



## *Early spring greetings from Hilltop Pastures Family Farm!*

As I sit down to finish this newsletter that I began in January we've already experienced a disconcerting start to 2010. What began as a normal year quickly went awry. We had Shane completely rupture his ACL in January that required replacement surgery while Sami had tonsillitis so bad that her airway was nearly completely blocked and she also had surgery. Whew, that's enough doctoring for quite some time if you ask me! We had every intention of getting all the new farm details for this year worked out early and out there for everyone to chew on before the season was in full swing. Sorry to say that hasn't happened. I am very happy though to report that both kids are doing great. Now the farm is already bustling with activity and as I compose this note I can feel the sun's warm rays on my face and with great anticipation I know that spring is about to fully bloom. Please note that this will be our last mailed newsletter and from here on out our newsletter will only be sent out via e-mail. If you have never e-mailed us and would like to continue to be kept up to date on the happenings on our family farm drop us a note to: [hpff@myclearwave.net](mailto:hpff@myclearwave.net).

### **NEW CSA**

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#### **CSA – Community Supported Agriculture**

We are very excited to begin offering a CSA program this year. A CSA is a great way to buy your food directly from us. You purchase a share (aka membership) for an upfront cost. In return

you receive the first fruits of the farm each and every month. I know many people enjoy having this close relationship with local farm families. Please see the enclosed insert for further details regarding this exciting shared venture.

### **MONTHLY DELIVERIES**

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One of our goals for this year is to make purchasing from us as easy as possible. While we certainly encourage everyone to visit us on the farm, we do realize that folks are busy and a visit to the farm isn't always possible. To make it convenient to partner with us, we are expanding our delivery service to every month. We are also including regular stops in Rochester and Cannon Falls, and we are certainly open to adding stops

along our route up Hwy 52. We have enclosed a flyer with all of this year's delivery dates and locations. If you would like to be included in our delivery e-mail, drop us a note to add you at: [hpff@myclearwave.net](mailto:hpff@myclearwave.net). Our next planned delivery is this coming Saturday, March 13<sup>th</sup>. Please see the enclosed flyer for more details on how our delivery service operates, and how to order.

### **100% GRASS-FED & FINISHED BEEF**

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We are excited to report that our partnership with Pedal Pushers Cafe in Lanesboro has been a huge success. We have had excellent reviews regarding the ground beef and we will continue to supply them with all the ground beef for their burgers! The owners of Pedal Pushers have expanded as well and have opened "Kari's Scandinavian Restaurant". Kari's is located right next to the Commonweal Theater and features a menu rich in classic Scandinavian cuisine, focusing on using locally grown meats. We are excited to be able to help supply some of the local meats on their menu.

If you're in the area stop in and enjoy. Our 100% grass-fed and finished beef continues to be very popular. The beef packages were a hit last year and we are again offering the Family and Sampler packages. New this year is a Combo Family package including a nice variety of beef and pork cuts. Also new is the quarter beef package. The quarter beef package is a fixed selection of cuts of beef including a nice selection of steaks, roasts, and ground beef. This is being offered at a convenient flat rate per pound of take home meat. As always we will continue to offer half and whole

beef bulk orders that can be custom cut to your specifications. These will be available in mid November. We have also priced the bulk beef by the pound of actual meat you take home with no

additional costs. Please see our price sheet for all the package and pricing details. We now have an all-beef wiener with no added nitrates or nitrites as well.

## **NATURALLY RAISED PASTURED PORK**

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Our Pastured Pigs continue to be wonderful creatures. The pigs spend ALL of their time outside in the fresh air, and are free to root and graze. Of course, like all of our animals, they are raised without the use of antibiotics or artificial growth hormones. Pasture raised pork is higher quality, more healthy, more tender and more delicious than industrially raised pork. It's naturally

lower in fat and higher in omega-3 essential fatty acids, vitamin E, beta carotene, and conjugated linoleic acid (CLAs).

We will continue to offer pork by the cut, halves and wholes, or in the Family and Sampler packages. These options are listed on the order form.

## **PASTURED BROILERS**

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We are sad to report that we are taking a break from raising chickens for this year. We just need to find a little more "room" for family this year and the chickens were the most logical place to ease up

a bit. Maybe next year or in a few years one of the kids will take on the chickens again. In the meantime Sami is continuing with her egg laying hens and will happily supply eggs when she can.

## **PASTURED TURKEYS**

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We are again going to offer the phenomenal Pasture Raised Turkeys! We will be raising both the Bourbon Red and the traditional Broad-Breasted Whites. We are scaling way back on the number of birds we are raising this year. Our CSA members will have the first opportunity to reserve turkeys this year and the remaining birds will be offered on a first come first served basis until

gone. All turkey orders will require a \$20 deposit to reserve your bird.

Both breeds of turkeys will be available as fresh beginning the Saturday before Thanksgiving and continue through the Wednesday before Thanksgiving. What a wonderful way to celebrate Thanksgiving this year!

## **FARMER'S MARKETS**

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On Saturdays from May thru October we will be at the Midtown Farmers Market in downtown Minneapolis on the corner of East Lake Street and Hiawatha Avenue. We will continue to support our local Farmers Market in Lanesboro on Wednesdays from June thru September. Check our website for our most current Farmers Market

schedules as this will vary throughout the season. We will also continue to offer our on-farm market store Monday through Saturday from 7am to 7pm. We also offer Sunday afternoon pickups for those on their way home from a weekend in Bluff Country. Please give us a call first to be sure we're home.

## **CLOSING THOUGHTS**

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We are looking forward to yet another exciting year partnering with you to provide the highest quality, best tasting and safest food for you and your loved ones. As always we welcome your comments, constructive criticism, and words of wisdom. Our farm is your farm, and we are always open and eager for your visits. We extend our sincerest thank you to all of you for your support!

Joyfully at your service,

Sara Austin  
Hilltop Pastures Family Farm