

Farm: Season starts in June

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“We’ve struggled with how wet it’s been,” Stein said. “We’ve been scrambling to get all our stuff in the ground.”

Without using a greenhouse, Stein and Olsen are stuck using the true Oregon growing season — which has not started early this year.

“The soil was really cold for a long time, and the rain really affected when we could get into the soil,” Olsen said. “I think if the winters and springs progress like that, I would put up a hoop house to be able to produce the food that we need. The cold weather up through April is kind of brutal for some crops.”

The urban farm model can provide not only local, organically grown food for families, but business opportunities for young farmers who may not otherwise be able to practice their trade.

“The barrier to farm right now for young farmers is land,” Olsen said. “So if these communities are creating spaces where farmers are needed and they can start their own business, I think there’s

potential there. At least for Dylan and I, we couldn’t buy our own land.”

With the average age of farmers being 65, Olsen said getting young farmers into the land is important.

Stein didn’t always want to be a farmer. He grew up in the suburbs and studied politics in university before taking an office job.

“I had this sort of an awakening,” he said. “This is not how I want to be spending my time.”

Through a series of events, Stein found himself working as an intern for an organic farm.

“It sort of clicked for me that this is where I want to be spending my energy and effort,” he said. “It’s a culmination of a lot of work, but it’s rewarding, and it’s really the only work I want to be doing.”

Lucky Crow Farms uses organic practices, and is working toward certification.

“We grow all our plants with no pesticides or synthetic fertilizer,” Stein said. “So, it’s keeping up with the slugs. When you’re farming sort of or-

ganically, it’s always, you’ve got to be kind of ducking and dodging to get the pest control right.”

A benefit of the CSA, urban, community farm model is it eliminates the middle man.

If a customer doesn’t care for spinach — or consumes a lot of it — he or she can let Olsen and Stein know so the farmers can make adjustments to the crop planning for the next season.

The farm also provides a place for families to come volunteer or to learn more about the origins of their food.

After years of maneuvering members of the Edwards Addition homeowner’s association and the Monmouth City Council, Lucky Crow Farms has decided not to raise chickens.

The council settled on allowing urban farms to raise up to 25 hens, but Olsen said that isn’t enough to provide eggs for 50 families.

“That means maybe one egg every three days,” she said.

For more information or to sign up for the CSA: luckycrowfarm.com.

Bed: Reservations come in at Little Luckiamute

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While he had a green light to get to work, Radke said he has one more person to convince that his dream would work: Cheryl.

“I said, ‘Let’s do a bed and breakfast. Nobody has done anything like that.’ You’ve got the mountain bike thing,” he said, referring to nearby Black Rock Mountain Bike Area. “We brainstormed a bit.”

What came out of their planning is Little Luckiamute Creekside Bed & Breakfast, a four-room bed and breakfast that has just opened. It required a painstaking remodel of the existing house and an addition to accommodate guests.

The approximately 2,000-square feet of B&B includes one king bedroom, two queen bedrooms and a four-bed bunk room. Guests have shared access to a full kitchen, TV room and two bathrooms. Those staying at Little Luckiamute are treated to a beautiful view and the soothing sounds of the namesake river flowing at the edge of the property.

The Radkes live in a separate part of the bed & break-

fast and lease back to the Wards. The business still is a work-in-progress, but they are open for guests.

“We don’t have a licensed kitchen yet, but there’s always bagels. There’s pancake mix. My wife stocks it with fruit, coffee.”

David said Cheryl still has another year before she retires from Oregon State University, so they aren’t ready to plunge into cooking just yet.

“Believe it or not, we’re getting calls,” David said. “We just got our license.”

To cater to the mountain bikers — and some have already made reservations — there’s hot and cold water on the outside so riders can clean the mud off their bikes — and themselves. One of the rooms has a bike theme in recognition of the popularity of the sport.

Another room has a nautical theme.

“Paul worked as a commercial fisherman for years, so we thought it would be fun,” David said.

He said they may develop wine tours and a local horse owner is putting together a horseback riding package to give guests more to do during

their stay. David said he’d learn how to kayak the Little Luckiamute and would offer that service to guests, too.

David said Falls City residents have been welcoming and supportive of the venture — even giving the couple a round of applause when the city council approved the B&B’s land use permit.

“There’s great people in this town,” David said.

He said having grown up in Dallas, the regional pecking order went like this: People in Salem would make fun of Dallas. Residents of Dallas would extend that courtesy to Falls City. Finally, Falls City, would look down upon the former town of Valsetz.

Now that he lives in Falls City, David said that was based on misconceptions.

“People just laugh at me when I say that I’m here to stay in Falls City. I’m here,” David said. “They laugh, but you know what? The people are great.”

Now, David and Cheryl hope they can repay the kindness they’ve received.

“We’re just getting started on this place,” David said.

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