

Shiloh Heritage Farms-Local CSA

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Talking about the pigs brought smiles to their faces. It isn't unusual to hear pet names when people refer to their dogs and cats, and even horses. It didn't seem so typical to hear that the sows and boars at Shiloh Heritage Farms have names. They do, and that might be the most telling thing about Hudson and Cianciotto. They love their pigs. They did offer that they don't name the offspring of these adults; they aren't around long enough to get attached to. However, when talking about the antics of the little ones, it's easy to tell that some attachment is inevitable, if even for a short time. One other very telling thing about this operation was about my arrangement to meet with this couple for this interview. They requested that we meet away from the farm, out of concern of me possibly cross-contaminating (bringing in a foreign 'bug') that might affect the pigs. Vicki Cianciotto told me that normally they have sanitary booties (like you would see in a hospital) for visitors to wear, but they were short on supplies and wanted to keep their pigs safe. Why is that a concern? Because the pigs don't get shots of antibiotics, that's why. I did get to look at an extensive number of photos though, so I know that they have a clean, humane set-up with healthy pigs.

Dave Hudson has lived in the Kettle Falls area 'forever'. His background was in construction as a contractor for over 20 years. He came from a farming background growing up on a farm in SW Idaho. Vicki Cianciotto is a recent addition to the Kettle Falls area, having moved here from Idaho in 2006 to join Hudson. She was formerly an RN, but her passion for agriculture drew her to Veterinary School at Utah State where she received her DVM degree. Her target interest was swine. An injury prevented her from continuing as a veterinarian, but her love and knowledge of pigs has never diminished. When the economy started slipping, they made a decision to try something different and build on their combined knowledge of farming and swine. The idea of doing the CSA was born and they are ready this year to get it rolling.

The pigs at Shiloh Heritage Farms are of two breeds: Large Blacks and Red Wattles. The Large Blacks originated from England in the 16th & 17th centuries. Interestingly, the Red Wattles hail from the South Pacific, but most current lines come from pigs found in East Texas in the 1980's. The name Heritage refers to the old breeds, popular up until the 1940's and 50's when production breeding and raising came into vogue. The existence of the Heritage breeds has dwindled and according to Cianciotto, if it weren't for smaller breeding operations like Shiloh, the breeds would probably die out altogether. The meat on these breeds is different than the York's, the typical breed that is currently used in confinement operations. The meat



A tribute to the pigs that Vicki and Dave raise

from these operations supplies the pork that consumers purchase from most grocery stores. The York's produce a lean meat. There is higher fat content in the meat of the Heritage breeds, marbled throughout. It makes for better tasting pork that doesn't dry during cooking, Cianciotto stated. She also pointed out that the personalities of the large operation breeds differ greatly from Heritage breeds as well. Heritage breeds are 'mellow, easy-going and suited for pasture raising'. York's are higher strung. This was shared when I saw a picture of Cianciotto in a pen with a sow and her piglets. I had always heard that it was dangerous to step into a pen with a sow and her piglets. Not so, Cianciotto told me, their pigs aren't aggressive at all. Their pigs follow them around the pens and 'talk' (grunt). They love to have their backs scratched. Hudson said that rather than arch their back like a dog or cat might do, they 'sway' their backs when they get a good scratch and stretch out lower to the ground. He said the little piglets are playful and like to pull on pant legs or untie shoelaces. Cianciotto and Hudson both stated that their sows (7-8 in number) and boars (2) are more like their children.

Shiloh Heritage Farms, while based around their pigs, is about much more than just that. They have been gardening and sharing their produce for years. The big switch this year is to make some money for their efforts instead of just growing for themselves and giving away their excess. In addition to the pork that is available, they also have eggs, and vegetables that come from their farm. In a cooperative effort, beef, fruit, bread and jams are also available from other participants in this CSA. The fruit will come from Peachcrest and Sherman Creek Orchards, the bread is from Heather's Fairy Tale Bakery in Colville. The beef comes from one of several local cattlemen. Upon receiving an order for beef, they get a steer, bring it to their farm raise it for five months, grass fed. Just prior to slaughter, the steer is grain fed. There is a large variety of vegetables listed on their flyers that is available, and they are also open to suggestions.

The vegetables and the meats provided in the CSA from Shiloh Heritage Farms are organic, but it is not certified. They looked into getting it certified, but it is a costly process and one that they cannot do at this time. At no time do any of the swine or steers receive hormone shots or antibiotics. No pesticides or sprays are used in their gardens. All of the animals are allowed free movement (within fences that is). When you see a picture of Hudson, napping on his couch with a piglet wrapped in a towel sleeping on his chest, you understand the affection this couple has for their 'flock'. I think some of the pigs were smiling at the camera.

This is a learning experience for this couple. Their focus is to provide good healthy locally grown food to the community for a reasonable cost while still making a profit. They have estimated that each box will contain approximately \$15.00 worth of food. The program will run from June through October, but orders MUST be placed by May 15th, 2010. This allows them to plant an appropriate amount of vegetables, secure the fruit and raise the needed amounts of pork and/or beef in time for the first boxes to go out. They plan on making the deliveries to the door of the consumer, setting aside one or two days a week. These details will be worked out as they go. The cost of a small box is \$150.00. A larger box (for larger families) is available for \$270.00. A \$100.00 deposit is required on all orders. Shiloh Heritage Farms also has other options with the meat, offering packages of ¼ beef, ½ beef, and whole beef or ½ or whole hogs. Meat orders are available year round. The choices are all up to the consumer, each box will be tailored to individual specifications.

All meat is processed at either Smokey Ridge in Chewelah or Mason's Meat in Diamond Lake, both are USDA inspected and certified establishments. (See an article about Smokey Ridge in the April 21st issue of the Spokesman-Review newspaper, Spokane, WA).

Shiloh Heritage Farms also makes wiener pigs available for purchase to 4-H and FFA members. Each year, Hudson and Cianciotto donate one wiener pig to a deserving student from the Kettle Falls area who might not otherwise be able to purchase a pig for the fair and participate in that program. Last year, they donated a barrow (young male pig) to a Kettle Falls High School freshman from Evans.

Anyone interested in ordering a weekly bounty of food from Shiloh Heritage Farms MUST contact them by May 15th. They can be contacted by phone at 675-2759; by email at shilohheritagefarms@yahoo.com, or by visiting their website at www.shilohheritagefarms.vpweb.com.

KF Police Chief Kendle Allen Running For Stevens County Sheriff



Kendle Allen

Kettle Falls Police Chief Kendle Allen announces that he is running for the office of Stevens County Sheriff in this year's upcoming election.

Allen, who has 31 years of law enforcement experience, has served almost 14 of those years with the Stevens County Sheriff's Office, and has been the Chief of Police in Kettle Falls for the last 3 years.

Kendle Allen believes that he will bring the qualifications of experience, leadership, and financial responsibility with him to the Sheriff's Office, especially with the current climate of budgetary problems in county government. Allen, who is running as a Republican, is a strong proponent of property and gun rights, and is willing to step-up and meet challenges that would take these rights away from law abiding citizens.

Some of Allen's goals for the Sheriff's Office are to improve customer satisfaction with service received by the public, promote citizen involvement with public safety projects, keep people informed through various media resources, and keep deputies visible in the communities. Kendle Allen will strive to provide the best possible law enforcement service to keep criminals off of our streets, and to make the general public comfortable in dealing with THEIR Sheriff's Office.

Spring Again

(in memory of Tom Sheimo)

You see, the lilacs didn't last long this year.
(I won't be fooled by flagrant, purple truth.)
Dust settled their lies in no time, for fear
of worn-out songs about love, death, or youth.
This morning it's the wild rose that reminds,
and black pollen from an exotic poppy.
The season insists, the dark soil must bind
us each to each—rooted, dumb, happy.
Whatever returns must be bargained for
or reckoned with—the cruel bloom of June,
the simple tenacity of grass, or
relentless candles of petals, perfume.
What never returns endures: a refrain,
nameless, more steadfast than bud or seed or
rain.

Lynn Rigney Schott



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