

**We'll be at Cobblestone Farmers
Market Saturday with LOADS of great
Organic stuff -- BLACKBERRIES, Fresh
Garlic and MORE! Details below...**

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Happy Friday, Farm Friends!



It's a good omen when a hot air balloon flies over your farm, right? We'll take it as such! Monday morning at 6:30, we were greeted by this beautiful balloon

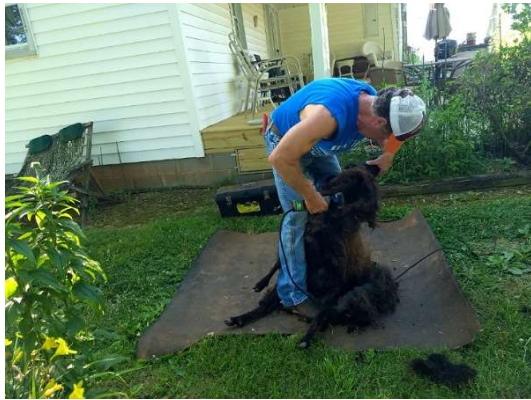
drifting over the farm. That was a first for us here. It really took us back to our days in Albuquerque when seeing balloons was almost a daily occurrence. What a pleasant way to start the week -- now if we had only been in the basket!

Shear Delights

Tony and BB had read the weather reports for this week and demanded that it was past time to get some of their wool off! Smart move! It had taken a bit to get this scheduled so they were l-o-n-g overdue for their summer haircut.

Our friend, Laura, who usually shears wasn't able to this spring, so we were able to get [John Brasfield](#) to take care of the task. John has a long history here in Stokes County as he was the Cooperative Extension Director and Livestock agent. In fact, John worked with Cheryl's father, Holt Ferguson, for many years on issues related to our small cattle operation. John was always trying to get Daddy to add sheep to the livestock mix at the farm but Daddy never would! I guess it takes a stubborn daughter to make the change!

John's shearing style is typical of what you might see in a shearing competition on RFD-TV. He doesn't use a stand but rather he puts the sheep into the "chair" position where they are sitting on their hindquarters. Then it's zip, zip and they're done! Ah! No more heavy winter coats!



With Tony and BB nicely sheared and cooler, we could turn our attention to GARLIC! It was time to get most of the softnecks out of the field and get them in the barn. In order to do that we had to clear the barn of all of the debris and stuff that collected in the loft (last year's garlic that didn't get turned into powder, boxes, hay, etc.) Harvest started in earnest on Tuesday, and it was amazing! The bulbs are huge!



NOTE: The bulbs pictured here are more on the small to medium size!

Ray decided not to use the undercutter this time because it risks damaging bulbs and this year, soil conditions were perfect for hand work. We used garden forks and [hori horis](#) -- which we haven't done in about 9 years -- but since the soil was pretty loose most bulbs just pulled right out.

So far, we have harvested 6,850 bulbs out of the field and we have about 4,800 more to go. And it has been quite a week for this task. With the heat and humidity, it has been a tough, sweaty job. But the upside is that when you are working this hard, it is nice to have a big ol' bulb of garlic that you are digging instead of a tiny dinky thing that will end up as cow garlic. HUGE kudos to Jonny and Sophie who have spent endless hours in the field digging and pulling these bulbs of gold!



So once the garlic is out of the field, we need to hang it in the barn to cure. The "curing" process is basically allowing the bulb to dry down -- no heat is applied (other than what we are experiencing!) but we do have a fan going all the time to ensure good air circulation. Our challenge this year is that since many of the bulbs are so large, we need more space to ensure that air flow! That's a good problem to have!



We'll have Fresh (not cured) garlic available at Cobblestone Farmers Market on Saturday! Oh. So. Good. Fresh garlic is juicy and has a bright flavor. A very special treat!

And meanwhile, across the farm, the Blackberries said that they were ready too! Yikes! So the dynamic trio of Jonny, Sophie and Elise braved the heat on Thursday and picked oodles of blackberries! Over 175 pints of berries in all! And you bet, we'll have them at market too!



Cobblestone Farmers Market News!

As we noted earlier, we will be popping up at [Cobblestone](#) tomorrow! We've got oodles of wonderful Organic goodies (we're the only vendor at market) to kick your weekend celebrations off!

We've been harvesting more than garlic and blackberries for you -- we've even got big, beautiful Fennel!



Come see us under the **Purple Tent** for **Blackberries**, Fresh Garlic, Fennel, Frisse, Cabbage (Green and Napa), **Baby Summer Squash**, **Snap Peas** and MORE! Market is open from 8:30-noon and it's supposed to be a much cooler day. Hooray! Looking forward to seeing you there!





That's the news for this week! Lots going on this weekend -- Father's Day and Juneteenth on Sunday and Pride parades on Saturday. And the weather is supposed to be delightful! Get out there and enjoy! It's gonna be hot and steamy again next week!

Be kind, love your neighbor, and pray for Peace and for an end to all of this senseless violence.

**Until next week,
*Cheryl & Ray***

