

# The Bonnie Blue Farm Report

*Our self-sustaining source of all organic produce, fruit, berries, sheep, piggys, chickens and of course the ever present (and into everything) turkeys.*

## Meet Swampy



‘Swampy’ is short for ‘Swamp Chicken.’ But wait, she is a turkey!?! That’s right, but she likes to identify as a chicken. We don’t know why; she grew up with turkeys, not chickens. At least once a year she will move-in with one of the chicken flocks and there isn’t much we can do about it, these turkeys are amazing flyers and incredibly stubborn. She also loves water and will go out of her way to wade through the numerous puddles that dot the property nine months out of the year. A water tub will also do (see picture).

Trouble would have also been a good name for this girl, as that is what she spends every waking hour looking for. It is not uncommon to find her on top of the pergola, digging up a pot on the porch, sorting through boxes in the garage loft (if we have left the garage door open for longer than a minute), playing in a sand pile, tearing the stuffing out of the outdoor swing seat, or looking for my latest plant purchase to scratch out and pull up. So at this point you are probably wondering why would we keep this turkey or any other turkeys? Believe it or not, they are actually Madeline’s favorite of our animals. If you need your spirits lifted, you go see what the turkeys are up to (or in to). Their antics can be inconvenient, but mostly harmless, and always good for a smile.

## Around the Farm

Lambs!!! Two of our four probably-pregnant ewes gave birth on Thursday April 5<sup>th</sup>. The babies are adorable, of course, and are already running around the pastures with their moms. The babies grow SO fast; in a couple weeks they will start eating grass and in a couple months we will separate the boys.

On the garden front, we had to go to war with the wild rabbits. Every tender young start we put in the garden was getting eaten down to a nub. We put a second fence around the entire perimeter, we sprinkled scent deterrent everywhere, and we even individually covered or put barriers around all the plants we could. We thought we had them beat... for a while. Plants are starting to disappear again, so time for night patrols to see what holes we might have missed.

New items coming on the menu: Asparagus and rhubarb are popping up. Turkey eggs are being collected (for taste: think the best chicken eggs you have ever had, but even more buttery). And soon, sheep milk! We ‘share milk,’ which means once the lambs are eating grass, we separate the mom(s) we want to milk from their lambs overnight (they can still see each other, the lambs just can’t suckle), we milk the mom(s) in the morning, and then release them to the lambs who nurse all day long. I get a lot more milk because the udder is in constant production mode for the lambs. And the best part is, if I don’t need any milk, or I won’t have time to milk, or we want to get away for the weekend, we just don’t separate them.

Until next month,

*Jay D Willis*



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