

January 2011

Dear Picadilly Farm shareholders and friends,

Winter set in cold and snowy this year, giving us the opportunity to enjoy a holiday break and to postpone further construction of the new greenhouses. January on the farm is a time for quiet office work, a peaceful moment to reflect on the season just past, and to plan for the future.

This is our 2010 Annual Report. The report contains information about the activities that took place at Picadilly Farm this past year, a summary of our 2010 income and expenses, and an outline of our plans for 2011. As a community-supported farm, we want this information to be available for all. Please let us know if you have any questions about the information presented here.

For us personally, the big news from this past growing season has nothing much to do with agriculture. Rather, it was the birth of our healthy son, Jesse, in July! So many folks helped us in keeping the farm ship afloat while we welcomed Jesse into the world - the farm crew, our assistant farm manager Susie, neighbors, our families, and shareholders all pitched in, and we thank you. We were grateful to receive help from nearby farmers, already busy enough with their own farming work – huge hugs especially to Megan, Rob, Gretta, Chuck and their farm crews for bringing their expertise to our fields when we really needed it! While we knew it would be a whirlwind as a farming family to have a baby in the summer, we were deeply uplifted by the outpouring of support, offered by so many of you, during a special moment in our lives.

Crop Production

We grew twenty-six acres of cash crops in 2010. We managed the remaining nine field acres with a mix of cover crop and bare fallow periods for weed control and soil improvement. This past season marked our second year of growing certified organic crops.

The season was notably dry and hot, in stark contrast to the cool, rainy weather of the prior two growing seasons. With our well-developed infrastructure for irrigation, we were able to water most crops about every ten days and some crops even more frequently. The water source for irrigation held steady through late August, faltering only when we were past the critical water periods for most crops. Irrigation takes a lot of time, and Bruce wisely invested in training a few other crew members about running the system. With this irrigation, it was overall an excellent growing season at Picadilly.

The high heat was superb for the quality, yield, and flavor of some crops, including: tomatoes (a banner year!); cantaloupes and watermelons (we had mountains!); cucumbers (a July glut yet again); and winter squash (with the best taste and texture we've ever grown). Of course there's always a flip side – we suffered blossom drop on peppers and eggplant, in which the blossoms abort during excessive heat. No blossoms, no fruit! We ended up with a late-set pepper harvest of nice quality fruits, but virtually no eggplant harvest from about 2000 plants. The heat also prompted an earlier than usual shift in the harvest from spring to summer crops, meaning that many of our spring successions grew together and were ready for harvest at the same time. The dry plus hot also led to difficulty in germinating the fall root crops in July, though after multiple re-sowings we brought in a good harvest of all the fall roots with the exception of rutabagas. We continued to struggle with fall crops from the brassica family: disease in the broccoli, cauliflower, and rutabagas; poor head formation in cabbage; and transplant failure for the fall Napa cabbage. We continue to study all we can now about how to grow these crops well on our light and sandy soils. Overall, 2010 will be remembered as a fantastic

year, with great yields for many crops, including surplus that we were able to pass on to shareholders and food relief organizations.

The Pick-Your-Own garden was a big hit again this year, though a bit weedier than we like. Strawberries were abundant, peas were decent in spite of poor seed vigor in the sugar snap variety, flowers were lovely, and basil was improved by more succession plantings. We were again successful in growing a great edamame crop from transplants. We were unsuccessful at containing the Mexican bean beetles in the green beans, in spite of our efforts to keep them off the plants with row covers, to parasitize them with beneficial wasps, or to let the chickens at 'em after the harvest was through. Better luck next year!

On our farm, we strive for optimal soil and crop health, as well as abundant and highly nutritious harvests. We've studied and practiced various means to achieve these ends. And we've learned that our farm embodies a unique set of physical, chemical, and biological characteristics. Each season, we decide how best to use, amend, and steward these resources, with both the immediate harvest and the long view in mind. Primarily we work within a "feed the soil" framework, knowing that healthy soils grow the healthiest food. Our practices center on enriching organic matter within soils that are kept biologically diverse and full of micro life. In 2010 we amended our soils with: compost; liquid fish fertilizer supplemented with biological stimulants such as humic acids and micronutrients; and a blend of dry powders of calcium, phosphorous, humates and micronutrients. Crops that are "heavy feeders" (such as corn, potatoes, and winter squash) were also side-dressed with an N-P-K blend made principally from chicken manure. Hopefully, we're creating a soil environment that will be resilient, productive, and laden with nutrients that find their way to our food.

While we observe that healthier plants can be more resistant to pests and disease, we still have to contend with pests and crop diseases every season. We used many strategies in 2010, all in keeping (at minimum) with the National Organic Standards. We continued moving crop families away from previous locations, which can be significant in keeping the populations of some pests in check, including Colorado potato beetles, cabbage loopers, cucumbers beetles, flea beetles and squash bugs. Rotations may diminish the presence of diseases such as alternaria in many crops, black rot in brassicas, and early blight and septoria in tomatoes. We continued to use row cover extensively and successfully in 2010, as physical exclusion for pests like flea beetles and cabbage maggots in the brassica greens and roots. We again released beneficial insects as parasites for damaging insects – trichogramma wasps to control European corn borer, and pedioibius moths to control Mexican bean beetle. We still saw high levels of both of these pests, so are uncertain as to the effectiveness of these releases. Our crop variety selections also played a role in pest and disease resistance, particularly in the cucurbit family (zukes, cukes, squash and melons), and in tomatoes and potatoes. In 2010, we used two certified organic pesticides: Entrust to control Colorado potato beetle in potato and eggplant; and Pyganic, once in the spring, to control for flea beetle in greens. We sprayed one certified organic fungicide, a copper spray, on tomatoes and potatoes. We also used a biological spray called Serenade on tomatoes, attempting to colonize the plants with "good" bacteria before the disease-causing ones could take hold. Along the same lines, we used a seed treatment called Actinovate on crops in the Chenopad family (spinach, chard, beets), to colonize "good" bacteria and enhance germination and vigor of these sometimes-tricky crops. Finally, we used a cleansing spray called Oxidate in the spring greenhouse to control algae on the tops of the Allium family (onions, etc) flats. We continued to monitor some pests and diseases that are difficult to deal with in an organic system (but easier to manage with conventional sprays), including potato leafhopper, Cucurbit family fungal diseases, and late blight in tomatoes and potatoes.

We're continually strategizing about weed control within the context of certified organic methods, time limitations, budget constraints, and production goals. We use multiple tractor-mounted implements to stir, shovel, and tickle small weeds out of the soil, but every crop still requires at least one labor-intensive pass with hands and hoes. In 2010, we scaled up our field crew for hand work, and refined some of our mechanical weeding tools. On our nine acres without cash crops, we kept half covered with oats, red clover, and grazing chickens. Soil health improved, but a lot of crabgrass that grew in and went to seed. The other half was mostly open for bare fallow weeding, allowing us to reduce the weed seed bank in this field, followed by a fall cover crop.

Crop production outlook for 2011: *Twenty-six acres of field crops is a good size for our farm business, and we'll continue growing at this size in 2011. Again, we'll have an additional nine acres of field area in a cover crop-fallow rotation. We'll move the crops through our established rotations. We'll continue with many of our tried-and-true pest and disease control practices, as well as weave in a few trials of new techniques. We look forward to learning more about and implementing advanced strategies for crop rotation, nutrient-dense produce, soil building, cover crop use, and weed control. We also plan to improve the PYO garden aesthetic and create a permanent home for an herb garden; to grow our first hoophouse tomatoes and possibly winter greens; and to research/develop ideas for raspberry production. As we have no strong intuition about the weather ahead (where is that Farmer's Almanac?), we'll plan as we can to be prepared for whatever comes our way.*

Animal Production

We continued apace with 2009, raising some pigs, sheep, and laying hens to compliment the vegetable production. For the fourth year, we raised six pigs from piglet to slaughter. Three lambs grazed at the farm crew house, keeping the grass mowed and the neighbors entertained. We managed two flocks of laying hens, with the second round of 78 hens starting egg production just as the first flock of 45 hens was sent to the butcher in October. Though our animal operations were not certified organic, we fed the animals certified organic, Vermont-processed grain, as well as produce scraps from the washbarn. Each animal had a role to play, in addition to the products that we eat and sell from each. The pigs ate lots of produce otherwise destined for the compost pile, and occupied a shady corner of the field unsuited for vegetable production. Lambs grazed the grass at the crew house. The pastured hens provided valuable nutrients through their manure, and in theory helped with pest control. Of course, shareholders and farm visitors enjoyed spending time with the farm animals, and we enjoyed caring for them.

Brendan Taaffe, a Brattleboro musician and beekeeper, continued to assist us with beekeeping at the farm. One of the hives grew increasingly aggressive, and had to be relocated just before the strawberry festival at the farm in June. Of the four hives that started the season, two are going into the winter strong. We had a very small, very tasty honey harvest.

Overall, the animal operations at Picadilly are not big money makers. Likely, we lost money in 2010, when accounting for our daily time spent feeding and moving the animals, and keeping them safe and healthy. Because the animals played positive roles besides the income we derive from them, we quantify their value based on more than just the bottom line.

Animal production outlook for 2011: *We haven't yet decided what we'll do for the coming season. We enjoy the animals, and see great value in the diversity on our farm. Yet, we have plenty of goals for the farm, plenty of activities to which we'd like to devote more time and attention. We'll keep you posted.*

Labor

We worked with a talented crew again this past year. Their good motivation, high standards, and extra support during Jesse's arrival really carried the season. Susie Parke-Sutherland began her stint as our first Assistant Manager in February. Overcoming a rugby-related injury in March, Susie proved able and willing to assist in many key areas of field and office. Our full-time crew included: Antonio, Adelina and Iver, as well as Ben who returned after working as an apprentice here in 2007. The part-time crew included, at various times: Harold, Noah, Alejandro, Caitlin, Maggie, William, Angie, Amelia, Luis, and Jorge. We took on two apprentices this year, Andrew DiMola and Jenny Quinn, both of whom pitched in just about anywhere at any time. Andrew focused on livestock care, along with tractor work that included planting bed preparation, fertilization, and weeding. Jenny's focus was on tractor seeding and weeding, along with a weekly box truck delivery to Boston's north shore. All in all, they were an exceptional group, and we are fortunate that Susie plus several of the others plan to come back to the farm this coming season.

***Labor outlook for 2011:** We have increased wages and benefits for returning crew, and will work with them to increase efficiency and effectiveness. We are ending our Apprenticeship program, at least for now. Though we both enjoy the teaching aspects of the farm, we've realized that we don't have the resources – our time and focus – to offer the overt attention to education that we feel a farm apprenticeship requires. Instead, we'll hire field workers who come with some experience, or a demonstrated ability to do farm work. We're beginning a second season with Susie as Assistant Manager, during which we'll hand over the clipboard to her with more and more frequency. We're pleased about the high rate of employee retention we've enjoyed so far, along with a nice crew house to accommodate five of them, and feel that we're well-poised for the coming year. For ourselves, we'd both like to spend more time in the field, and less time in the office (especially Jenny!); that will be an increasing priority, and may lead us to hire some administrative help.*

Sales

Picadilly is succeeding as a Community Supported Agriculture farm, and we fulfilled all of our sales commitments for the season. In 2010, we offered CSA shares through multiple streams (details about each follow after this list):

- Local, on-farm shares
- Pre-boxed shares delivered to eastern Massachusetts
- Local, extended season shares in November and December
- Extended season shares for Sunrise Farm in White River Junction, VT
- As a partner in Shared Harvest CSA winter shares in Lexington and Canton MA
- As a regular-season grower for Long Hill Orchard CSA in West Newbury MA

Locally, our CSA grew to over 200 shareholders – about 30% growth from 2009, and closing in on our build-out goal of 250-300 local shareholders. We delivered thirty of these shares to off-farm pick-up sites in Brattleboro, Greenfield and Keene, while the rest of the shareholders picked up here at the farm. About 90% of these shareholders were Full Season shareholders (25 weeks), and the other 10% were Summer shareholders (12 weeks). Our shareholder retention rate from 2009 was great, over 90%. Our Mix-and-Match distribution style on the farm continued to be successful and well-liked.

We delivered 230 pre-packed, boxed shares to pick-up sites in the eastern Massachusetts towns of Belmont, Arlington and Bedford. Sixty-five percent of the 2009 shareholders renewed for 2010. These Wednesday shares went off quite smoothly, with increasing shareholder interest and enthusiasm. There were just a few bumps along the way, when one site host moved mid season, and when tomatoes were

squished in over-packed boxes. Shareholders had the opportunity to receive surplus cucumbers and tomatoes, and several dozen eastern MA shareholders came out to visit the farm over the course of the growing season.

As anticipated, the market was strong for late-season share sales. We offered forty pre-boxed Nov-Dec shares for delivery to Greenfield and Keene. About fifty of our Full Season shareholders also elected to receive shares through December. And we again offered an extended season Nov-Dec share to forty regular season shareholders at Sunrise Farm in White River Junction, VT (owned and operated by Bruce's brother, Chuck).

Our collaborative growing for Shared Harvest Winter CSA continued in 2010. Shared Harvest is a multi-farm CSA, organized by Gretta Anderson, serving 400+ shareholders in Lexington and Canton MA. We produced about half of the vegetables for the shares, and made five full-truck deliveries between October and December.

We continued as a grower for the CSA at Long Hill Orchard in West Newbury MA. We provided about two-thirds of the Mix-and-Match produce for 150+ regular season shareholders.

In addition to our CSA shares, we also sold our produce to:

- The Farm Direct Co-op in Marblehead, Salem and Melrose, MA. They contracted with us to produce a weekly order for their 700+ members.
- Waltham Fields Community Farm (where Jenny worked in 1998 and 2001). They contracted with us to produce potatoes and winter squash for their 365+ CSA shareholders.
- Green Meadows Farm in Hamilton MA. They contracted with us to produce potatoes, winter squash, sweet potatoes, and cantaloupes for their 200+ CSA shareholders.
- The World Peas Co-op of the New Entry Sustainable Farming Project in Dracut MA. They contracted with us to produce various crops for their 130+ CSA shareholders.
- The Brattleboro Winter Farmer's Market, weekly in November and December.
- Small-scale wholesale deliveries to local co-ops, farm-to-school programs, and other farms.

***Sales outlook for 2011:** We are making a few important shifts in 2011, toward the goals of simplifying our markets and focusing fully on CSA. We plan to expand our share sales, particularly in eastern Massachusetts, and to discontinue wholesale growing as much as possible. We'll continue to grow our local CSA, toward our goal of 250-300 shareholders. In eastern MA, we'll offer our shares on two delivery days, to an expanded number of pick-up sites, giving us the capacity to accommodate up to 500 shareholders. We're hoping for a high shareholder retention rate, and to sell out of shares earlier, as our reputation for consistent quality, good variety, and excellent communication spreads. We'll again grow for extended season/winter shares, for distribution here at the farm, through Sunrise Farm CSA, and through Shared Harvest CSA. We will continue to collaborate with Waltham Fields Community Farm, by growing potatoes and winter squash for them, and by growing 100+ full shares for their expanding membership. Green Meadows Farm CSA will contract with us to grow bulk crops for their shareholders. If we sell our available shares, these markets will be sufficient to meet our budget.*

Infrastructure and Equipment

We had an easy year, in terms of new purchases and construction work at the farm, with significantly less action than every year prior. There were three primary reasons for this. With a new baby coming in July, we needed as little "extra" to manage as possible. Second, the crew house purchase in 2009

stretched our infrastructure budget a little farther than our comfort zone, so we were happy to hold back for a season. And finally, the farm is just in pretty good shape! Coming into our fifth year here, we've accomplished many of the "have to do" projects and purchases, and are moving into the "really want to do" zone. It's a great feeling, to begin to experience Picadilly Farm as post-start-up.

Of course, we did a few things. In the washbarn, we installed a heater, making it oh-so-much easier to pack, wash and organize the fall and early winter harvests without risk of freezing either crops or fingertips. (This improvement was rated best-of-the-year by the now-warmer farm crew). Our neighbor, Harold Bigelow, improved the insulation along the west wall of the washbarn as well. While he was at it, Harold built new doors for the big tractor barn, and installed a new window in the crew break room. Between early spring plantings, the farm crew stained and painted the new doors, and renewed paint on much of the barn trim. Repairing and repainting the barn exterior will be an ongoing project.

Bruce led the charge on building a second mobile chicken coop, for the second of our rotating flocks (this one is such an improvement over the first, perhaps the original needs to be rebuilt? Or perhaps Bruce needs a spring "off" from chicken coop construction...)

In the equipment department, we purchased a new computer for the farm office, a second Allis Chalmers G tractor (the small orange ones), and a new set of tractor mounted seeders. The second G tractor and seeders build in some wiggle room in the all-too-likely event that the first ones falter at a critical moment during the April through August planting season.

We invested about \$5000 into off-farm winter maintenance and repair for the Massey Ferguson tractor, our primary tillage tractor. This tractor will need to be replaced by one that we will likely finance, so we'd like to hold out on that purchase for as many seasons as is reasonable.

The farm was awarded a \$10,000 grant from USDA, for construction of a season-extending greenhouse. We decided to fill the remaining space between the existing greenhouses and the barns - left open after we removed the old silage bunkers in 2009 - with two new greenhouse structures, purchased from Rimol Greenhouse Systems in New Hampshire. Both will be 30' x 96', with one intended for spring plant propagation and fall crop curing, and the other for unheated growing of tomatoes and possibly winter greens. Materials were delivered in early December. Albert Hudson, previous owner of this farm and now our friend and neighbor, prepared the sites. Bruce, Albert and the crew pounded in one hundred ground posts just as the ground froze around us. Construction work will resume as time and weather allow this winter and spring. It seems likely that we'll begin our spring transplants in one of the old hoop houses still this March.

Another piece of infrastructure is the property itself. We continued collaboration with the Natural Resource Conservation Service of USDA to enact our established best management practices, including our ongoing attention to soil erosion and runoff, particularly at the field edges. In April, we established about half an acre of a riparian buffer along three critical acres of the edges of our southern field. That work consisted of grade stabilization work that was hired out to Gary Beaman, along with planting of numerous native shrubs. We continued to implement NRCS-advised plans for Nutrient Management, Cover Cropping, and Integrated Pest Management.

Infrastructure & equipment priorities for 2011:

- *Finish and begin to use the two new greenhouses.*

- *Re-roof the north side of the washbarn, the final metal section to re-place the old asphalt shingles.*
- *Enact NRCs-funded projects for erosion control: repair two washed out (from the 2005 floods) grade stabilization structures at field edges; expand a riparian buffer around these areas; and improve drainage around the farmstead.*
- *Buy an additional tractor, 45hp or so, to assist with field work.*
- *Establish a permanent area for perennial Pick-Your-Own herbs, possibly in raised bed containers within the farmstead.*
- *Research possibilities for improved storage and distribution of winter crops. Begin construction if design, time and finances allow.*
- *Consider irrigation well re-development.*
- *Improve the aesthetics of the farm, especially around the parking and distribution areas.*

Financial Summary

Financially, the farm is healthy. In 2010, the business income was sufficient to pay the farm's operating expenses, as well as to pay down \$10,000 of our start-up debt, to keep current on the crew house mortgage and expenses, and to fund our capital plus infrastructural improvements for the season. A small amount of the year's profit was retained by the business, and the rest withdrawn as our family's income. The business maintains a modest cash reserve to allow for positive cash flow in the spring, and to provide a rainy day fund if we face unbudgeted and unexpected expenses.

Dating to business start-up in 2006, Picadilly Farm LLC still owes \$110,000, at zero percent interest, to two friendly lenders. We'll continue to repay \$10,000-\$20,000 on this debt each year. The business also holds a 14-year mortgage of \$71,000 on the farm crew house, with Greenfield Cooperative Bank, which is paid from the annual operating budget. Jenny and Bruce hold the farm mortgage personally, and Picadilly Farm LLC rents the land and barns from us.

Our personal income from the business increased from 2009 to 2010. Our family made our entire living from the farm, with no supplemental work off the farm. We estimate that Bruce put in about 2900 hours on the farm last season, while Jenny contributed 1200 hours (mostly in the office since June).

The financial commitment of hiring a full-time, year-round Assistant Manager has been an excellent step forward for the business. This type of position is also valuable to the broader organic farming community in our region, offering a "stepping stone" for new farmers on their path to their own farms. Overall, we continue to increase farm crew wages and benefits as we are able. Offering year-round housing, as a benefit to our five primary field crew, has proven to be of significant value in attracting and retaining skilled and dedicated staff.

Labor costs are by far the most significant expenses of the farm. Add in compensation that our family takes from the farm, and nearly 60 cents for every dollar spent on Picadilly produce goes directly toward the livelihood of one of us working here. Add again the attention we take to working with individuals and local businesses when we have projects to do, machines to fix, seeds to buy, animals to feed – much of what shareholders spend on a share goes to people and good livelihood.

A summary of the 2010 income and expense report, as well as our budget for 2011, follows below.

	2010 actual		2011 projections	
Income				
Animal product sales	\$9,500	2%	\$9,500	2%
CSA shares, on farm	\$85,000	18%	\$101,000	19%
CSA shares, off farm	\$166,000	34%	\$295,000	57%
Extended season CSA shares	\$53,300	11%	\$44,500	9%
Contract/Co-op growing	\$140,400	29%	\$45,000	9%
Wholesale & shop sales	\$25,000	5%	\$14,000	3%
NRCS Program payments	\$6,400	1%	\$10,000	2%
Total Income:	\$485,600		\$519,000	
Operating Expenses				
Animal production	\$9,700	3%	\$8,000	2%
Payroll (J&B excluded)	\$153,500	40%	\$196,500	48%
Admin, Insurance, Certifications	\$13,600	4%	\$16,700	4%
Marketing & events	\$4,000	1%	\$5,500	1%
Purchase for resale	\$3,700	1%	\$3,000	1%
NH taxes	\$1,600	0.4%	\$2,000	0%
Growing expenses	\$54,000	14%	\$54,000	13%
Repair & maintenance	\$16,500	4%	\$18,500	5%
Fuel and oil	\$9,600	3%	\$11,400	3%
Utilities	\$14,000	4%	\$15,000	4%
Farm rent (from J&B)	\$18,000	5%	\$18,000	4%
Crew house mortgage & taxes	\$10,600	3%	\$9,700	2%
Debt repayment	\$10,500	3%	\$15,000	4%
Capital Expenses				
Infrastructure & greenhouses	\$44,200	12%	\$25,000	6%
Equipment	\$15,800	4%	\$10,000	2%
Total Expenses:	\$379,300		\$408,300	
Surplus (pre-tax):	\$106,300		\$110,700	

Financial Outlook for 2011: We hope and plan to have another year well in the black. We are taking a bit of a risk with our move to doubling CSA shares in eastern MA, and away from some of the wholesale and contract growing. We feel confident about this shift in the big picture, but uncertain about how much we can actually expect to grow the eastern MA CSA in one season. The business has a modest cash reserve built as a “rainy day” fund, but we’re very hesitant to tap into it for regular operating expenses. Fortunately, we do feel reasonably confident that we could sell our produce through other markets, if we don’t meet our CSA share goals. It’s just more work, and the days aren’t getting any longer!

We plan to increase payroll spending in 2011, leaping from 40% to 48% of our budget. Several employees are returning, with earned raises. And with the elimination of our apprenticeship program, we’ll offer a higher wage to the experienced workers who take those positions. In order to accommodate this, we’re planning another relatively lean year for capital and infrastructural purchases and projects. We’ll defer several projects in order to prioritize the payroll increases,

including re-surfacing the lot in front of the big barn, and developing a well for the barns and greenhouses.

Community Involvement

Our presence in the local community continues to grow. We hosted multiple farm tours, including the Massachusetts Collaborative Regional Alliance for Farmer Training, and UNH Agricultural Extension. We participated in a few agricultural studies, with the University of Maine, UNH and the Cheshire County Conservation District. Jenny made connections with the gardeners at the Winchester Elementary School.

We hosted several social and community events here at the farm. The highlight came early in the season, at our strawberry shortcake picnic. The event featured a performance by the Arlington, MA-based Family Folk Chorale, a multigenerational chorus conducted by Chris Eastburn, whose family hosts one of our eastern MA CSA pick-up sites. The event was open to the public, and drew shareholders and community members out to enjoy the farm. A dozen shareholders and neighbors volunteered to pick berries, make and serve shortcake, and welcome folks to the day – our thanks to everyone who created a spirited afternoon. We will be delighted for a repeat in 2011! We topped off the season with a fun-filled, somewhat chaotic, second-annual Picadilly Farm Harvest Potluck and Contra Dance at the community center in Winchester. Shareholders and the farm crew shared a meal, watched a slideshow about the season, played games, and danced to the lively music of farm beekeeper Brendan Taafee with shareholder Peter Siegel. Volunteers made the evening, bringing food to share, children's games to play, and cleaning up. Enthusiasm was strong for these simple, free, family-friendly farm events.

Picadilly Farm partnered with Fair Winds Farm and the Riverview Café in Brattleboro, offering our produce for the fourth annual September “Feast in the Field” to benefit the Vermont Fresh Network. Unfortunately, after 11 years in business, owner Tristan Toleno had to close the doors of the Riverview Café this winter, so the future of this event is uncertain.

We continued to offer weekly donations of our surplus produce after CSA distributions to local hunger-relief agencies. Volunteers from Post Oil Solutions in Brattleboro came out every Wednesday, for the fourth year running (thanks Courtney!), to sort and deliver produce to agencies in Brattleboro. They redistributed over 2500 pounds of Picadilly produce in 2010. The Northfield Food Pantry also picked up weekly boxes for the families they serve. In December, volunteers from the Community Kitchen of Keene cleaned surplus and “seconds” winter squash out of the greenhouse, taking with them nearly 3000 pounds of usable squash for their holiday meals. Brattleboro area farmer Amy Frost organized several gleaning groups in our fields, and our produce was a part of various regional free Thanksgiving meals. There is increasing community interest in not just distributing surplus harvested food, but also organizing to harvest additional surplus from local fields.

Several anonymous donors purchased and subsidized CSA shares for the community and for low-income shareholders: one for the Winchester Learning Center, an early childhood education program serving low-income families; a second for the Early Sprouts program at the Child Development Center at Keene State College; and a third donation was shared among two CSA families, who would have struggled to participate otherwise. We extend special thanks to the donors of these gifts!

Outlook for farm community in 2011: *There is good momentum for most of the activities listed above, so we'll plan to continue.*

In summary, we continue to feel grateful and humble, after another year of working with the elements of nature, people, and the current economic uncertainties. We know that we are fortunate to participate in work we believe in and are satisfied by every day. We both love to grow food, and we love to do it even more for you. We appreciate your ongoing support for Picadilly Farm, and for local, sustainable food production.

Warmly,
Jenny & Bruce
The Picadilly farmers