

**Sonrise Farms**  
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Dear Friends,

It has been a long cold winter, but spring is just around the corner. So it is time for our family to make plans and time for you to take an inventory of your freezer. We also ask that you take a few minutes to read our annual newsletter.

**Chickens:** We will continue to raise our chickens in portable pasture shelters where they receive plenty of fresh air and sunshine. All grains for our poultry feed are usually raised here on the farm and blended with an organic mineral supplement. Our feed contains **NO** hormones or antibiotics.

Our chickens do not have the stress of being transported to a processing facility. Poultry processing is done right here on our farm. After we process in the morning, you can pick up your *fresh* chickens in the afternoon. Processing dates are listed on the order form. If a pickup date does not fit your schedule, we will be happy to freeze for a fee of \$0.10 per pound and you can pick up at a more convenient time.

Every spring orders are slow to come in for the June group of chickens so we request fewer from the hatchery. By the time butchering day rolls around, we have more last minute orders than we can accommodate. Please order quickly so we can supply all the chickens you, your family and friends will need.

**Eggs:** Rising feed costs have caused us to raise our egg price to \$2.50 per dozen. Give us a call or send an email if you would like to stop by and purchase eggs. Remember egg production is seasonal and can fluctuate greatly.

**Stewing Hens:** Several of you were disappointed last year when we did not have enough laying hens and we were unable to fill your orders. Well, we'll try again this year. For those who are not familiar with stewing hens, these are the egg layers that have "served their time." The meat has a very rich taste and the broth is especially flavorful. Please remember these **MUST** be cooked *long and slow* to be tender. They are great for chicken soup or chicken and dumplings.

**Beef:** Our Murray Grey beef cattle calve in the spring when the deer are fawning and receive a new section of fresh pasture every day of the growing season. We do our best to raise our cattle the natural way God intended. By doing things the correct way, our cattle have NO need for antibiotics, hormones or grain supplements. We process beef twice a year when the cattle are at their best growth rates and the grass has just come off peak production. Therefore, June and November are your choices again this year for freezer beef (quarters, halves or a whole).

**Pork:** These are our "hard-working hogs that do our composting. Since they are barn-raised and not confined the meat is juicy and flavorful.

**Beef and Pork Processing:** We will continue to use Chenoa Food Locker in Chenoa, Illinois for all processing. A few customers called last year and expressed a preference for Chuck's Locker in Ivesdale. Please indicate on your order form if you prefer Chuck's and we will see if we can arrange it. Otherwise, we will take the animals to Chenoa and notify you so you can place a cutting order. If you need an estimate of costs or have general questions, please feel free to call.

**Frozen Meat:** We continue to carry a wide variety of beef and pork cuts, which are individually packaged and frozen. These items can be purchased any time during the year here on the farm, as long as supplies last. They will also be available during poultry pick up days.

**Special Note:** We have never required deposits with meat orders and we have no plans to change our policy, but we have had problems in the past with last minute cancellations. We understand that there are unforeseen circumstances that come up during the year and we have always and will continue to do our best to accommodate every customer's needs. So when you place an order with us we take it as a commitment from you and we will gear our production accordingly. If something unexpected comes up, please call us and give us some time to work things out on our end.

Thank you for taking the time to read our newsletter. We appreciate each of you, our faithful customers. Thank you for encouraging and supporting our business and family. We enjoy visiting with each of you when you come to the farm. Many of you have become very dear friends over the years. Now take a few minutes, fill out the order form and fire it back to us in the self-addressed envelope. Remember, "first come, first served" has always been our policy. Please call or email to make an appointment if you would like fresh eggs or frozen meat cuts. We look forward to seeing each of you this summer.

The Hesterbergs at Sonrise Farms