

Janzen Family Farms Newsletter

October 19, 2011

Dear Friends & Customers,

Hello! As autumn leaves start falling, we'd like to keep you posted on some of the recent developments at our farm. We are grateful for your business and attention.

Article about us TODAY in the Newton Kansas!

Please check out the article about us by Ashley Bergner today in the *Newton Kansan* here: <http://www.thekansan.com/business/x1199435472/Janzen-Family-Farms-offers-variety-of-locally-produced-food-products>.

Norm to Speak at "Local Food Connections" Evening Workshop on Nov. 1

Come meet Norm Oeding, JFF farm manager, at the upcoming Local Food Connections Workshop in Wichita on the evening of Tuesday, Nov.1. The Workshop is sponsored by Our Local Food's South Central chapter (OLF-SC), a project of the Kansas Rural Center. Dinner will be provided by the Lotus Leaf Café and Creperie (<http://lotusleafwichita.com/index.htm>), a vibrant new Wichita restaurant that uses local ingredients, including Janzen Family Farms flour. Norm will be part of a panel discussing making local food connections, while other sessions will address online and social media marketing for local food, local food lingo and more.

Date & Time: Tues, Nov. 1; 6 pm-9 pm (including dinner)

Where: Sedgwick County Extension Center, 21st & Ridge Road, Wichita, KS

Cost: \$10 for OLF-SC Members; \$20-Non-Members

For more information, go

to: <http://www.ourlocalfoodks.org/> or www.ourlocalfoodsouthcentral.blogspot.com

Beef Orders

Our next slaughter date is Nov. 9, with meat scheduled to be ready for pick-up about two weeks after that. Please note that demand is high, so be sure to order early to ensure your preferences are available. Also, our prices have increased somewhat. Bulk orders of an eighth or quarter of an animal are now \$6/pound, while the prices of roasts and ground beef have risen to \$7/pound. The prices of the stew meat and short ribs are also up a bit, but the prices of steaks are holding steady, as are the prices of organ meat and sausages. Due to high demand, our "pack deal" on the ground beef is no longer available. We thank you for your understanding.

SlowFood (Wichita/Flint Hills) & Our Local Food (South Central) Visit the Farm

On Sept. 17, we had the privilege of hosting a potluck for members of SlowFood's Wichita/Flint Hills chapter (<http://www.facebook.com/slowfoodict>, <http://www.slowfoodusa.org/>) and Our Local

Food Kansas's South Central chapter (<http://www.ourlocalfoodks.org/>). Thanks for coming!

Here's a report of the wonderful event from Our Local Food: "Despite the rainy, cool weather (which was warmly welcomed), many great folks came with homemade pies, cobblers, garden fresh veggies, casseroles, and many other goodies made with local ingredients! Norm Oeding, farm manager, gave everyone a tour of the farm and flour mill. Highlights of the tour included the sight of a baby calf born the night before, and a quick lesson in milling flour! The wheat Norm mills into flour is used to make his Little Red Hen Bakery bread available at Food for Thought and Whole Foods locations in Wichita. No doubt the most popular activity of the evening was eating; nobody left this picnic hungry!"

Participants in Kansas Cattle Drive 2011 Enjoy JFF Flour

Janzen Family Farms was also lucky enough to be involved in the reenactment of a three-week cattle drive through central Kansas. We provided 100 pounds of flour, helping participants to enjoy traditional Kansas foods. Mike Clover, Trail Boss, reported that the "flour was great" and the cooks "made some really good sourdough biscuits." For more on the adventure, go to www.kansascattledrive2011.com. You can also read about it in the *Wichita*

Eagle here: <http://www.kansas.com/2011/09/11/2011136/ory-walks-an-old-trail.html>.

Remembering Emice Hein

Sadly, Oct. 3 marked the passing of Emice Hein, fellow local food producer. Emice and his wife Lydia were pioneers of our present generation of value added food producers with their leading edge product, Grannie's Mustard. The Heins lived and worked in the Hillsboro area. Emice truly was Grannie's right hand man as he assisted with production, marketing, promotion and sales.

"I met Emice two or three times, usually at a show like the State Fair where they were set up," notes Norm Oeding, JFF farm manager, who has sold their mustard for about seven years. "Grannie was in the forefront, because she dressed up like 'Grannie' and played the part really well. Emice stayed in the background and did the 'heavy lifting' so to speak. Their son Gene is who I have had regular contact with and Gene is also now the owner of Grannie's Mustard."

"Gene also has helped us with Taste of Newton last year and the year before that," Norm adds. "He and his wife Rita live just four blocks west of downtown Newton. Gene always brought the mustard for our event. They have sample pump containers and in this aspect we were able to truly make it a 'Taste of Newton,' and Gene had a little opportunity to promote his along with our products. Gene also was our head cashier."

Because of the timing of the passing of Gene's dad, Gene was unable to participate with JFF at Taste of Newton this year. We did have Grannie's Mustard, though, available in the small containers. Our hearts go out to the Hein family.

A memorial has been established with the Hillsboro Mennonite Church Building Fund. <http://www.grannieshomemademustard.com/>

Thanks to Our Customers & Helpers at the Taste of Newton

This October's Taste of Newton celebration of local food was again a big success. Many thanks to all our customers, grillers and all our other helpers, including Deborah Wild, Rachel Evans, Nathan Regier, Chuck Regier, Abe Regier, Brad Guhr, and Joe Kondziola, our summer intern this past season. We sold more than 200 burgers and enjoyed seeing a lot of new faces and old friends. You can view pictures of the event on our Facebook page and website.

Teens Asking Great Questions at Recent Farm Visit

The pleasure was all ours as Norm recently toured Michelle Bayless and two of her four children, who are home-schooled, around the farm. Teens Maegan and Micah both participate in ranch roping and all three Bayless family members had lots of great questions. It was a really pretty day for a tour. The Bayless Family has been kind enough to share their amazing pictures of the day. Please check them out on our Facebook page and website.

The Drought of Summer 2011

— by John M. Janzen

The slow soaking two-inch rain of this past weekend and the gradual greening of our landscape hopefully marks the close of a summer of drought with daily heat indices well over 100 for weeks on end. I tried to take pictures of “the drought” but dry grass and leafless trees don't make good photographs. Here are some verbal images that might convey the reality of this summer's drought and how we coped with it at Janzen Family Farms.

In our garden, despite daily watering, our cucumbers and eggplant barely grew and didn't produce anything. Tomatoes seemed hardier, but didn't produce much of anything either. Of our usual garden crops, only the pepper plants survived and are now, finally, blossoming. Most of our herbs—e.g., perennial chives and annual parsley—died despite daily watering. Mint and basil survive.

For the first time in a long while, some corn and soybeans in our area have been put up for hay rather than grain. A third of JFF's soybean crop was hayed; the rest looks like it will produce enough grain to be worth harvesting. Our sorghum looks quite good, though thin. Our pond water level is way down; the dock is resting on the bottom—water begins where the stair steps end. We are hoping that further rains will restore the water and we won't have to harvest a pond full of fish this fall. Our pastures were challenged this summer; we moved our grass-fed herd off of native pasture early and began to feed them hay.

Are there any silver linings to drought? Since our alfalfa yielded only a single early cutting, the summer's short growth was available for grazing. So, as the other pastures dried up, our yearlings and finish steers were moved onto alfalfa, which in a drought year is one of the most concentrated sources of protein an animal can get. Meanwhile, our neighbor Jason is grazing his sheep on the grasses and weeds of the creek and pond bottom “upstream” from the much diminished pond.

If you visit the farm today you will see the green hue of newly seeded winter wheat that will provide fresh pasture in a few weeks. John and Reinhild's bumper crop of burr oak acorns attracted a ground hog (alias, woodchuck) who has come by several times for his daily fill. No one has yet figured out a good recipe or food use for "hedge apples" produced in great abundance by our several miles of Osage Orange trees planted by our homesteading forebears.

Thank you again for your interest in our farm!

Sincerely,

The Janzens and Norm Oeding

www.janzenfamilyfarms.com and

<http://www.facebook.com/pages/Janzen-Family-Farms/104855429573431>