

Local farm readies for the cold

By Sarahlee Lawrence
Correspondent

As these clear October nights dip into the teens, the team at Rainshadow Organics hustles to put food up for winter. They have pickled, sauced, jammed, and fermented since mid-July. Their farm store shelves are full from floor to ceiling. The pastured pork, beef, and chicken fills the freezers. The wheat, corn, and buckwheat is in dry storage and the team mills it fresh each week for the grain case as well as wood-fired pizzas every Saturday. The final hustle is for the storage beets and carrots. The leeks. The onions and winter squash. The potatoes.

Rainshadow Organics is a full-diet farm, which means that they strive to grow everything they eat from grains, proteins, dairy, vegetables, honey, mushrooms, eggs, etc... For the long winter ahead, they will be open every Saturday from 11 a.m. to 3 p.m. with a fully stocked store and wood-fired pizzas. The farm will provide from the root cellar, the dairy, the freezer, the granary, the field, and the greenhouse. It's a true culinary adventure at the source.

As they wrap up their first summer season with their new farm store, they are tremendously grateful for all the people who came for lunches and dinners, farm tours and workdays. They bid farewell with the greatest thanks to their summer interns who came from all over the country to learn to farm through the Rogue Farm Corps. Each year, the farm teaches the awareness necessary to make good stewards of land and animals. It is a place where young people can dig their mental and physical wells to draw from in their future.

Interns learn about soil preparations, seeding, propagation, transplanting, weeding, harvest, farmers market, record keeping, fencing, nutrient management, cover cropping, cultivation, tractor



PHOTO BY CHARLOTTE DUPONT

A beautiful meal prepared from foods produced at Rainshadow Organics, a full-diet farm.

maintenance, irrigation, castration, slaughter. They also learn to cook for their team members as well as the public. They can host a dinner party, set a table, and cook a pig in the ground. In return, they give incredible value to this farm and its community.

Last weekend they hosted a very well-attended customer appreciation day. They watched, smiling from the periphery, children dig for roots and peel back the husks of colorful fall corn. 2018 marks the fifth annual community gleaning where Rainshadow opens its fields for the taking and in turn they harvest all of the positive energy of families playing in the dirt and feeding the pigs.

This week they will tend to the winter greens. The greenhouses require a lot of attention with these hot days and cold nights. A warm autumn will establish hardy plants that will slowly yield,

from now until May, nutrient-dense greens — arugula, spinach, kale, chard, mache and mustard greens. And in the field with the last of the irrigation water, they will seed rye and clover cover crops to protect and feed their organic soils.

As the evenings creep up into the days, the farm crew spends their dark hours cooking the food. They collect ingredients from all over the farm, and start from scratch. It takes time. But it's all whole and trustworthy and it tastes the best. And they agree that unlike most people who eat to live, the farm team lives to eat. Ingredients cultivated for months or years before they arrive on the plate. It's inconvenient and time-consuming. And it's the way it should be.

Find out about the farm's winter dinner series and heritage turkeys on their website, www.rainshadoworganics.com.

The season to go nuts

The holiday season is upon us — ready or not, starting with the candy-fest of Halloween in just a week.

Snacking is as much a holiday tradition as turkey, tree lights, parties and shopping.

Those heaping plates of treats rarely provide healthy options, but few people complain — at least not until the New Year, when they realize they gained a few extra pounds.

Actually, though, a healthy holiday alternative might have been there all along, just ignored because of the more enticing sugary treats surrounding it. Many snack trays include healthy nuts of various kinds, but data shows that the typical American is more apt to reach for cookies, candy and chips. And it's not just a seasonal thing: six out of 10 Americans don't eat any nuts on a given day, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

Nuts often play second fiddle to less nutritious snacks,

despite studies going back to the 1990s linking them to positive health outcomes — from lower cholesterol and blood pressure to reduced risk of cardiovascular problems.

Maybe this year, though, is the time to put that nutcracker to good use. Dr. Earl L. Mindell, an internationally recognized expert on nutrition, vitamins and herbal remedies, says the holidays are prime time for people to gain an awareness of the health benefits of nuts.

“Many of us love pecan pie, especially during the holidays,” says Mindell, a spokesman for Primavera brand walnuts and the author of 63 health-related books. “But eaten separately throughout the year, as is the case with almonds, chestnuts, walnuts and other tree nuts, they'll significantly change your diet for the better. The nutritional values and different ways nuts

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