

Tis the Season for Holiday Joy! Check out some of our favorite activities to make your Holiday Season sparkle! See details below.



Happy Friday, Farm Friends!

We hope you had a wonderful Thanksgiving filled with family, friends, good food, and time to reflect and give Thanks. Our very quiet Thanksgiving gave us a chance to rest and enjoy a couple of our favorite things -- the Macy's Thanksgiving Day Parade and the National Dog Show! Given the couple of weeks before the holiday (especially for Ray), we needed low-key celebrations for sure!



We wanted to thank you for coming to our Thanksgiving Pop-Up Market last week! It was great to see so many of you here at the farm and we greatly appreciate you making Plum Granny Farm a part of your Thanksgiving celebration.

We are so grateful to you for being a part of the Plum Grany Farm family. Thank you for wanting to know the story behind who we are and what we are doing. Thank you for supporting a small, Organic family farm. We are so grateful to each one of you who takes the time to read our little newsletter each week -- we hope we leave you with an idea of something to do at home, a pro tip or just a chuckle at the animals. Thank you for being there for us.

Frosty Morns!



It seems like it's time to enjoy the beauty of indoor flowers and plants. Even though we are still two weeks away from Winter, you sure can't tell it by the temperatures. These nights in the teens have been doozies. But the bit of frosty dusting on Tuesday made for a pretty -- but brief -- scene!



Much of the week has been spent on cleaning up after the freeze. The first night in the low 20s took its toll on the Ajo high tunnel and left Lil' Abner relatively unscathed. Neither tunnel is heated but we think Lil' Abner did better just because it is larger (wider) and thus has more mass to protect it.



Ajo on Sunday



Lil' Abner on Sunday

But after several days of subfreezing temperatures, Lil' Abner succumbed to the cold. Out with the tomatoes in all of the tunnels. Here's Ajo on Thursday -- the plants that are covered are eggplant that had survived until Wednesday night. Sniff!



One very interesting observation was that since our tomato plants were still alive when the big freeze happened, the water in the tomato stems froze and then the stems exploded. Usually, the plants are dead by the time of the lowest temperatures so there's no water left in the stems. Such nerdy stuff! Check out these pictures -- so cool!



Jonny has been working hard this week to get fields and beds cleared. Removing the plant debris is easier now after the freeze and it's a good time to get it onto the compost pile. We also want to remove the landscape fabric where we don't have plantings so that the soil can have a break from the cover. Our Organic Systems Plan requires that fields not be covered by landscape fabric for extended periods unless they are actively growing crops.

The Road to Certification

Speaking of Organic Systems Plan... we've been thinking about that a lot over the past couple of weeks as we've been preparing for our Organic Inspection next Tuesday. Each year we develop a thorough plan for the farm and submit it to our certifier, [Quality Certification Services](#). This plan outlines our soil management practices, how we deal with pests and diseases, how we support habitat for wildlife and more. It is very comprehensive and is about 100 pages in length.

Next, is the inspection phase. Each year, we have an on-site inspection by a trained independent Organic inspector. The inspector reviews all of our documentation and conducts a seed to sale review to trace our products from seed purchase to harvest and sale. Following the paperwork review, we take the inspector around the farm for a thorough walk through all of our fields, high tunnels and storage buildings. This inspection is very thorough and can take up to 5 hours.

Needless to say, all of this requires a lot of preparation. We remain committed to Organic because we believe that it's important to go through the scrutiny each year. We learn things from our certifier and there are always changes to the program (what inputs are still clean, etc.) that are important to know. We wish that more of our farming colleagues cared enough to get certified. Too many of them will say that it's too much trouble and that their practices "are just as good" but how do they know -- and more importantly, how do YOU know? In these days of increasing recalls and questionable growing practices, we believe that it is important to take the extra step of Organic certification for our customers.

Wish us luck as we meet with our inspector on Tuesday!

That's this week's news for you, Friends!

We are starting to get in the Holiday Spirit around here and are looking forward to a few of our favorite Holiday events. You've missed the voting portion of the [Mitchell's Nursery and Greenhouse](#) Annual Poinsettia Display, but it is still a treat to see all the beautiful poinsettias in their huge new 18,500 square foot greenhouse!



The Rural Hall Historic Train Depot will present [Santaboose](#) on Saturday (12/7) from 5:30-7:30 p.m. Climb aboard the little red caboose and visit with Santa. There will be food trucks, children's activities and even snow! The Depot will also be open for tours.

SANTABOOSE!

Rural Hall Historic Train Depot and Railroad Museum

Be on hand for the arrival of Santa at 5:30 p.m. then visit with him inside our little red caboose.

The Depot will be open for tours, Hollywood snow will fall, food trucks will be onsite, and there will be a number of children's activities to partake in.

December 7, from 5:30-7:30 p.m. - FREE ADMISSION!

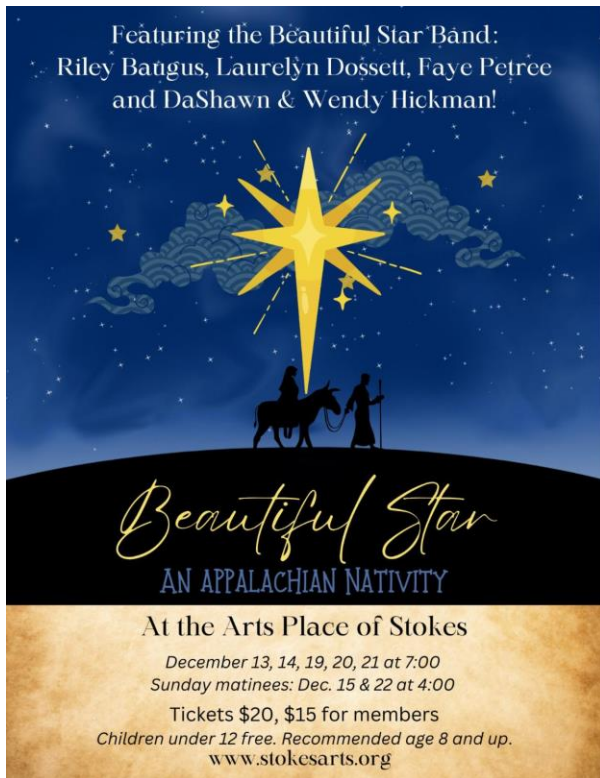


8170 Depot Street, Rural Hall, NC | ruralhalldepot.org - @ruralhalldepot

On Sunday (12/8), Wake Forest University presents its [Annual Lovefeast](#) at Wait Chapel. Begun in 1965, the Wake Forest Lovefeast has grown to be the largest Moravian-style lovefeast in North America and is one of the favorite features of Wake Forest tradition. Doors open at 6 p.m. and the event is first come, first seated. Admission is free.



Next weekend and the next, the [Stokes County Arts Council](#) will present [Beautiful Star: An Appalachian Nativity](#). We saw this performance last year and really enjoyed the array of music and acting in the show. Some of Stokes County's renown musicians will be performing in the Beautiful Star Band and many local adults and youth will be part of the cast to tell the Nativity story -- with an Appalachian twist.



We hope you enjoy some of our recommendations!

Be kind to your neighbors.
Until next week,
Cheryl & Ray

