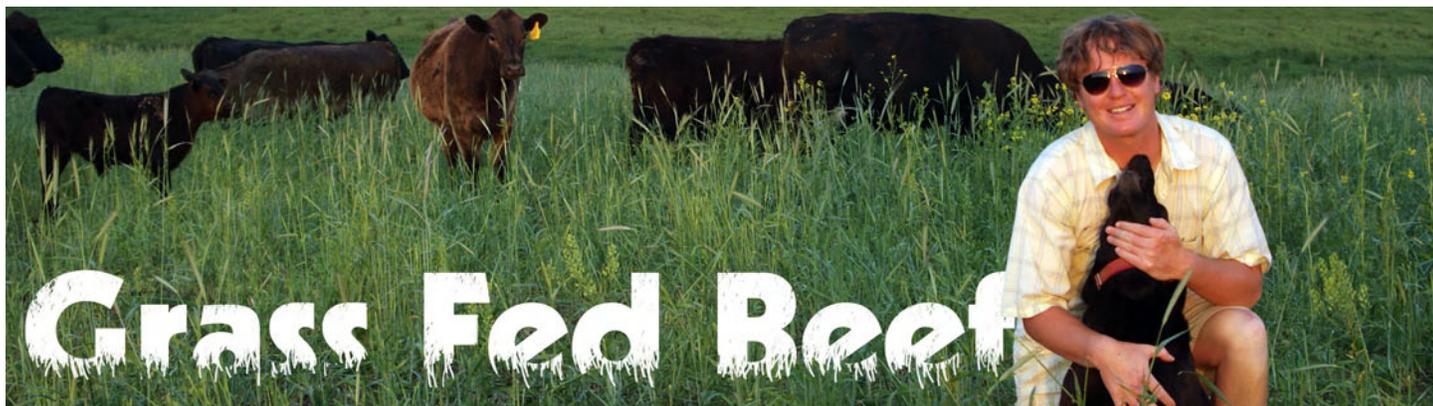




WHAT'S FRESH

A NEWSLETTER TO CONNECT LOCAL GROWERS AND CONSUMERS

VOLUME 2, #12 DECEMBER 2010



BY NEAL SAWYER

If a customer asked me four years ago if we sold grass fed beef, I probably would have given them a rotten tomato face and told them they really don't want what they are asking for. Three years ago I would have laughed and shook my head if somebody told me I could move cattle every twelve hours to fresh grass and stay sane. Two years ago I verbally wrestled with somebody who told me that combining all of our cattle into one big herd would benefit our farm. Last year all the farm management made drastic changes. And last week (November 13th, 2010) we began selling a new line of retail cuts, Sawyer Grass Fed Beef.

Sawyer Grass Fed Beef is different from beef you can buy in other places. What distinguishes grass fed beef from other beef is that our grass fed animal is grazing grass or fed hay (in the winter) for it's entire life. In comparison, most other animals are raised in the pasture until about 500-600lbs, then weaned off from their mothers, and fed a diet high in grain until they are ready for market. Animals fattened on grain finish faster compared to animals fed grass or hay, which is why most beef is finished on grain.

Many customers have been interested in purchasing grass fed beef for a variety of reasons. Grass fed beef is healthier as it is a natural source of omega 3 fats and is high in CLA (Conjugated Linoleic

Acid). Also animals fed a diet of grass and hay are more environmentally friendly. Grain fed beef is typically fed corn which requires much more energy to produce.

I invite you to try Sawyer Grass Fed Beef. The beef will have a pleasant unique flavor your palette will enjoy, distinct from grain finished beef. It has only taken four years to make ripe tomato faces to customers who ask for grass fed beef, three years to figure out how to grow better grasses to rotate cattle into, two years to create a single herd of cattle that includes animals fattening for beef, one year to finish the management changes to produce grass fed beef, and one weekend of selling at the farmers market to see there is demand for grass fed beef.

Crisp Air Outside - Warm Hearts Inside

BY MYRA ROELENS

We've all turned on the heaters and are making soups, stews, casseroles and pot roasts. You are relishing family time, sipping hot cocoa or warm apple cider with cinnamon sticks and cookies by the fireplace. Now is the time to put your feet up and forget about your outside woes, or is it? Did you forget to put your garden hose up? It still may have water hiding inside ready to burst the hose. There still is time to ready garden tools for next year. For protection from rust, use a good quality oil to seal up hand tools. Option two is recycle them and buy new ones that have hit the clearance shelves. Make sure any perennial vegetation is secured well enough to ensure the Winter



doesn't hurt them. Winds, ice and snowfall can make them brittle and breaking can occur.

Now is also an excellent opportunity to go through winter squash, potatoes and onions that were put away in September and October. Make sure anything with spots either gets composted or eaten quickly! We've all heard the expression "one bad apple spoils the whole bunch!" A great tip: Use dried apricot, plum or peach pits for firewood enhancement! Just make sure they are completely dried before throwing them in. You can always use the oven, on a low setting to achieve dryness and to fill home with yummy smells. Don't forget about our outside friends the birds and squirrels. They do share our planet and scavenging this time of year can get quite rough for them. Enjoy your family this season and I hope you have a very Happy New Year!

NEWS ARTICLES

Do you have something that might be helpful to other growers or of interest to our consumers? Please submit your articles and ideas to Phil Crandall or Myra Roelens.

Buy Fresh Buy Local
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GO GREEN

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BUY FRESH BUY LOCAL NEWSLETTER

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COOKING

Pumpkin Oatmeal Drop Cookies

BY CATHY LAFRENZ

3/4 c butter
1-1/2 c sugar.
Cream butter and sugar
Add 1 c pumpkin
2 eggs
1 tsp.vanilla
And mix thoroughly.
Then sift together (Which mind you, I never do!)
1-1/2 c all-purpose flour (I used 1/2 c of whole wheat flour and 1 c all-purpose)
2 tsp baking powder
1/2 tsp baking soda
1/2 tsp salt

1 tsp cinnamon
1/2 tsp nutmeg
1/8 tsp ground cloves.
And stir this into the creamed mixture.
Then it is goodie time!
1-1/2 c oatmeal
1/2 coconut
3/4 c chopped nuts
1/2 dried cranberries.
Bake at a 375 oven for 12 minutes.
Now the recipe says it makes 6 dozen. Not the size that I make!!! I got not-quite 5 dozen.



WIC Farmers' Market Nutrition Program

Most farmers find paperwork to be the last thing they want to be involved in, but going that extra mile for customers can help the bottom line. Becoming a certified vendor can help add to your profits. While things have slowed down a bit, farmers should be looking at becoming eligible. You can find the necessary information for Iowa by calling 1-515-242-6239 or visiting <http://www.bfblqc.org/2010IowaVendorHandbook.pdf>. Illinois

vendors can contact the Illinois Department of Human Services at 1-800-843-6154 (option 5) or you can write to the program unit at the following address: WIC and Senior Farmer Market Programs, Illinois Department of Human Services, Bureau of Family Nutrition, 535 W. Jefferson, Springfield, Illinois 62702. General information from the USDA can be found at <http://www.fns.usda.gov/wic/WIC-FMNP-Fact-Sheet.pdf>.

Election Results

The election results are in. Returning for another year will be Phil Crandall, Cathy Lafrenz and Cindy Heilman. Past president, Doug Coobs, will be returning to the board. Two new members were also elected, Joshua Schipp and Myra Roelens will be our newest board members. During the first board meeting it will be decided who will be Director, Treasurer and Secretary.



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