

We're having so much fun with our Pop-Up Farm Markets, we're doing it again tomorrow. New this week: Freshly dug Potatoes! We still have Tons of Tomatoes, Fresh Garlic, Sweet Peppers, Eggplant, Garlic Scapes and MORE. Hours are 9-11 here at the Farm. Details below.



Happy Friday, Farm Friends!



This week's flower is **Milkweed**. This is [Common Milkweed](#) that grows extensively in our area. Ray has been doing a great job maintaining our stands of milkweed and [Butterfly Weed](#). They are very prolific in our hay fields and Ray always mows around them. This year we have a huge milkweed crop in Ruth's Field, where we are growing potatoes. It's going to be fun to look for caterpillars there as we harvest potatoes over the next month or so! Maybe we'll be lucky enough to find a chrysalis to raise! It was such fun when we had the opportunity to do that a few years ago. The thrill of watching an emerging Monarch is incomparable!

Hot Enough?!



Barney's doing the [Sploot](#). He's trying all the ways to stay cool.

Summer came in with a bang and a sizzle, for sure! Like you, we've all been working really hard trying to beat the heat. We've adjusted our work hours to take advantage of the cooler mornings -- we're starting at 6:00 a.m. and quitting at noon. Then Ray and Cheryl head out later to get more work done. That helps but it is still a challenge!

BB probably had it the worst of all of us. She was walking around with extra thick wool -- she didn't get sheared last fall because of Cheryl's hip issues and surgery. Boy, was she ready for a shear!



Our friend, [John Brasfield](#), gave her the gift of instant weight reduction -- that was one chunky fleece for sure! She is breathing much better now and is back to her sweet

self. Now if she would just be less picky about her food...



Ginger Update

We now have a FULL house of Ginger! Everything got planted and now we'll get all of the plants fed and well irrigated.



As we move into hotter temps, we need to make sure the ginger is well hydrated and not baking in the sun. While ginger is a tropical plant, it is an understory plant - which means that it grows in the shade (at least partial) of larger plants. We try to mimic that natural environment with shade cloth to reduce the intensity of the sun and to cool the foliage with sprayers that mist the plants for a few seconds several times a day. This will be a tropical paradise VERY soon!



Tater Time!

Ray did such a great job of keeping Ruth's Field (our potato field this summer) well-cultivated before his surgery. We couldn't let all that hard work go to waste while we wait a few more weeks for him to be able to drive a tractor again.

He's always been our main tractor guy -- in the words of Chad Tucker in his [Roy's Folks segment](#) -- Ray is my "tractor-loving husband." But as he heals after surgery, some of these things must get done. Enter Cheryl.

An equipment agnostic, Cheryl is a bit tractor-phobic. She can drive the Kubota from point A to point B and has even done bush-hogging and hay tedding but cultivation has always been Ray's thing. Until Wednesday.

Cheryl gave it a whirl and started the process of getting the field back under control. It was scary (oh, so scary!) -- because she didn't want to obliterate an entire row of potato plants. But it turned out okay. Ray was very helpful and kind in guiding her through the field and ensuring that no plants were excessively harmed in this process. Success!



Our earliest varieties of potatoes are ready and Jonny got some harvested on Thursday. These delicious spuds will be available at our On-Farm Market on Saturday. And if Cheryl doesn't plow up the field by mistake, we'll have an ongoing harvest over the next few weeks.



Another On-Farm Market Tomorrow!

Thanks to your support, we had another great Farm Market last week! Shall we do it again?

Join us this **Saturday, June 28 from 9-11**. We'll be set up at the **Tobacco Barn** (new this week -- it's cooler!) and we'll have LOTS of delicious Organic produce for you!



We still have lots of **Organic Slicer Tomatoes** -- there's bulk pricing on 10 pounds or more. We'll also have more delicious **Eggplant** and lots of recipes to help you showcase this beautiful and versatile veggie.



And yes, we'll have those delicious, freshly harvested **Potatoes** -- perfect for potato salad or roasting on the grill.



Don't forget the sweet **Carmen and Escamillo Italian Peppers** along with our freshly harvested **Garlic, Garlic Scapes, and Elephant Garlic Flowers!**



Farmer Ray Update: Week 4

Each week is new progress and new challenges. You know how those heat warnings talk about those with heart disease... well, it's true!

Ray knows that whatever you put into recovery is what you get out. Cheryl was faithful to her stretching and exercises after surgery and now her bionic hip is stronger than ever. (Want a bone density test on titanium?) If Ray's a couch potato during recovery, he'll be a super couch potato after. Tempting, but not us. Yes, the weather is dangerously hot, but a guy's gotta get those steps in!



So, every morning around 7:00 you can see Ray walking up and down the driveway. Yesterday was 2.3 miles - - 75' at a time. Until his trusty shoes gave up and blew out.



Time for an emergency trip to Fleet Feet! Those good folks scanned his feet, analyzed his walk and roll, saw the pressure points, and voila! A new pair of Karhu shoes for back-to-school [Cardiac Rehab](#) starting next week.

Once again, thanks for all your kind email messages, cards and comments on Facebook and Instagram. And we can feel the prayers and positive thoughts coming our way. We are grateful for each and every one!

That's the news for this week, friends! We're looking forward to a slightly cooler weekend. Maybe it's a good time to take in a ball game. The [Carolina Disco Turkeys](#) are playing at home this weekend at the Couch Ballpark at Wake Forest University (formerly Ernie Shore Field). What are the Disco Turkeys? They are one of the most popular summer collegiate baseball teams in the Southeast. They offer America's pastime and affordable, family friendly entertainment much like minor league baseball teams all across the country.



**Until next week,
Cheryl & Ray**

