



Munnell Run Farm News

February, 2009

Munnell Run Farm's 10th Anniversary Earth Day Celebration

On April 18, the Mercer County Conservation District will hold its 10th Annual Earth Day Celebration from 10:00 a.m. until 1:00 p.m. at Munnell Run Farm. Plans are underway to make this our biggest and best Earth Day event so far. We encourage families, scout troops, youth groups, and other community organizations to join us for a fun and interesting look at our environment.

There is no fee for this program and lunch will be provided. Check the website and local newspapers for more information as the date approaches. Early, online registration is encouraged and will be available at www.munnellrunfarm.org on March 1, 2009. Or, register by phone at 724-662-2242 Monday through Friday from 8:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.

Annual Seedling Sale

Sponsored by the Mercer County Conservation District, this year's sale offers Colorado Blue Spruce, Norway Spruce, Concolor Fir, Fraser Fir, Douglas Fir, Eastern White Pine, Lilac, Shadblow Serviceberry, and Canadian Hemlock. See descriptions of the different trees and their prices on our website, www.munnellrunfarm.org. Orders will be taken through March 31 and pickup is scheduled for April 22.

You may place an order by calling the Conservation District office at 724-662-2242, downloading an order form online at www.munnellrunfarm.org, or e-mailing us at mercercdd@verizon.net. Proceeds from this sale help support the education programs held at Munnell Run Farm.



Spring Fun at the Farm



Spring may seem far away right now, but our annual spring preschool program series will be here before you know it! All of the programs feature hands-on, outdoor activities designed to help children ages 3, 4, and 5 use their senses to learn more about the world around them. The programs will be held this year on consecutive Wednesday afternoons, April 8 through April 29, from 1:00 to 2:30 p.m. The spring flyer with an overview of each of the programs and online registration will be available on our Munnell Run Farm website, www.munnellrunfarm.org, in late February or early March. Tell your friends, save the dates, and bring your little ones to see us this spring!

“Christmas at the Farm” a Success

Thank you to all of the shoppers, vendors, and volunteers who participated in “Christmas at the Farm” in late November. You helped to make this first-time event a success!

We appreciate those of you who traveled to the farm in the snow to pick up your fresh, hand-tied Fraser Fir Christmas wreaths, as well as those who came to the farm for the first time to see what local products were available to purchase.

There was a great mixture of items from handmade jewelry, alpaca products, baked goods, herbs, handmade metal gifts, hand-carved wooden items, knitting supplies, locally-made cheeses, maple syrup, goat's milk soap, gourd art, jams, and many other wonderful treats. The event helped to ring in the Christmas season while also supporting local artisans and producers. Thanks, again to those who participated!



Regional Food Venture at Munnell Run Farm Project Advances

Another step forward in establishing the shared kitchen incubator at Munnell Run Farm has been realized. An Agriculture Planning Grant from Pennsylvania's First Industries Fund is helping the Foundation advance the Regional Food Venture Project. When completed the licensed commercial kitchen will be available to farmers and entrepreneurs who need the resources to develop food products, introduce them to the marketplace and grow a start-up business. Jams, jellies, salsas, cheese, yogurt and other products could be produced at the kitchen, alleviating the need for the up-front capital needed to construct or renovate a building, install the needed equipment and obtain the needed licenses at their own farms or kitchens.

The planning grant will help to determine the feasibility of establishing the kitchen at the Farm, develop operating, staffing, and marketing plans, and enable MRFF to develop the design of the building needed to house the incubator. The feasibility study will guide the design of the building, which will be housed in the former laundry building at the Farm. It will help to determine the level of interest of producers from the surrounding region who would use such a kitchen, and consumers who would purchase the products from it. Survey forms have been developed and will be disseminated to producers and consumers in the region. They, along with public meetings, interviews and other means will reveal the potential for the kitchen's economic viability. A favorable determination will lead to the next step, which is seeking funding for constructing, equipping, and operating the kitchen.

The goal is to create a PA Department of Agriculture inspected creamery and commercial kitchen incubator where entrepreneurs can add value to their milk, vegetable and fruit commodities. The survey form can be downloaded from the Penn Soil website under Current Projects – Regional Food Venture or enter www.pennsoilrcd.org/Regional%20Food%20Venture.htm.



Calling All Garden Volunteers!

If you are interested in helping to maintain one of the raised garden beds this year, please contact Jill at 724-662-2242 or e-mail at jshankelmccd@verizon.net. Last year we had a wonderful group of volunteers who each adopted a bed and planted and maintained their gardens throughout the growing season. Each bed looked great and really added to the aesthetics of the farm! The gardens also made great teaching sites for both our preschool and K-12 programs.

Not wanting to take on a whole raised bed but still want to get your hands dirty? There are several perennials beds that will need to be weeded and maintained throughout the summer. If you would like to help in some way let us know. We would never turn down a fellow "weed warrior!"



Friends of Munnell Run Farm Membership Form

Membership Category	Amount
<input type="checkbox"/> Individual	\$25.00
<input type="checkbox"/> Student	\$15.00
<input type="checkbox"/> Family	\$40.00

Munnell Run Farm Foundation, Inc., is a nonprofit organization with IRS 501c3 status. Your contributions are tax deductible and much appreciated. Please fill out this form and mail it to MRF with your donation. Make checks payable to Munnell Run Farm Foundation, Inc.

Name

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