



Canis Major Constellation



### Down in the Flood

"It's gonna be the meanest flood  
That anybody's seen.  
Oh, mama, ain't you gonna miss your best friend now?"  
- Bob Dylan

Catharina Kessler of Promised Land Farm stood on one side of the stream, her cattle were on the other side and the bridge between them had washed away. "Luckily I have good neighbors", she recalled. "Otherwise the animals would have starved to death." Craig Meyerhoff came to rescue the 22 steers and take them across the street to pasture. Another neighbor came by to build a gang plank so that Catharina could finally cross the rushing waters. While she still doesn't have a reliable source of drinking water in her home, she is grateful for the help that she received from the community and feels fortunate not to have lost her life or her livestock.

Richard Giles of Lucky Dog Farm rented some extra fields this year so that he could have the biggest crop ever. The fields were planted with over 10 acres of green beans and 10 acres of potatoes, along with rows of greens, squashes, flowers, herbs, onions and tomatoes. Richard staggered the planting of his green beans so that he could have a steady supply throughout the growing season. This year, he would have the help of a Pixall bean picker that he purchased for over \$18,000 to harvest his bean crop.

Richard and the crew were working on mud caked farm machinery when I arrived to tour the farm to inspect the flood damage. The mud was light brown in color, unlike the soil that I had seen on his farm earlier in the spring that was black and loamy. Richard told me that he had lost over eight inches of top soil. As we toured the fields, I had the forlorn feeling of being on a battlefield. The potatoes would rot in the field because the water had drenched the roots. The white bulbs of the onions were exposed and the green tops that once stood straight fell in all directions. "That's where we had our tomatoes", Richard said as he pointed to the hoop houses filled with dead tomato plants. Trying to be positive, Richard showed me the new rows of lettuce that they had planted in an effort to make the most out of the time left in the growing season.

Holley White, who is married to Richard Giles and runs the Lucky Dog Farm Store, was in the store ironing some vintage dresses when I arrived. They were beautiful and would be a great addition to the store. Sadly, however, it was mid-July and

she was not behind the cash register ringing up bags of fresh produce or filling up the boxes for her CSA members. A sign in the produce department explained that the flood had ravaged their produce for the season. Most markets rely on fresh produce as a draw for customers to buy the other items that the store carries - dry goods, dairy, and meats. Still loyal to her suppliers, she stocked her display cases for those that would come into her store for the Evans Milk, Harpersfield Cheese and Cloonshee Chickens.

As every cloud has a silver lining, my phone rang today with news that Evans Creamery would be at the Pakatakan Market on July 22 selling dairy products to provide flood relief for Lucky Dog Farm. I was humbled by the indomitable spirit of our small farm community and its ability to come together in this time of need.

### Dog Days at the Andes Hotel

Dog Days, or the hottest and most sultry days of summer, were thought to have been caused from the heat given off by the brightest star in the solar system that forms part of the dog shaped constellation, Sirius. The Andes Hotel, with support from *Pure Catskills*, is celebrating Dog Days on Thursday August 3, by paying tribute to our local farmers whose efforts come to fruition at this time of year. This farm celebration features casual local farm food, a tasting of ice cold local beers, ice cream and music provided by local talent, Bill Foley of Walton, NY.

For the Dog Days Menu, Ed and Sally will serve simple foods prepared with special attention to quality and detail. The fried chicken salad features blueberry-eating free range chicken from Snowdance Farm. There will be a *knock your socks off* white bean chili made with pork from Betty Acres Farm. For more non-traditional fare, a gyro made from seasoned ground lamb will satisfy any Mediterranean cravings. It wouldn't be a Dog Days event without a local hotdog. Decide whether or not the *New York Times* was right in naming the Dines Farm's all beef hotdog the number one dog in the country. Ed accompanies all entrées with relishes, slaws and vegetables grown on local farms.

Ed and Sally plan to cool down the crowd with local beer and homemade ice cream. Ommegang Brewery from Cooperstown will be on hand to explain what goes into making a Belgian style beer. And if beer isn't your cup of tea, try a scoop of

homemade ice cream or Ed's summer berry shortcake with fresh fruit from Bohringer's Fruit Farm in the Schoharie Valley.

Diners are invited to meet the farmers at 4:30 pm at The Andes Hotel, 110 Main St. Andes, NY 13731. Dinner and music is from 5 pm to 9 pm. For reservations, please call (845) 676-3980. Entrees range from \$8 to \$12.

## Events

### Farmstead Cheese Production Workshop

**Wednesday, July 26 10:30am – 2:00pm**

Are you interested in adding value to your milk? Need help formulating a business plan for your cheese operation? Not sure of the regulations that might apply to you? Then this is the workshop for you! The speaking panel will include Nancy Richards from Finger Lakes Farmstead Cheese and other NYS dairy farmers, Steve Richards from Farm Net, and Rob Ralyea from Cornell Food Science Department.

The host site is at Rice Hall on the Cornell campus in Ithaca. The cost is \$5.00, please bring your own lunch.

For more information on this workshop, contact Fay Benson, [afb3@cornell.edu](mailto:afb3@cornell.edu) or 607-753-5213.

### Down on the Farm Day in Jeffersonville

**Saturday, August 5 10:00am – 3:00pm**

Sullivan County does *Down on the Farm Day* on Saturday, August 5 from 10 am to 3pm at the Myers Century Farm on Earl Myers Rd. in Jeffersonville.

Milking Demonstrations, hay baling demonstrations, tours of the farm and displays by Cornell Cooperative Extension, Soil and Water Conservation District, 4H Clubs and other agricultural organizations will be featured.

The Sullivan County Dairy Promotion Committee will be on hand with milk and ice cream and the Moo Juicers 4H Club will have young farm animals on display.

Food will be available at a minimal cost. A \$2 donation per person will be used to offset expenses.

For further information, contact Cornell Cooperative Extension of Sullivan County at (845) 292-6180.

### Planet Cauliflower

**Saturday, September 30 10:00am – 4:00pm**

If you're wondering why Margaretville hosts a cauliflower-themed festival each year, you need to come join us this year and see the phenomenon for yourself! A history tent shows visitors what it was like in the 1920s, when cauliflower grown for City markets was King of the Fields. This year's Cauliflower Festival will be held in Margaretville on Saturday, September 30 from 10 am-4pm. For the third year, WAC invites growers and value-added farm businesses to set up in the farm tent for a day of meeting week-end visitors, old-timers and regular customers. Space is free but must be reserved by calling Karen Rauter at (607) 865-7790 x119 by August 15. Lots of new activities are planned for this year, including Planet Cauliflower, a

collaborative cheese table by the NY State Cheese Guild farmers and the premier of a new Catskills convivium of Slow Food USA.

## Local Livestock Farmers Announce Summer Workshop Series and Internship Program

The farmers of MADE in Schoharie County are pleased to welcome the first class of students to their inaugural season of the Grassfed Interns program, a collaborative effort designed to pair next generation farmers interested in sustainable agriculture and grass-fed livestock with successful pasture-based farms.

A summer workshop series will be conducted as part of the curriculum for the interns. For specific details about instructors, course descriptions and locations, see [www.grassfedinterns.com](http://www.grassfedinterns.com). Farmers from Schoharie or neighboring counties interested in joining the program and hosting an intern for the 2007 season should contact Carol Clement of Heather Ridge Farm at (518) 239-6234.

### Grazing Land Management

Sunday July 30<sup>th</sup>, 10am-3pm

Sap Bush Hollow Farm, West Fulton

Troy Bishopp, Dr. James Hayes, Mick Bessire, Instructors

### Holistic Financial Management

Sunday, August 6<sup>th</sup>, 10am-3pm

Agroforestry Resource Center, Acra, NY

Seth Wilner and Phil Metzger, Instructors

### Business and Marketing Plans for Grass-fed Farming

Sunday, August 20<sup>th</sup>, 10am-3pm

Agroforestry Resource Center, Acra, NY

Adele Hayes and Carol Clement, Instructors

## Pure Catskills Collaborative Market

The project is finally under way. Mike Biltonen of Stone Ridge Orchard and Blue Marble Farms is spearheading the formation of two *Pure Catskills* collaborative markets at Nina Planck's Real Food Markets in New York City. Mike, who also sells his own apples and fruit, is hauling produce from the six county Catskills region for farmers that find that their time is better spent farming than selling. If you would like to be part of this effort, please contact: [Mike@stoneridgeorchard.com](mailto:Mike@stoneridgeorchard.com) or [allisonbennett@nycwatershed.org](mailto:allisonbennett@nycwatershed.org).

## Save the Date!

**Sunday, September 3 3pm – 8pm**

The West Kortright Center's annual benefit this year is a "Harvest Festival, A Day in the Country". Farmers, restaurateurs, and community members will be pitching in to help raise money for the arts center and to provide an afternoon of farm food and fun. So, save the date!

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