

When the farmer can sell directly to the consumer, it is a more active process. There's more contact. The consumer can know, who am I buying this from? What's their name? Do they have a face? Is the food they are selling coming out of Mexico with pesticides? **Jerry Brown**

Agua Linda Farm

April 2008

April Farm Journal

In April, as the temperatures get warmer, our workload increases. We're working double time, in fact – minding our customers demands for spring mix and greens, planting for the

summer and working on marketing and sales. We are starting tomatoes and chilis in the greenhouse and are counting seed packages to be sure that we have ordered enough. We spend the better part of 3 days a week harvesting, washing and packaging our produce. We are now participating in 3 farmer's markets and are delivering weekly to Patagonia, Tucson and Tubac and have been busy recruiting new CSA members for the season. CSA deliveries start this month.



We have had a lot of folks visit the farm lately. Our hope, in fact, is to sell most of what we grow to individuals and families in our community. We are not interested in shipping and warehouses and mass marketing strategies – we hope to build relationships with local people while growing their food. Last week we had a customer come from Green Valley with his wife, for example. He was thrilled to see our operation and recalled his youth growing up on a farm. That afternoon a family from Tucson came

for a visit. Their kids had never been on a farm and they squealed with delight as they met all the animals that they had previously only encountered in storybooks. This April we have about two hundred school children coming to the farm for their spring field trip. For many, this will be their first lesson in where food comes from – before the grocery store, McDonalds or their own refrigerators. Last month we had our first "Talk and Tour" which is a sort of open house (open field?). Forty-two people came to learn about what we do! Most satisfying, however, was a regular customer who brought out of town visitors to the farm recently and explained, "I wanted them to see *my* farm". It takes a lot of time and effort to reach out to the community like this and to keep our farm stand open, but we believe that in the long run we will benefit as more folks feel that they are a part of what we are doing and support our efforts.

The alfalfa was irrigated for the first time this year. The horses and cattle are looking over their yellow field to the next pasture. Already the grass is greener on the other side and soon they will be munching on fresh green blades instead of dry stubble from last year.

As of today, all of the goats have had their babies. These are pigmy goats that really serve no purpose other than to entertain school children and families when they visit. Today, the last mamma was having her babies and the first one was stuck. Since I had the smallest hands, I was the one who reached in (after taking off my wedding ring) to find the legs and pull the baby out. The mother immediately began cleaning it and within minutes gave birth to a second baby with no trouble at all. A few hours later, the new kids were walking around and nursing just fine. Had we not noticed the problem, the mother and kids would probably have died by the time we went over to feed in the evening.

My hens have finally started laying! We hope to be selling eggs at the farm store and farmer's markets soon.

Our next Talk and Tour is April 5th at 1 PM. Please let us know if you plan on attending. Stewart will be demonstrating how Bailey, the miniature horse, helps him cultivate. This is a free event.

On May 3rd we are going to show a documentary in the backyard. "*The Real Dirt on Farmer John* will turn every idea you ever had about what it means to be an American farmer, or an American dreamer, on its head. Meet Farmer John, the incredible human being whose inspirational story of revolutionizing his family farm and redeeming his own life has won accolades and awards at film festivals around the world." – Farmer John Productions.

We are borrowing a large screen and projector and encourage folks to camp out. You can bring coolers with your own food and drinks and we have an area in the shady/grassy back yard where you can pitch your tent.

We have a bonfire pit and three gas bar-b-ques that everyone can share. We hope to inspire a few of you to stick around and work in the garden the following day! This should be a great family event! RSVP!!

Now

Spring mix, lettuce heads, arugula, braising greens
Asian cabbages and mustards, spinach, radishes

Find Us

- Farm Stand: Sat 9 AM-3PM & Sun 12-3PM
- St. Phillips Market: Sun
- Tubac Market : Thurs.
- Sierra Vista Market: Thurs.
- Aqua Vita - Tucson
- Food Conspiracy - Tucson
- Nob Hill - Tubac
- Red Mountain Foods - Patagonia



The Real Dirt on Farmer John, showing May 3rd.



Agua Linda Farm Newsletter

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