

Big Maple Family Farm, LLC

NEWSLETTER

August 3, 2025

Farmer Camp Success

The next generation is what we have to look forward to. When we can inspire them to follow a path that they enjoy, then it is all worth it.

A few years ago, the idea of Farmer for A day camp blossomed as part of building up the next generation. Our goal was to create a space where kids were able to get their hands dirty, actually partake in things on the farm, and learn the ups and downs of the industry. Previously, we would hold a farmers market for the kids at the end of the week, but this year we



wanted to take a

different approach. We really wanted the kids to get into the farming aspect. The day to day, to bring things full circle, and to learn that the consumers are a pivotal piece of what we do. We won't lie though, the weather was brutal! The heat of the week did not disappoint and these kids had to learn how being a farmer meant the work still needed to be done, even though we didn't feel like it.



Throughout the week we have had 12 little farmers join us, and they accomplished many different farm tasks. Many of you may have noticed that packing was not the same throughout the week, or maybe you saw the little thank you card the kids decorated for you. What we did throughout the week, the kids enjoyed and they were so excited to be a part of the bags and the farmer's market throughout the week. The kids were proud of what they did and what they learned.

At the end of the week, as we were talking to the kids, we asked them if they had any questions and one kiddo said, "When do we get paid for what we did?" This led into a great way to close out our week and explain one of the hardest parts of farming. We explained how farmers might not get paid for their work. In fact here on this farm, we don't get paid for our work and we each work away from the farm in order to continue to farm. Farmers more work to feed the world. They are passionate about growing food for people in the community and how to get them a healthy option. The kids were surprised that many farmers do not get "paid" for their work. They took that learning time and asked more questions about the other kinds of farming and moving forward in the things that we do. Each day might be crazy here on the farm, but taking the time to spend a week with the kids was a blast and created a chance to teach the kids the who, what, where, and why we keep going no matter what the challenge it.

Road Safety Is Vital for All To Understand!

July flew by, but it allowed us to finish up our first crop of hay. The weather was hot and the hay was down the road so it was a lot of traveling with equipment up and down a short stretch of the road, however no matter what, these travels never disappoint with people who are in a hurry. I will say it till I am no longer farming, stop breaking traffic laws to get around farm equipment and be safe always. Our biggest contender when moving equipment is people passing on double yellow lines, and poor vision. Most people are patient, but it will only take one person to make a poor decision and our family as well as their family could be paying the price. We want people to be safe, and we know the tractors and equipment go slower, but remember that is our sons, husbands, fathers, mothers, wives in those tractors and following a tractor for three miles on avg only adds 6 extra minutes. Those 6 minutes could keep you, your family, our family, and other families safe. So let's remember rural road safety and stay behind the tractor unless in a passing zone and have good lines of sight.



Farm Updates

The farm has been a very busy place the last couple weeks. We held farmer camp, started picking produce, and if you can believe it, we are going into week 5 of the farmers market. It is hard to believe that things are just moving as fast as they are. The calves are growing nice, moose is almost fully weaned and getting big enough to head out with the other cows. We also moved the turkeys, rotated the meat chickens, and well we have threatened the free loading hens who refuse to lay eggs. Regardless what the day brings, we continue to be farming and getting all things accomplished, each and every day.



There's Nothing to Bulk About

If you ask us, growing produce is one of the BIGGEST gambles a farmer can make. There is no crop insurance policy for the loss of a crop, there is no guarantee a seed will germinate, and even if it does germinate then here comes the hungry creatures ready to eat it. It just has the least amount of guarantee you will see a harvest.

However, let's talk Bulk ordering. Growing up, my grandparents had a notebook that sat in the road side tent and we took orders for people who wanted items. Many people want us to go back to that however, when we created the Subscription program, the model of our farm changed.

So what does that mean for you? Well it is harder to take those orders, because our philosophy is, that if we take that order, then we are obligated to fill it. Well, we also provide the subscription

program, so filling those orders because a constant source of stress. What if we don't have the green beans for the subscribers, plus all these orders? What if the peppers don't grow but here is three more orders? It's just so hard to figure out what to do, so last week maybe you saw we had some bushel items, we have decided advertising or word of mouth, or a simple request is how we will take it. We need to ensure that those who subscribe are getting their items first and then we can move forward with bulk after that. Either way, we are happy to provide items to many people's home and we hope that you will continue not to bulk about our new farm model to sell our products.



Weekly Delivery Options!

Have you heard that we deliver? Now some of you already know because of your subscription, but have you heard about our weekly program? Have you ever checked out our online store? If not you should seriously get looking. We know so many enjoy our products and we hope that you are able to keep them coming to your house even after the bags are done for the season through our weekly program.

It's such an easy process, you can place a delivery order by checking out our online store through our website. Place your order and the date you want it delivered or picked up. From there, your items will be ready on a Monday. That's right, every Monday evening we travel around all of Elk County and deliver milk, farm fresh meat, and produce. We carry a variety of items and for a small \$20 order it can be brought right to your door. So if you have not checked it out, then head there now and check out our website at www.bigmaplefamilyfarm.net

and place your first delivery order today.

Even Farmers Make Sure They are Healthy

The farm might be a busy place, but we are also taking the time to ensure that your farmers stay healthy and happy. Connor is the youngest farmer here on the farm and we are happy to report that he had his first experience at the dentist. The hardest part was getting him to stop talking about the farm so they could clean his teeth. He was happy to report that there are no cavities in his teeth and he could put his name on the wall.

Not only is eating healthy food important to us, but so is making sure that we are staying healthy. With annual dentist, dr, and eye appointments also happening, we are making sure your farmers can continue to work for you. Everyone has had great reports and Garrett is back to work full time from his knee and ankle injury. He does need to wear a brace at heavy farm moments such as hay, but overall he is back 100% in the saddle (or should we just say tractor seat). No matter what, a healthy farmer is able to keep taking care of you and remember we are making your plate as healthy as ours through all this hard work.

Fall Lesson Time

Summer Break from the horse program is coming to an end, and now is the time where we are encouraging individuals to take advantage of the fall lesson times. We are now taking on new sign ups for the next period of riding and horsemanship skills programs. If you are interested or know someone who might be interested please reach out to Amanda at 814-335-0804 to learn how easy it is to register. Lessons are available Evenings and Weekends.





Our Farm, Your Food

Have you ever worked so hard at something and one small thing can take it all away? Yeah, that's how we feel each year when it is time for our yearly inspection. This year, was no different when we knew it was coming. We want everything to be absolutely perfect because we know how much we care about the food we are providing and we need the inspector to see the same. Our hard work to ensure that you have a quality product doesn't just stop in the fields. We work hard to ensure that all things are done correctly and that your food is of high quality. If we wouldn't eat it (well except for hot pepper items we don't eat those), then we aren't going to ask you to eat it. So the anticipation mounted as our inspection time continued to draw near and then bam, it was here. We are happy to report that we are cleared to keep going and we can't wait to keep bringing you those farm fresh goodies.

Horses are Healing

As I round out 10 years of working with individuals and horses, there are some moments that never cease to amaze me and remind me why I enjoy this time. This moment was one of them. First, let me say that this horse is older and we have a desire to retire her, however, her replacement is a little more than some volunteers can handle at the moment and well she is just the best girl ever! This rider, just loves her and the thought of having to move him to a different horse in the future actually is harder than one might think. He is autistic, he thrives in consistency, and he thrives with his Tagen. The hug just shows it. He wants to be there with her. She enjoys his company and the best part, he is becoming more and more independent with her. It's like they are growing together and it's times like this that I love seeing the results of these types of human-animal connections. This is truly the stuff that makes this program great, no matter what the struggles are right now, this is the moments that make each horse (toddler) problem well worth it. If you have never been around horses and you want to experience moments like this, reach out, there is a program for everyone and



you will leave this place enhancing your daily life through one equine interaction after another.



**Images from
Farmer For A
Day Camp**

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