

Farm News

Community supported/ sustainable farming/ biodynamic produce/ healthy eating

Cloughjordan Community Farm News Bulletin

Issue no. 3 June 2016



Peppa grazing happily in her field, early June morning 2016

Photo: EB

June:

The heat and dry weather these past weeks has left us in no doubt that summer is definitely here and the kids, newly released from the confines of school, are looking forward to even more sun for their summer holidays... but on the Farm we hope for rain between the rays and moderately warm temperatures. After an unseasonably cold April/start of May where frost threatened plants very late in the season (we had them snuggling under fleeces even in the tunnels!) we headed straight into spectacularly hot weather and drought, where four times daily watering was necessary to keep the plants alive...we even had to water some field crops.

This rather dramatically erratic weather has led to over a month lag-behind in the produce that would normally be available now to Members, as evidenced by our less full crates in the Coach House at a time of year when we tend to expect abundance. So this season's produce is coming down the line much later than usual. However we have planted **all of our main-crop spuds, plus onions and winter squashes in the fields, along with broad beans, sweetcorn, fennel, chard, kohlrabi and melons. In the tunnels we have transplanted all of our this season's cucumbers and courgettes, gherkins, sweet peppers and chilli, tomatoes and basil.** These have all been responding quickly to the heat and are coming on well. We still also have plenty of salads and herbs in the tunnels. There should be the usual bountiful bushes of **blackcurrants and gooseberries** this summer, along with field rhubarb, and we will let you know when the soft fruits are ripe for the picking.

The Hens Are Here:

The Pecking Order: An Interview with **Wendy Bailey and Paul Glennon.**

"This is our first venture into poultry and egg production," says **Paul Glennon**, sounding both animated and, understandably, a little trepidatious. The Farm has long recognised the benefits of having animals alongside our vegetables as there is a symbiotic relationship between animals and the land, a natural feeding and fertilising chain which enriches the soil and naturally enhances biodiversity. Poultry help improve the land by scratching in the soil, by foraging and feeding on insects and pests, thereby



A young hen or pullet on the Farm June 2016 Pic: EB

helping get rid of some plant damaging critters and spreading fertility... all good things... not to mention producing, in the process, deliciously fresh, free range eggs.

"Yes, we've deliberately chosen old breeds of hen suited to an outdoor life and foraging and they are light Sussex (black and white), White Leghorn (all white) and a Plymouth Rock/ Rhode Island Red cross also known as Barred Rock (speckled)."

And about how many do you have altogether?

"There are about 18 White Leghorns, 16 Sussex and 16 Barred Rock," Wendy calculates.



Paul and Wendy's hens exploring their new home.

June 2016

Pic: EB

So how are the hens settling into their new environment and what can we expect re future egg production? Paul and Wendy are pleased with the initial signs.

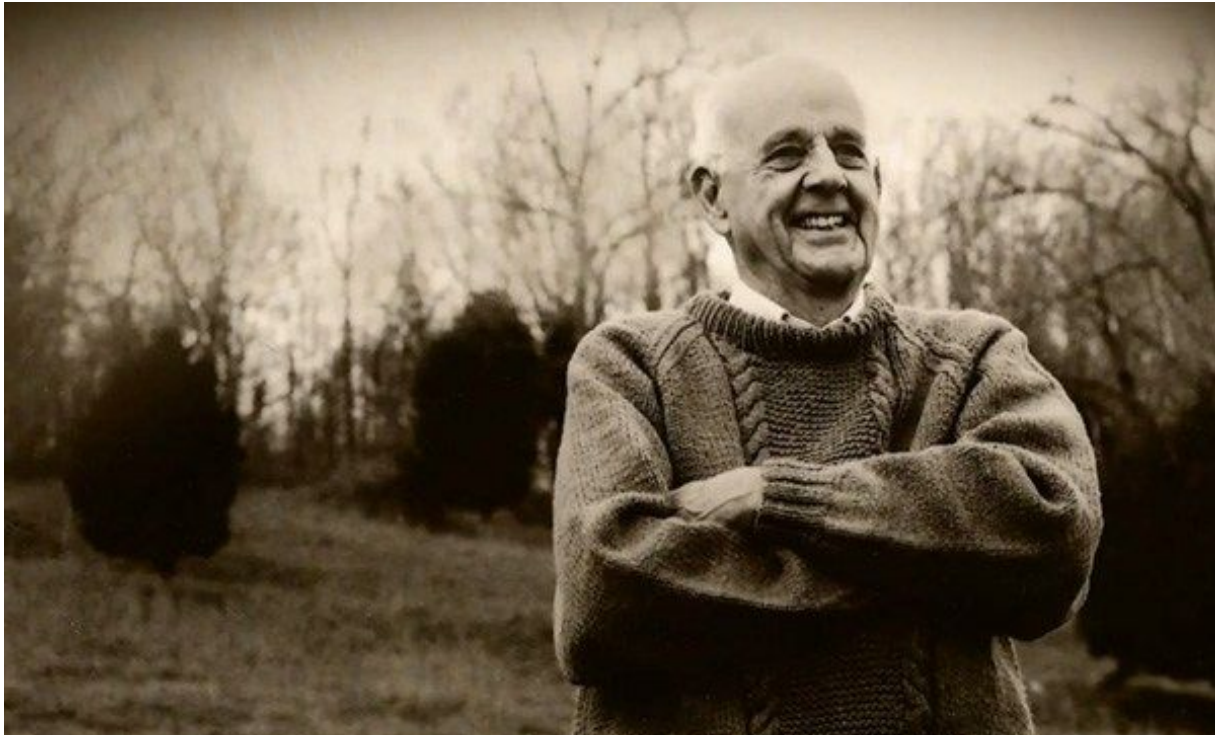
"Actually they have settled well since arriving and these young pullets are beginning to get to grips with laying, roosting and foraging and generally being a grown up hen." Paul elaborates. "You might notice some have no red combs or wattles on their head yet. These will come in the next few weeks and is a sign that eggs are soon to follow."

So not that many eggs, just yet? "Well we're only getting about five eggs a day just now because they're so young...explains Wendy. "...the pullets are only aged from 18-22 weeks so the actual laying is just beginning, really." "Yeah...the eggs to date may have been small but they're perfectly formed and totally delicious," adds Paul, smiling.

"We hope to be starting into real production possibly by the end of July," continues Wendy. "And we'd like to trial an Honesty Box system in the Coach House with IOUs available, to tally the books."

So you have it direct from the producers: in just a few weeks, fresh eggs from Paul and Wendy's free ranging hens - fed on organic feed as well as foraging on natural, biodynamic, chemical free pasture - will be available in the Coach House.... so watch out for Wendy and Paul's updates on this new 'homegrown' Egg Club....and we wish them all the very best with their welcome new venture.

Wendell Berry: America's 'Rural Prophet'



Wendell Berry: photo by Guy Mendes (From Brain Pickings website: online Journal of Ideas)

'Poet, novelist, and environmentalist Wendell Berry lives on a farm in Port Royal, Kentucky near his birthplace, where he has maintained a farm for over 40 years. Mistrustful of technology, he holds deep reverence for the land and is a staunch defender of agrarian values. He is the author of over 40 books of poetry, fiction, and essays. His poetry celebrates the holiness of life and everyday miracles often taken for granted.

Critics and scholars have acknowledged Wendell Berry as a master of many literary genres, but whether he is writing poetry, fiction, or essays, his message is essentially the same: **humans must learn to live in harmony with the natural rhythms of the earth or perish.**

The Unsettling of America: Culture and Agriculture, which analyzes the many failures of modern, mechanized life, is one of the key texts of the environmental movement, but Berry, a political maverick, has criticized environmentalists as well as those involved with big businesses and land development.

In his opinion, many environmentalists place too much emphasis on wild lands without acknowledging the importance of agriculture to our society.

Berry strongly believes that small-scale farming is essential to healthy local economies, and that strong local economies are essential to the survival of the species and the well-being of the planet.

In an interview with *New Perspectives Quarterly* editor Marilyn Berlin Snell, **Berry** explained:

"Today, local economies are being destroyed by the 'pluralistic,' displaced, global economy, which has no respect for what works in a locality. The global economy is built on the principle that one place can be exploited, even destroyed, for the sake of another place."

Berry further believes that traditional values, such as marital fidelity and strong community ties, are essential for the survival of humankind. In his view, the disintegration of communities can be traced to the rise of agribusiness: large-scale farming under the control of giant corporations. Besides relying on chemical pesticides and fertilizers, promoting soil erosion, and causing depletion of ancient aquifers, agribusiness has driven countless small farms out of existence and destroyed local communities in the process.

In his *New Perspectives Quarterly* interview Berry commented that such large-scale agriculture is morally as well as environmentally unacceptable:

"We must support what supports local life, which means community, family, household life—the moral capital our larger institutions have to come to rest upon. If the larger institutions undermine the local life, they destroy that moral capital just exactly as the industrial economy has destroyed the natural capital of localities—soil fertility and so on. Essential wisdom accumulates in the community much as fertility builds in the soil."

This is an extract from an article in the Poetry Foundation online journal. To read the entire article and to find out more about the man and his work, click on this link:

[Life and Writings of Wendell Berry](#)

On Saturday (25th) our 2nd annual Speakeasy event in We Create will be focusing on the life and works of this articulate, countercultural and, in this age of accepted conglomerate control and consumer passivity, contrary American. Countryfile presenter **Ella McSweeney** and Writer and Environmentalist **Paul Kingsnorth** will be reviewing and celebrating the man and his work.

See Upcoming Events on Page 7 for details.

WENDELL BERRY

New Collected Poems



Wendell Berry: [How to be a Poet... and a Complete Human Being](#)

Click on link above to read more of the article and to hear Wendell Berry read his own poem. This copy of How to Be a Poet taken from Brain Pickings.org- an online Journal of Ideas.

HOW TO BE A POET

(to remind myself)

Make a place to sit down.
Sit down. Be quiet.
You must depend upon
affection, reading, knowledge,
skill — more of each
than you have — inspiration,
work, growing older, patience,
for patience joins time
to eternity. Any readers
who like your poems,
doubt their judgment.

Breathe with unconditional breath
the unconditioned air.
Shun electric wire.
Communicate slowly. Live
a three-dimensional life;
stay away from screens.
Stay away from anything
that obscures the place it is in.
There are no unsacred places;
there are only sacred places
and desecrated places.

Accept what comes from silence.
Make the best you can of it.
Of the little words that come
out of the silence, like prayers
prayed back to the one who prays,
make a poem that does not disturb
the silence from which it came.

For more on Wendell Berry's writings and poetry see the [Poetry Foundation](#) website.

Upcoming Events:

Saturday 25th June: Speakeasy #2 in Bay 1, WeCreate Centre

7pm- 10.30pm Entry: 20e/ 10e* Hosted by Cultivate & Community Farm

“What I Stand For is What I Stand On,” Wendell Berry.

An evening of food, music, performance, poetry and inspired conversation.

RTE's Ella McSweeney and multi award winning author Paul Kingsnorth frame this evening with their thoughts on the extraordinary life and times of one of America's most iconic individuals – Wendell Berry.

Food from 7 pm, Entertainment from 8pm. Entry 20e* - tickets from Sile Na Gig's or pay at the door (*10e if you bring food...see below) . Proceeds to Community Farm and Cloughjordan Arts for development of Bay 1 in We Create as an Arts Hub.

Food from Community Farm Members, Riot Rye Bakery and the Community Co-op. *If you bring food to share, please write up a card describing its 'story'...i.e. if locally sourced, include where the main ingredients come from- as well as a description of the dish- and you will pay only 10e entry fee- thanks!

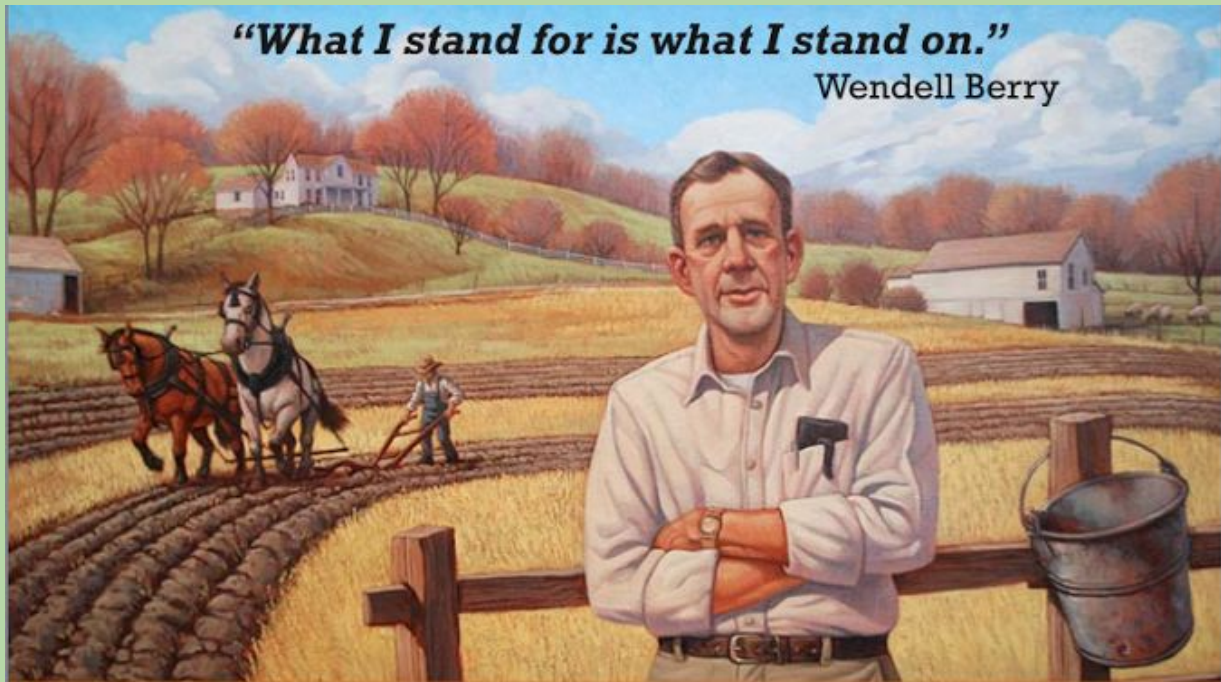
For bookings: Sheelagh na Gig's www.sheelaghnagig.com or email events@cloughjordancommunityfarm.ie

Fri 19th - Mon 22nd August: All Ireland Permaculture Gathering 2016: at Cloughjordan Community Farm, with Cultivate

The All Ireland Permaculture Gathering is about bringing people and ideas together who share a common interest in sustainable and ethical methods to building a better world.

First held in Co. Wicklow in 2011, between 200 & 300 people have attended the gathering each year since. It is a weekend camp to support the development of Permaculture in Ireland & Northern Ireland by providing an opportunity to network, celebrate and learn together. It is not a passive event laid on by others, but rather an active participatory gathering which is co-created by a year team and camp attendees. People come and host talks and workshops, share skills and information and participate in this dynamic community event.

For further information contact learning@thevillage.ie



“What I stand for is what I stand on.”
Wendell Berry

A CONVIVIAL EVENING
speakeatsy
CELEBRATING THE WORDS & WISDOM OF WENDELL BERRY

FOOD | MUSIC | CONVERSATION | SPOKEN WORD
SATURDAY 25th JUNE | FROM 19.00 TO 22.30 | €20/10
WE CREATE | CLOUGHJORDAN ECOVILLAGE

See the new Community Farm Website at: <http://cloughjordancommunityfarm.ie/dir/>

The Farm Website also contains a link to the Farm Facebook page which contains even more detail on the above event.

Members Suggestions and Queries:

Our Comments and Queries Box in the Coach House had a couple of queries and observations this month about the After Five Box which we address below.

After Five Box:

As mentioned earlier in the Newsletter, due to an unfortunate combination of events - extreme weather plus a serious lack of labour and help on the Farm- due mainly to having very few Wwoofers this year (which was in turn mostly due to lack of accommodation for same) - **our Harvest has been very late getting to the stage of relative abundance we are used to at this point in the year.** The Farm team, especially the Producers, are very aware that this has led to disappointment at the reduced levels of produce in the Coach House at this time.

With more pressure on the general Harvest, it seems **the After Five Box and its lack of content, both before and after 5pm, have become an issue.** We are discussing the best option to try and preserve the Farm's 'fair share' approach to Harvest and **one idea suggested by a Member is that the After 5pm Box goes up to the Coach House later in the day i.e. it simply goes up after 5.** Sounds good to us.... and once we have confirmed that someone can regularly deliver it to the Coach House later in the day, we shall let you know as soon as that starts.

Producer's/Grower's Report:

We intend in the future to communicate more closely with Members on the crops and their progress via a more detailed **Producer's Report which shall be sent out monthly, in a bid to keep Members in the loop as to crop progress/ growing problems/ pest issues (rabbits are a serious problem at present, especially as we cannot afford to buy protective fencing) as well as outlining what is being planted etc.** This monthly report should help Members' understanding of some of the many challenges faced by our growers- financial, labour, equipment and weather related.

As outlined on the opening page of this Newsletter, however, much produce is ripening now in the tunnels and a lot of our winter plants are in the ground; seasonal fruits and veg, including courgettes, cucumbers, tomatoes, broad beans, basil and our sweet and chilli peppers are growing rapidly and we should have early potatoes in the next week or so.

Finally: Also please note that, for now, the Harvest delivery will remain at TWICE a week till further notice- i.e. on Mondays and Fridays. We thank you for your patience.

We'll keep you up to date with what is happening in the days and weeks ahead and continue to let you know what to expect in the Coach House with our twice weekly Harvest reports.

The Comments and Suggestions Box gets emptied and reviewed once a month but if you have any queries re. produce or the Farm generally that cannot wait for our monthly bulletin reply, please contact Eileen Brannigan on ebrannig@eircom.net or Tamara McGinty on tamaramacginty@gmail.com

Recipes: Ideas for Seasonal Eating

June/July: These are the months for fresh, zingy ingredients and cool, leafy salads; tis the season of quiches; frittatas; grilled or smoked fish with rocket and cress; courgettes roasted, grilled and grated; with little bursts of chilli sprinkled lightly over everything.. In just a few weeks, the magical combination of deep red tomatoes from the vine and fragrant green basil will make their usual mouth watering appearance.....But for now we are focusing on one of this season's most under-rated, yet attractive, adaptable and user friendly of veggies: **the quietly cool courgette**....

[Pea, Feta and Summer Herb Frittata](#)

This one is easy to make... and light but filling enough for a summer evening supper. You can use the Farm courgettes for this and add in some Farm dill, mint and parsley along with thoseand just about all you have to get a hold of now is the cream cheese.

[Summer Ratatouille Salad](#)

Yes... it is a Jamie Oliver recipe; it had to happen eventually....this one is nice and fresh and again involves courgettes and our core Farm herbs.

[Courgette, Feta and Mint Salad](#)

And for something similar but warm and nourishing, with few extra ingredients and therefore little extra effort:

[Griddled Courgettes with Pine Nuts and Feta](#)

So don't go saying you don't know what to do with your courgettes!

And please do send us your own recipes. Recipes you've tried out at home and personal favourites, old and new, are always welcome.... no matter how informal.

Send to **Eileen or Tamara** at the email addresses above for inclusion here in the next edition of our Newsletter. We know many of you love to cook; share a handy tip or two with us.... or a culinary experiment that worked out surprisingly well.



Wendell Berry From the Poetry Foundation website

Photo: Dan Caracco

The Peace of Wild Things

By [Wendell Berry](#)

When despair for the world grows in me
and I wake in the night at the least sound
in fear of what my life and my children's lives may be,
I go and lie down where the wood drake
rests in his beauty on the water, and the great heron feeds.

I come into the peace of wild things
who do not tax their lives with forethought
of grief. I come into the presence of still water.
And I feel above me the day-blind stars
waiting with their light. For a time
I rest in the grace of the world, and am free.

Accreditations:

Photographs taken
by: Eileen
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