, but especially when we decorate.
- 4) We never ask the children "what do you want for Christmas?". Instead, we talk about what they have received from God, and focus on the gifts that they are making and giving to others.
- 5) We read devotionals and many Christmas books that focus on the story of Christ.

There are many other ways to keep Christ at the center of Christmas. These are just a few. We hope you enjoy a Christ-centered Christmas!

Farm Devotional: Less is More

The goal of marketing is to convince consumers that they are discontent with what they have and they need more to make them happy. At Christmas we can often get caught up in the consumerism and materialism of it all, and suffer both financially and spiritually because of it.

One thing God has been teaching me more and more this year is the lesson that less is more. The less toys we have in our home, the more peace and orderliness we have. Therefore, we've gotten rid of MANY toys and the kids seem so much happier. In our school, we have cut back on the number of subjects we've been trying to fit in, and instead just focus on a few major subjects. All of us have enjoyed school more and have probably learned more as well. In our parenting, we have been learning that less of us and more of God is what's going to truly change hearts. Therefore we've become more dependent on God to work in our kids' hearts and are trusting less in ourselves and our methods. God has also been showing me that I need less time for myself and more time with Him. This produces more joy, peace, and fruit in my life when I make more time for God.

At Christmas, we can get so distracted by more of the good things, that we end up with less of the best thing, which is God. Instead, let's try to be intentional about spending less money by buying fewer gifts, and spending more on those in need. Let's spend less time stressing about the perfect food and decorations for all the Christmas parties, and instead spend more time enjoying our friends and family. And let's spend less time focused on consumerism, materialism, and commercialism, and more time focused on Christ and His amazing love for us.



Sowing Seeds

How many times have you been born, and how many times will you die?

"To all who believed he gave the right to become children of God..." - John 1:

It's amazing to me how we bring nothing good to the table when it comes to receiving eternal life. This most valuable of all gifts is the gift of spiritual life given by God and is one that we cannot earn in any way; it is placed on the table as a free gift given purely out of God's love and grace. It is free for the taking, and we desperately need it. But not everyone can take it...only those that he allows. No one is deserving; He doesn't owe any favors to anyone that they "should" be allowed to take it. Rather, it is only for those that he "enables" to take it. Since the wages of sin is death and all have sinned, then we are all spiritually dead before we are even physically born. Since a dead person cannot bring themselves back to life, we are dependent on God to bring us back to life. To those that he enables to believe in Jesus Christ as Lord and their personal savior, he gives them spiritual life...they are born spiritually like a baby since we are not bodies, we are souls. In summary, if you are only born once (physically), then you will die twice (both a physical death and a spiritual death). However, if you are born twice (physically and spiritually), then you will only die once (just the physical death).

If you don't already believe in Jesus Christ as your personal Lord and Savior, then I would encourage you to read the book of John in the bible and ask God to enable you to believe in Jesus today!

Born once, die twice. Born twice, die once.