

what's "cropping" up!

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## Farming a family affair for the Yutzys

**N**oah Yutzy, president of the Geauga Family Farms board of directors, farms 35 acres of his 88-acre farm in Parkman Township. That sounds like a lot of ground to cover for one man, but he doesn't do it alone.

Noah's wife Kathy and their nine children, ranging in age from 2 to 15, all help Noah with everything from planting to picking. He says it gives the children a sense of worth.

"Everybody helps," Noah said. "Even our 2-year-old loves to ride along on the wagon and watch the action and holler 'Whoa' and 'Giddy up.' The 6-year-old and the second- and third-graders can help put beans in the bag, put cherry tomatoes in the basket. They're always in competition to see who can pick the most."

He says while they all have a good time, it's not all fun and games.

"Sometimes it's 90 degrees, sometimes it's raining, and it still needs to be picked and brought in, with mud up to your knees. You need to be dedicated," he said.

Noah's father bought the farm in 1988 and ran it as a dairy farm until 1993. Now, in addition to the 35 acres used to grow produce, the farm also includes five acres of maple trees and more than 30 acres of pasture and woods. About 15 acres are in rotation at any given moment, changing year to year from sweet corn, row crops, hay, oats and corn for the horses.

Speaking of horses, the large Yutzy family shares their land with a menagerie of animals in addition to horses, including goats, dogs, rabbits, chickens, turkeys, a miniature donkey and a barnyard full of cats.

Noah said the children name the animals, except for the goats and chickens. The goats are used for dairy, which the family has come to enjoy. Noah and

Kathy started using it for their second child because he was allergic to regular milk.

"I like goat's milk better than cow's milk," Noah said. "You just have to get past the 'ick' factor, at least I did. It tastes like 2 percent milk from the store; it's very mild if it has been cooled properly and they haven't been eating too many weeds."

Noah says participating in the CSA concept is one of the best things that can happen in growing produce.

"I hope it works that way for the customers," he said. "We're striving to resolve any issues and problems that cropped up this year. We're very committed to making this work for our members, whatever we need to do."

From his perspective, he likes the CSA model because as a farmer he knows his product is being sold.

"You don't need to hunt for a market while you're so busy trying to farm. And unlike an auction, we're not getting below wholesale pricing," he says.

Noah says while it requires a lot more work, it's worthwhile to do it for the extra price on the produce. He says the weather doesn't always cooperate.

"The hardest part is trying to get things planted on time so we're able to harvest on time," Noah said. "If it's raining and you can't lay plastic then the plants sit in the greenhouse and they get extra long and they fall over. That's our toughest part. And this year because of the rain we couldn't cultivate our fields and got a lot of weeds."

Noah likes the other benefits of farming in general. "You're at home with the family," he said.

Noah isn't the only one who likes farming. She says while she enjoys what she calls "the fruits of the field," she really likes how it has brought the family

## YUTZY'S...continued from Page 1

closer.

"Before I had to try and keep four boys busy," Kathy said with a laugh. "I like it better not having to get up in the morning and pack Noah's lunch. I like him being home every day."

Plans for next year include buying a mower that mows between the rows.

"Andy (Miller) and I are talking about buying one to share between the two of us," he said.

When he isn't farming or sugaring, Noah is a carpenter, working with his dad in the off-months framing homes, remodeling bathrooms and kitchens, and roofing.

"We do everything from the footers to the shingles," he said.

But Noah isn't all work and no play.

"In the summer, we usually try to take the children on a trip to the zoo or and a fishing trip," he said. "A fun day is Rollerblading at the park – the boys really love that. To relax they like to take their ponies out back and ride around. And they love to play basketball. Once the produce shop is empty, that's where they play. We have a hoop and a court in there on concrete."

During the winter, the Yutzys play games in the house, and read.

"Most of the kids are book worms," Noah said fondly. "There's nothing they love more than a couple hours alone to read a good book. Nothing more relaxing. I actually can't sleep unless I read for about 30 minutes. I think it relaxes your brain."

Noah likes to read publications like "Truck Patch News," a monthly paper put out for produce growers; the "Small Farmers Journal," a quarterly publication; "The Acres USA," which mostly focuses on organics; and one called "Bee Culture." Another favorite of Noah's is "The Plain Interest," written mostly by Amish people.

"It's full of short stories of everyday happenings in people's lives," Noah said. "I don't dare get involved with a thick book. Not in the summer. It might be 1 o'clock before I get to sleep. During the winter I can read about two thick books a week."



The work of a farmer's wife is endless as well, but Kathy takes it all in stride and always has a ready smile.

"She just got done helping us pack the produce this morning and is now school shopping for the kids," Noah said. "We canned 400 quarts of tomato pulp this week and we'll do more."

Kathy also has canned cinnamon pickles, and is canning a few quarts of beans at a time as the beans come in. She wants to can peppers as well.

Noah said they also are going to try to dry peppers.

"(The dried peppers) may be an item we can sell this winter," he said, thinking out loud about upcoming signups for a planned winter CSA.

"Winter shares are going to be available," he said. "We are planting squash and cabbage, and we're going to plant what we call a winter bean, or fava beans."

Noah mentioned some of the other items winter CSA members could expect.

"There may be produce left over from what we've planted that will flow over into the winter shares – tomatoes and peppers for a while, until the frost," he said. "Potatoes, beets, onions, some herbs..."

Deliveries would be once a week, probably on Saturdays. Locations have not been decided.

Noah didn't seem anxious for the season to end, and added his sincere appreciation for everyone's help and understanding.

"We appreciate the volunteer help from everybody. We also appreciate the patience when the produce has not been that good. We will put in extra to help make up for it," he said. "We really love the CSA concept."

Kathy really likes the members of the CSA as well.

"I hope they had as much fun getting their boxes as we had packing them," she said. "And I hope everyone wants to come back next year."

Field Night will be from 6:30-8 p.m. Tuesday, Aug. 24, at Parkman Produce, the Yutzy's farm at 17050 Nash Road in Parkman Township. See the map at [www.geaugafamilyfarmsllc.org](http://www.geaugafamilyfarmsllc.org) for directions, or enter the address in your GPS.



## This week's picks

Coming this week to your CSA box ***could be some or all of the following:*** Water-melons, beans, green peppers, tomatoes, cherry tomatoes, rainbow chard, sweet corn, lettuce, onions, zucchini, blackberries and peaches.

For those of you who have opted out of receiving nonorganic fruits, your name will be on your share to differentiate it from the others.

Remember, farming isn't an exact science. Family and Single shares won't necessarily include the same items so if you don't have one or

more of these items, it's either because we didn't have enough, or because you have a Single share and the item in question was included in the Family share only.

Photos of each week's produce are still being posted on Facebook by GFF member Lyn Trier. Just "Like" Geauga Family Farms and click on "Links" in the bottom left-hand portion of the page. It will bring up a list of postings from each week, with labeled photos of all the veggies.

Below are a few recipes using this week's vegetables. 

### Sautéed Rainbow Chard with Garlic and Lemon

1/2 cup extra-virgin olive oil  
3 large garlic cloves, thinly sliced  
4 pounds rainbow or ruby chard—thick stems discarded, inner ribs removed and cut into 2-inch lengths, leaves cut into 2-inch ribbons  
Salt and freshly ground pepper  
1/2 teaspoon finely grated lemon zest

In a large pot, heat 1/4 cup plus 2 tablespoons of the olive oil. Stir in the garlic and cook over moderately high heat until lightly golden, about 1 minute. Add the chard leaves in large handfuls, allowing each batch to wilt slightly before adding more. Season the chard with salt and pepper and cook, stirring, until the leaves are softened and most of the liquid has evaporated, about 8 minutes. Transfer the chard to a bowl. Wipe out the pot.

Add the remaining 2 tablespoons of olive oil to the pot. Add the chard ribs and cook over moderately high heat, stirring occasionally, until crisp-tender, about 5 minutes.



Stir in the wilted chard leaves and season with salt and pepper. Transfer to a bowl, sprinkle with the lemon zest and serve right away.

## Recipe tips from our members

Leah Konopka, who picks up her share at First Church Congregational in Painesville, sent in this recipe for zucchini.

We encourage you to send in your favorite recipes, tried and true recipes your grandmother used to make, or new-fangled ones you've made up yourself.

"I've been making a great zucchini dip and taking it to every party this summer, which has received rave reviews. It's so tasty, I usually double the recipe, and it's still always gone by the end of the evening."

### Zucchini Spread

- 1 cup finely shredded zucchini
- 1 cup shredded sharp Cheddar cheese
- 1/2 cup chopped walnuts
- 1 teaspoon lemon juice
- 3/4 cup mayonnaise
- 1/2 teaspoon salt
- 1/4 teaspoon pepper

Place zucchini in cheesecloth or a strainer; squeeze out excess moisture. In a bowl, combine zucchini with remaining ingredients; mix well. Cover and refrigerate at least one hour or overnight. Serve with crackers or raw vegetables.

## Peach French Toast

Serves 4

4 tablespoons unsalted butter  
 2 tablespoons light brown sugar  
 2 ripe yellow peaches, cut into 1/2-inch pieces  
 2 tablespoons plus 3/4 cup heavy cream  
 8 slices white or sourdough bread or brioche  
 3 large eggs  
 1/8 teaspoon ground cinnamon  
 Confectioners' sugar

In a large skillet, over medium-low heat, melt 2 tablespoons of the butter until it foams. Add the brown sugar and stir for 30 seconds. Add the peaches, raise heat to medium-high, and cook, stirring frequently, for 3 minutes. Stir in 2 tablespoons of the cream and simmer for 2 minutes. Transfer to a bowl.

Heat oven to 200° F. Place 4 slices of the bread on a cutting board. Divide the peach mixture evenly among the slices, leaving a 1/2-inch border on all sides. Top with another slice of bread and press gently.

In a shallow bowl, beat the eggs and cinnamon.

Working in batches, soak the sandwiches in the egg mixture for 2 minutes per side.

Melt 1 tablespoon of the butter in a large skillet over medium heat.

Fry 2 sandwiches until golden brown, 3 to 4 minutes per

side. Transfer to a baking sheet and place in oven to keep warm. Repeat with the remaining butter and sandwiches.

Beat the remaining cream until soft peaks form. Halve each sandwich on the diagonal, sprinkle with the confectioners' sugar, and serve with the whipped cream.

Tip: If you're using day-old bread to make the French toast, trim the crusts, which may have become tough.



*Recipe from Real Simple*

## Italian Sausage-stuffed Peppers

8 Hungarian wax peppers  
 1 lb. Italian sausage  
 8 T. pecorino romano, grated  
 1/4 c. fresh basil, shredded

Sauce:

2 lb. ripe tomatoes  
 4 cloves garlic  
 1/2 t. salt  
 1/2 c. dry red wine or stock  
 1/2 small onion, finely minced  
 1/2 t. dried oregano  
 1/4 c. fresh basil, shredded  
 1/2 t. black pepper  
 1/2 t. crushed red pepper (opt)  
 Extra-virgin olive oil

Hungarian wax peppers can be picante, so if that scares you, you could just as easily do this with bell peppers. If you want it more picante, you can use hot Italian sausage instead of sweet, or add the crushed red pepper.

Preheat the oven to 500.

Quarter the tomatoes, and put them in a baking pan with the garlic. Drizzle with olive oil and sprinkle with the salt. Roast the tomatoes until they are soft and the skins begin to char, then remove. Deglaze the pan with the wine or stock, then run the contents of the pan through a food mill.

In a tablespoon of olive oil over medium heat, saute the minced onion until soft and transparent. Add the tomato puree, oregano, and black pepper, and simmer for 30 minutes over low heat. Stir in the shredded basil, and salt to taste.

Make the stuffing. Cook the sausage in about a tablespoon of olive oil over medium heat, breaking it up as finely as possible. If the sausage is excessively greasy, drain.

When the sausage is room temperature, mix it with half of the pecorino and the shredded basil.

Cut the stem ends off the peppers, then remove the seeds and the white veins. Stuff the peppers, close the ends with toothpicks, and saute them in a little olive oil over medium heat until they soften. Serve in the sauce, sprinkled with the remaining pecorino.

*Recipe from GroupRecipes.com.*

## Letters from our members

**W**e want you to know we are aware of your concerns regarding the freshness of your produce and are working out a solution to these issues. The extremely hot weather, organic packaging demands and amount of time the produce sits at some of the sites before being picked up have added some challenges.

GFF continues to receive many letters from our members. We love hearing from you. Our ears are open to your questions, comments, concerns, and naturally, your compliments. ;)

*Please turn back to Page 1 for more information on the steps we are taking to address crushing and freshness issues.*



Just a note of thanks. We are really enjoying our produce. This is our first year joining up and we are so pleased.

The variety gives me a chance to try some things I would not normally buy. So I've been experimenting with recipes.

And your recipes are very helpful as well.

We are really enjoying our produce and will be signing up again for sure.

*~Shirley Brizz, Eagle Creek*

My daughter, Michelle and I share family share each week.

We love all of the vegetables and look forward to the selections each week and can't wait to do it again next year.

Thank you for the quick reply.

*~Judy Fischer, Sage's*

I can't imagine being more pleased with my decision to join this CSA. This is my first year, and I love this experience for so many reasons: I love supporting our local farmers. I love seeing the same familiar, friendly faces each Saturday morning as I pick up my share. I love the variety of vegetables that have resulted in some rather unusual - and in some cases, delicious - experiments that I would never have had the courage to try otherwise.

I've been making a great zucchini dip and taking it to every party this summer, which has received rave reviews. It's so tasty, I usually double the recipe, and it's still always gone by the end of the evening.

Thanks to you, the farmers, and the volunteers at First Church Congregational for all of your work to make this opportunity available.

*~Leah Konopka,  
First Church Congregational*

## Please return ALL containers

**J**ars -- jelly/jam jars, maple syrup jars, honey jars, cucumber jars, in short, anything that comes in a jar -- are being added to the list of containers to return to your pickup site. The idea for this came from member Michael Sharon, who picks up at Ruffing Montessori School.

We recently added the clear plastic containers

in which you receive your cherry tomatoes, jalapeño peppers, berries and more. These items are expensive!

This not only helps the farmers cut costs, thereby helping to keep the cost of your CSA share down, but also allows both you and us to do our part to help the environment. Reduce, reuse, recycle. It's the **GREEN** thing to do!



**Quote of the Week: "It's bizarre that the produce manager is more important to my children's health than the pediatrician."**

*~Meryl Streep*

**Veggie Tip of the Week:** Basil perks up if you put it in a glass of water (either in or out of the refrigerator). If the stems are just placed in the refrigerator without water, they will wilt almost immediately. You can throw it right into the food processor with a bit of olive oil and then pour into an ice cube tray. Empty the frozen cubes into a freezer bag and drop in a cube whenever you need some fresh basil flavor.

## Basil - more than enough to go around

**A** bner McDaniel is up to his eyeballs in fresh basil! If you would like to purchase bulk quantities of fresh basil for pesto, pasta sauce, etc., please contact Roseanna Hershberger at the warehouse - 440-548-2371. The price is \$10/pound (which is approximately three of the large bunches that you have been receiving in your share).

*See the recipe below for a great way to use several CSA items at once!*



*One pound of fresh basil.*

### Tomato, Peach & Basil Salad

Chop 2 tomatoes and 2 peaches into bite-sized pieces. Gently mix in a bowl. Roughly chop a small handful of basil leaves and sprinkle over the peaches and tomatoes. Drizzle with your favorite balsamic vinaigrette. Serves 4.

## A different way to look at meat

For Foer, Meat Is Murder ... And Worse  
Aired on All Things Considered on NPR Nov. 1, 2009  
Author Jonathan Safran Foer

In his new book, *Eating Animals*, Jonathan Safran Foer grapples with the moral and environmental consequences of the decision to consume meat. The author, who flirted with vegetarianism for years, says his dog helped him finally commit to the cause.

In his new book, *Eating Animals*, Jonathan Safran Foer grapples with the moral and environmental consequences of the decision to consume meat. The author, who flirted with vegetarianism for years, says his dog helped him finally commit to the cause.

How did Jonathan Safran Foer become a vegetarian activist?

Foer, best known for the novels *Everything Is Illuminated* and *Extremely Loud and Incredibly Close*, writes in his new book, *Eating Animals*, that he struggled with ambivalence over eating meat for most of his life, but never committed until he adopted his dog, George.

"She changed things for me," Foer tells Guy Raz. "This dog opened up the way that I thought about animals."

Foer argues that there's no difference between the value of the lives of pets and the lives of the animals that we eat every day.

"If our next-door neighbor kept a dog in the conditions that well more than 90 percent of pigs are kept in, we would call the police. We wouldn't just be offended. We wouldn't just think it was wrong. We would be compelled to take action," Foer says.

But *Eating Animals* isn't just an anti-meat screed,

or an impassioned case for vegetarianism.

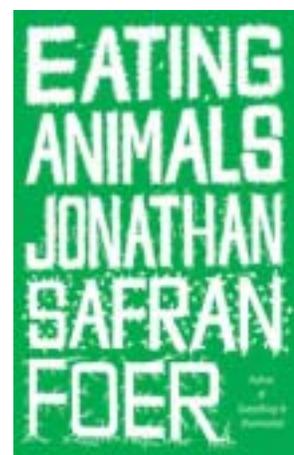
Instead, Foer tells a story that is part memoir and part investigative report. And it's a book that takes America's meat-dominated diet to task.

Foer says his problem with meat isn't that some people make the decision to eat it; instead, it's that people don't think about the decision. And that, he argues, is just how the

American factory farm system wants it: "What does it say that there's an entire industry ... that asks us to give them money, asks us to ingest in our bodies and to feed to our children a product whose production they won't let us see?"

Foer says overconsumption of meat — and the factory system that produces it — cause multiple health problems and contribute hugely to global warming and other environmental disasters. These factors make the purchase of a cheap breast of chicken much more expensive than it might initially seem.

"More than anything, I want people to come away with the idea that meat matters," Foer says. "I am not asking other people to come to these conclusions. I am asking people to see something that they already know, which is that what we choose to eat when ordering at a restaurant, what we choose to buy at a supermarket, is frankly one of the most important decisions we'll make all day."



*Eating Animals*  
By Jonathan Safran Foer  
Hardcover, 352 pages  
Little, Brown and Co.  
List price: \$25.99

# Order your bulk veggies now

The farmers of the CSA have asked us to let everyone know that they have some extra bulk veggies perfect for canning or freezing. Items include green peppers, cucumbers and canning tomatoes. They are great for making pickles, sauces and salsa.

Wouldn't it be nice to open up a jar of summer's goodness in January?

Please see the form below if you are interested in ordering any of these items. They can be delivered to your pick-up site. Quantities are limited so place your order soon!



CANNING TOMATOES – 20 LB. BOX \$10.00

#1 QUALITY GREEN PEPPERS – BUSHEL \$24.00

CUCUMBERS – 1/2 BUSHEL \$10.00

GREEN PEPPERS (SECONDS) – BUSHEL \$12.00

Please fill out the form below and mail it with a check\* to:

Geauga Family Farms  
Attn: Roseanna Hershberger  
15549 Patch Road  
Middlefield, Ohio 44062

\* Checks should be made out to Geauga Family Farms



## BULK PRODUCE ORDER

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone number: \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail address: \_\_\_\_\_

Pick-up site location: \_\_\_\_\_

I would like:

\_\_\_ CANNING TOMATOES (x \$10)

\_\_\_ #1 GREEN PEPPERS (x \$24)

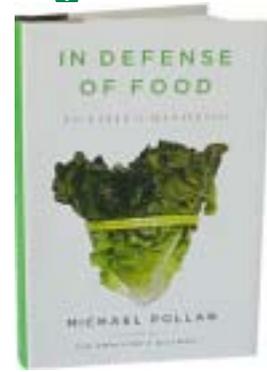
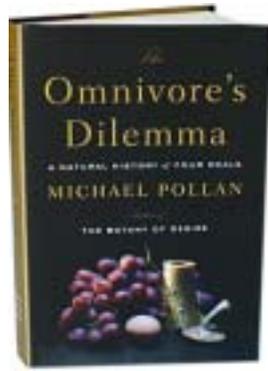
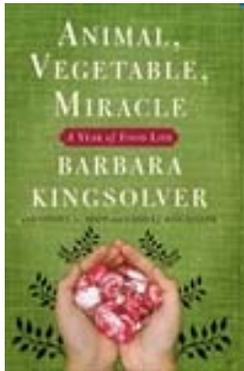
\_\_\_ CUCUMBERS (x \$10)

\_\_\_ GREEN PEPPERS (SECONDS) (x \$12)

ORDER TOTAL: \_\_\_\_\_



## Other recommended reading & viewing




*New thinking about what we're eating.*  
A film by ana Sofia joanes

## Cluck-cluck, quack, quack, moo-oo-oo

**O**ur Pekin ducks are ready! Duck meat doesn't 'taste like chicken' - the flavor is richer, the meat is more moist. Why not try something different, especially when you can buy directly from the farmer? Free-range chickens and ducks are fed organic minerals; most are fed conventional feed. The freshly butchered ducks are \$3.20 a pound; chickens are \$2.50 a pound. Most weigh in at about 4 pounds or so. Chickens and ducks **MUST** be picked up at the farms. Please call Michelle Bandy-Zalatoris at 216-321-

7109 or Laura Dobson at 440-478-9849 to place your order. Also available is grass-fed, pastured ground



beef. The cost is \$3.75 per pound delivered with your share. Please check first to see if your site is able to receive extras such as beef before ordering. More meats will become available in early fall. Contact Kathleen Webb at 216-408-7719 or gfamilyfarms@aol.com. 

### Farm Visits

#### Meet the Farmer Dates 2010

**Fourth Tuesdays – 6:30-8 p.m.**  
**Second Saturdays – 1-4 p.m.**

*Drive out to picturesque Geauga County for a visit with the farmers of Geauga Family Farms. The second Saturday and fourth Tuesday of every month through October, CSA members can come see where their food is grown, and meet the farmers who have nurtured the certified-organic produce shareholders receive each week in their CSA share.*

*For a map of all the farms, visit our Web site at [www.geaugafamilyfarmsllc.org](http://www.geaugafamilyfarmsllc.org) and click on Meet Our Farmers on the left.*

**Aug. 24 Parkman Produce, Noah Yutzzy**

**Sept. 11 Assorted farms, TBA**



## Order extras weekly

**S**ome sites offer “extras” to GFF CSA members. St. Paul's, St. Noel, First Church Congregational, Ruffing Montessori School, Deepwood Center and Family Karate all offer extras.

This means you can order items like fresh baked bread, honey, maple syrup, ground beef and more, to be picked up with your share.

The JCC, Sage's, Eagle Creek, First Unitarian and the Cleveland Food Co-op do not.

Please make sure your site offers extras before ordering meat or other products from the warehouse.

To order extras, see your site manager. 

[www.geaugafamilyfarmsllc.org](http://www.geaugafamilyfarmsllc.org)

#### Mailing address:

Geauga Family Farms 17050 Nash Road Middlefield, OH 44062  
For more information, call 440-478-9849  
Web site: [www.geaugafamilyfarmsllc.org](http://www.geaugafamilyfarmsllc.org)  
Editor: Laura Dobson, LMFfree99@yahoo.com

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