

# The Farm Weekly

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## CICADAS ARE SINGING

The longer we live here, the more we associate the seasons with specific events at the farm. We know that winter is about to end when we hear the first red wing blackbird sing, and special recognition goes to the first member of the family who heard it.

Next on the list is the first sighting of a turkey vulture, then the house wren, and several others including the first "bambi". There are first smells too. Almost everyone notices the first time they smell new mown grass, and the smell of fresh sweet corn and that first red ripe "real" tomato.

But you know that you are into the deep of summer when you here the song of the cicada. Their sound makes me instantly think of the heat and humidity the Ohio Valley is famous for. When I hear it in a movie, it touches me subconsciously and immediately makes me think of summer. I am rocking in my glider on the screened in back porch, with the sun setting and the birds quieting, as I type this

and the cicadas are making their wonderful noise.

The first clutches of bluebirds, robins, and barn swallows are attending flight school in different areas of the farm, especially off the fences, electrical wires, and roof tops. It's fun to watch the barely blue, fledgling bluebirds try to imitate their parents getting bugs in mid flight. Fortunately they still have mom and dad feeding them, so they don't have to rely totally on themselves, but mom and dad won't be bringing them supper of long since they will be responsible for raising another clutch soon.

The rain this year has been absolutely wonderful for the garden. After two years of irrigating it comes as a big relief. Tim still has to irrigate the vegetables planted into plastic, but that's is easier than moving pipes, for we laid the drip irrigation when we put down the plastic.

Hannah got a taste of what it must be like to see the geyser Old Faithful.

Someone in upper management over irrigation forgot to clean out a filter. This caused pressure to build and shoot through one of the access point making a fairly loud bang and sending a spout of water about 40 feet into the air.

We just had several hundred bales of wonderful second cutting orchard grass hay that is filling the barn with its rich aroma. I have a farmer who knows exactly what I want for the alpacas and this year he has finally been able to have a nice second cutting to sell us. I am not sure who is more excited him, me, or the alpacas!

The garlic harvest has begun and as you can see, the bulbs are large. Tim has an undercutter bar that he pulls with the tractor to loosen the soil enough that the garlic can be easily pulled. With stems and roots, it is bunched and hung in the rafters to cure and develop the papery skins around the bulb and individual cloves.

Since the garlic in your boxes has not been cured, it might be a good idea to keep it in your fridge after trimming it, just to be sure it will last and not get a little moldy on the outside. If it does get a bit moldy, this can be washed off easily.

This variety of garlic is called a stiff neck due to the very woody stem centered between the cloves. I like this variety

**ANNUAL  
FARM OPEN  
HOUSE  
SATURDAY  
22 JULY  
10:00 TO 4:00**

because the cloves are pretty uniform and easily separated from the bunch.

If you are having a hard time using it all, you can try it as an hors d'oeuvre. Cut the stem to about one inch above the bulb. Then leaving the outside skin on, cut off the top part of the bulb so that the fleshy tips of all the cloves are slightly exposed. Drizzle some olive oil over this and bake in the oven at about 200° until soft. You then separate the cloves and squish out the gooey, mushy soft contents onto a tasty cracker or onto some crusty fresh bread.

The annual farm open house is scheduled for next weekend. We will have a few local artisans and some grilled foods. The biggest attraction each year is the horse drawn wagon rides out to see the vegetables growing. You are encouraged to bring family and friends along too. Everyone is welcome and we look forward to seeing you there!

### *This Week's Box*

**Onions  
Broccoli  
Chinese Cabbage  
Summer Squash  
Green Cabbage  
Pepper  
Garlic**

### *Next Week*

**Onions  
Lettuce  
Summer Squash  
? Broccoli  
Green Cabbage  
Tomato  
?Cucumber**