



Happy Friday, Farm Friends!



While we didn't get to see the annular solar eclipse on Saturday, we were treated to an epic sunset the next day. This was one of those sunsets that *requires* a photo! Breathtaking!

It's been one of those hodge-podge weeks around here -- a bit of this, a bit of that...

One space that got some love this week was the greenhouse. We cleared out plants that didn't get planted (don't you hate that?), cleaned and stored the heat mats (they'll get a nap for a couple of months), weeded and gave it a good sweep. Whew! Much better!



While we were working in the greenhouse, Ray decided that it was time to do a trial harvest of the turmeric. These plants were overwintered and have gotten pretty huge. Remember all of the flowers that we showed you a couple of months ago?



The sample bag told us that the plants need to grow and mature a bit more. There were some nice sized rhizomes, but the color wasn't as dark as we'd like.





So why do we care about the color? The darker the color of turmeric, the more flavor and good stuff there is in it. And when we talk about turmeric, that "good stuff" is curcumin, an antioxidant that has been associated with reduced inflammation. Because inflammation is linked to a range of chronic conditions and diseases, among them arthritis, Alzheimer's and heart disease, researchers argue curcumin could help reduce the risk of those diseases by limiting inflammation in the body.

So, while some growers harvest their turmeric while it is pale orange, we wait until it has developed its characteristic bright, deep orange color. Darker hue = Better for you!

We hope to have turmeric available right before Thanksgiving.

### **A Little Help From Our Friends!**

Getting and keeping our soil healthy is of paramount importance to us. We have taken some very tired, depleted tobacco-growing soil and have built it up over the past 15 years. Leaf mulch has been a big part of this effort but since 2018, we have had a secret weapon -- Cara!



Yes, our beautiful Brown Swiss has become an important part of our soil building routine. Thanks to her voracious appetite and resulting piles of manure, we have an amazing soil amendment. And when you add her heifer, Mia, to the mix, well, you can say we are just wallowing in the ... stuff.



According to the University of Wisconsin, "animal manure is a valuable soil amendment for home gardens. It not only supplies primary nutrients (nitrogen, phosphorus and potassium) and micronutrients for plant growth, but also is a source of organic matter. Increasing soil organic matter improves soil structure, increases the water holding capacity of sandy soils, improves drainage in clay soils, provides a source of slow release nutrients, and promotes growth of beneficial soil organisms."

Plus, manure is a rich source of earthworms and other microorganisms along with microbes that result in healthy, living soil. All of this sounds great to me!

And what's even better is that since our cows graze on organic pastures and

eat organic hay, we don't have to worry about persistent herbicides in the manure. This can be a huge problem for folks.

Herbicides that live on -- even once the hay is consumed and passed through the digestive system -- is a special problem for horse manure. You see, horses don't handle weeds in their hay very well, so people who grow hay for horses frequently use herbicides to control those weeds. Plus, horses don't break down their food as well as cows and sheep since they aren't ruminants.

So, thank you Cara and Mia! You are our Soil Building Heroes!

Let's put this good stuff to work, shall we?



### **The Kitten Report - Week 7 ^ ^**

Dusty and Tuxie continue to amuse and delight us! They are becoming more and more animated every day and are very social. We are trying to expose them to visitors and all 4 of us take turns feeding and hanging out with them.

Their most favorite thing is eating, closely followed by running and wrestling. Ray discovered a great toy (part of a bag of swag from the Carolina Classic Fair!) -- they go nuts chasing this thing!



They continue to gain weight and get stronger. Tuxie is approaching 3 pounds and Dusty is about 3 ounces behind him. She says she's willing to eat more to level it up!



If you happen to visit us here at the farm, make sure to ask if you can see them!

### **Cobblestone Farmers Market Update**

We had a great time roasting peppers last Saturday at Cobblestone! Despite the rain, so many of you came out to see what all the roasting was about -- thank you!



Roastin' Ray (and the rest of us!) will be back at market NEXT Saturday (10/28). We may or may not be in costume for Halloween. You'll have to come see for yourself!

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That's all we have for this week. It's Homecoming Weekend at both [Winston-Salem State](#) and [Wake Forest](#)! That means lots of visitors to our fair city and lots of special activities.

Being a drumline fanatic, I am always impressed by the power of the Red Sea of Sound. They will be featured in the [WSSU Community Homecoming Parade](#) on Saturday morning (10/21 at 10 a.m.). The parade starts at Martin Luther King Boulevard and Research Drive and continues to WSSU's campus at Cromartie Street. And the weather is supposed to get great -- let's go!

**Be kind to your neighbors and let us all pray for peace.**

**Until next week,**

***Cheryl & Ray***

