

January 2013

Dear Shareholders & Friends of Picadilly Farm,

Greetings from the farm! A cold chill fills the air as we write, and a light layer of snow blankets our fields and woods with a softening layer. The barns sit mostly quiet, and the hens roost contentedly in one of the hoop houses for winter.

This is our 2012 Annual Report. The report contains information about the activities at Picadilly Farm this past year, a summary of our 2012 income and expenses, and an outline of our plans for 2013. As a community-supported farm, we make this information available to all concerned. We welcome your feedback about the information presented here.

With six production years behind us now, we remain deeply committed to Community Supported Agriculture. Wherein consumers invest in a portion of the harvest ahead of time, CSA continues to represent a revolutionary leap forward for farmers. At Picadilly Farm, CSA arrangements improve our ability to share the risks of this endeavor, and to set prices that reflect our actual costs of production, which include competitive wages and benefits to our farm workers. We appreciate your support. In these dynamic agricultural times, where exciting and scary trends share news together, we're excited to be part of the growing enthusiasm for local, authentic, and tasty food.

### **Crop Production**

The 2012 season was excellent in just about every way. Like much of the country, Picadilly did endure some drought. But given our capacity to irrigate crops, the dry weather actually served to reduce disease pressure and set back the weeds, and we harvested higher quality produce for it. We grew 26 acres of cash crops. We managed the remaining nine field acres with a mix of cover crop and bare fallow periods, for weed control and soil improvement. We also planted about 1200 row feet of tomatoes in three hoop houses. Last season marked our fourth year of growing certified organic crops.

The weather was just super overall. March was strange, with days soaring up to eighty degrees. Whatever else this portends, it was fine for the propane bill associated with our seedling propagation house, and the seedlings did grow more quickly. Spring plowing commenced a few days earlier than usual, but otherwise we did not deviate much from the prescribed plan -- too risky, given the wide range of possibilities ahead. A few hard frosts during the third week of April killed many strawberry blossoms that had opened earlier than usual because of the warm spell. Otherwise, spring was uneventful, and summer came on warm and hot. And dry. We irrigated and irrigated and irrigated from our shallow wells, until the water just about ran out. And then it rained, in late July, just when we started getting nervous. Most crops were ahead all season, so that by the time the frost came in October, there was little to be affected. With memories of hurricane and blizzard from 2011, we expected bizarre weather challenges, but all was calm on the farm. Blissfully calm. It can't be overstated: the dry weather contributed to the best weed and disease control we've had here yet.

And with this fine weather for growing vegetables, many crops were good all season long. We all ate well. Spring greens were yummy and abundant – the bok choy, Napa cabbage and tat soi were especially delicious. Carrots, beets and summer squash came in on schedule, and the sweet corn was outstanding – always a coup to grow good organic sweet corn, so thumbs up, Bruce! The plate-sized fall broccoli may go down as legend. Celeriac, sweet potatoes, green beans, Gilfeather turnips and fall carrots were all vibrant this year.

The Pick-Your-Own garden was excellent, and very popular with shareholders. In spite of a smaller pea and strawberry harvest than we planned, the garden was a weed-free win. The short harvest season of PYO tomatoes was disappointing, but we prolonged the harvest as long as we could before mowing in Late Blight-infected

plants. Cut flowers were excellent, beans were plentiful, field herbs worked out fine, and there were more edamame and husk cherries than anyone could pick. The herb garden outside the barn was well used, and your farmers continue to learn about container gardening there. Many local shareholders took advantage of first-ever end-of-season gleanings in peppers, eggplant, and tomatoes.

Without a doubt, some crops were challenging, including: onions, field tomatoes and cucurbit family crops. Onions and shallots were a headache. Though the seedlings took well and the early weeding was good, these alliums suffered later from some combination of grass weeds, dry weather, and thrip (insect) damage. Alliums prefer steady moisture and plenty of soil organic matter, conditions which are tough to achieve on our light "Agawam" soils. Onions did not cure well after harvest either, and a significant percentage rotted in storage. In early July, field tomatoes became infected again with the Late Blight fungus, reminiscent of our loss of that crop in 2009. We spent many hours cutting down and bagging out infected plants, a dismal job. In a losing battle, we put in way too much time spraying the tomatoes with a certified-organic copper fungicide and a concoction of beneficial organisms. More than once, we declared that field tomatoes are "over" at Picadilly! Late Blight eventually infected the hoophouse tomatoes as well, but not until late September and without the same ferocity. In cucurbit crops, a common fungal disease called scab reared its head in June, setting back the winter squash, the second round of melons, and the last summer squash. The "specialty" winter squash – delicata, acorn, sunshine and buttercup – didn't bounce back to full health, and even many fruits that were harvestable didn't store well. The second watermelon planting never made it into the barn at all, as a rafter of wild turkeys enjoyed many a melon for early breakfast. Hmm, thoughts of a Turkey Share? As we expect, the conditions of each year always serve some crops better than others. Fortunately, with some 42 crops and over 100 seed varieties in our plan, chances are good for there to be many winners.

At Picadilly, our production techniques evolve and (hopefully) improve every year. In 2012, we focused on: expanding hoophouse tomato production; trialing a new type of insect-exclusion netting; and implementing a few specific fertility ideas. Tomato hoophouse production expanded to our full capacity -- 1200 row feet in three houses. We learned and implemented a better trellising system, and many of the plants grew right up to the roof. The yields improved, though the flavor was just average --- more to learn! We trialed a new type of insect-exclusion netting over the bok choy, Napa cabbage, green beans and rutabagas. Compared to the spun-bonded polypropylene fabric we've been using up until now, this Proteknet is easier to see through (very beneficial to observe how the crops are growing!), and is more porous, for better ventilation and thus decreased disease pressure. And, of course, Proteknet is four times more expensive than regular crop row cover! By our calculations, it is worth the expense for many crops, so we'll replace the old row cover with Proteknet over the next couple seasons. Regarding fertility, we borrowed the following technique from some New York farmer friends, specifically to increase nutrient availability for heavy feeding fall brassica crops: seed oats and bell beans in the spring as a cover crop; let the beans fix nitrogen from the air into the soil for several months; till under in late June; plant a few weeks later with fall broccoli and cabbage seedlings. The fall broccoli and cabbage came in beautifully, but we'll give the sequence a few more years' trial before claiming success. Overall, though it's difficult for us to have opportunity for rigorous science, our observations say we're headed in the right directions for Picadilly conditions.

Crop production outlook for 2013: As we begin our seventh season of growing on these fields, we understand more deeply the natural capacities and limitations of this land. Sandy, Agawam soil types naturally favor some crops (sweet potatoes, carrots, greens), and don't support others as easily (brassicas, alliums). We'll use and cultivate this expanding understanding in ways that are still unfolding. Twenty-six acres of field crops is a good size for our farm business, and we're planning to continue at this size in 2013. We'll continue to examine our best and worst crop producers, seeking the reasons. We plan to use more of the Proteknet insect netting. We await final approval for certified-organic use of biodegradable mulches that would be super to use instead of plastic sheeting under nearly 20% of our field crops. We hope to avoid falling off the "tomato cliff" once again, and will use some of winter's time to study up on our options! Post-harvest produce handling will be a focus this season, as we prepare to comply with the still-unfolding regulations of the Food Safety Modernization Act.

## **Animal Production**

Raising animals is a small part of our work at Picadilly. In 2012 we raised six pigs and over 300 laying hens. Animal production complements our produce growing in key ways: the pigs eat the mountain of barn “seconds”; the chickens add nutrients to our light soils; the honeybees provide pollinations; and the barn cats are on the payroll for rodent control. Of course, when our animal products are available, they sell well.

Once again, we raised six pigs from shoat to bacon at the farm. This year’s drift was friendly and cooperative. The “Yorkshire” piglets bought in from the Natick (MA) Community Organic Farm in May. They feasted on an abundance of produce scraps from our washbarn, with supplemental organic grain every day. Shareholders often walked out to the porcine corner to visit them. Sam from Manning Hill Farm up the road lent us his trailer, and in November Bruce took the pigs to Adams Farm slaughterhouse in Athol, MA. All of the pork was sold by the half animal, mostly to returning buyers. The price of \$4.75 per pound of the animals’ hanging weight was up from \$4.50 in 2011, reflecting a rise in organic grain costs. Breaking down operating expenses and income, the farm earned an acceptable return raising pigs, comparable to our vegetable production.

The 2012 New Year dawned with about 140 “Rhode Island Red” hens on the farm, laying well. In mid-April, we brought home 200 “Tetra Amber” pullets from a hatchery in Pennsylvania, beautiful white and tan birds with a calm demeanor. After a coyote break-in the very first night, the rest of the season proceeded without major incursions. The hens lived in the fields, free-ranging within an electric fence. Their portable coop was moved every day or two, to maximize the fertility benefit of the manure in our soils. Hens ate certified-organic grain, crop residues and forage, as well as some kitchen and barn scraps. Shareholders enjoyed visiting the hens, and children loved throwing bits of food inside the fence and watching the chickens scurry for them. Eastern MA shareholders participated in an egg share, with about 140 folks receiving a weekly half or full dozen eggs. Eggs were available for purchase at CSA distributions on the farm, and the surplus was sold wholesale to several local Co-ops and farm stands. The Reds were slaughtered in November at Westminster Meats in Vermont, and shareholders purchased the stew birds here at the farm. The Tetra Ambers are still producing eggs, from their winter resort (one of the big hoopouses). Breaking down operating expenses and income, the financial returns from laying hens do not represent a profit for the farm.

Brendan Taaffe, a musician and beekeeper, continued to assist us as beekeeper at the farm, with two hives. We stopped raising three sheep on the crew house lawn this year, as the crew was no longer interested in having them.

Animal production outlook for 2013: We plan to raise six pigs again. Laying hens are at this point unlikely, as are any other livestock expansions. We may have opportunity to partner with other producers, to supply eggs and meats to our shareholders.

## **Labor**

Picadilly Farm employed over 20 people last season, who put in a combined 16,000+ hours on the farm. Five employees lived in the two farm crew houses, while the rest lived locally. Picadilly employees received a competitive hourly wage, plus farm produce, sick pay, annual pay raises, and for some, season-end bonuses and year-round housing.

The Picadilly crew included one full-time, year-round Assistant Manager -- the role filled by Susie Parke-Sutherland for three seasons running. The backbone of the crew was formed by eight full-season workers, who did our work on the ground from March through December. They were: Walter Kolenda, Allegra Halverson, Antonio Mendez, Iver Mendez, Molly Dowd, Jose Garcia, Alejandro Perez and Adelina Reyes. Part-timers Sarah Strain and Jason Kobel also pitched in. The crew successfully shouldered a wide variety of tasks, including planting, weeding, harvesting, washing, packing, tractor work, maintenance tasks, and animal chores. We wish Walter & Sarah well as they move on to life out west, and we hope to see many of the others back at the farm this spring.

During local CSA distributions, Harold Bigelow returned to staff the Tuesday shop, and Jodie Hoye again staffed Saturdays. Our Eastern MA delivery driver position went from Joe Hoye to Tom Amato, who both left for full-time jobs, before settling in nicely with Doug McCarthy, who would like to return in 2013. Our summer weeders were a rotating group of many, including our first ever “boy squad” of 13-15 year olds! The weeder group included: Jasmine, Julia, Dylan, Brian, Maggie, Elizabeth, Marisol, Ben, Willie, and Jacob.

Albert Hudson, previous owner of this farm and now our neighbor, continued to offer his skills, time, guidance, and sage intuition, as he also developed a new shallow well in the hollow, helped with animal chores, kept the lawn mowed, and sprayed fertilizers. A neighbor and young mechanic, PR Woods, worked diligently to keep the Picadilly fleet roadworthy.

Labor outlook for 2013: We're arranging for many returning workers in 2013, including Susie, Antonio, Iver, Doug, Alejandro, Allegra, Jose, Jodie, PR, Jason, and Harold. We are currently hiring for the upcoming season, and will advertise our summer positions at local colleges, as well as on-line. The crew houses are running well, with some winter maintenance required. This winter, we are updating employee and safety policies on the farm, and expanding our safety training program for farm crew.

## **Sales**

Picadilly Farm is well established in the marketplace as a Community Supported Agriculture farm. We've continued to maintain a much smaller wholesale and “contract growing” presence. Seven years since groundbreaking, the size and scope of the farm's sales are relatively stable.

In 2012, we offered our CSA shares through multiple established streams:

- Local shares
- Pre-boxed shares delivered to eastern Massachusetts
- Collaborative shares with Waltham Fields Community Farm, in Waltham MA
- Pre-boxed December shares to extend the season at the farm and in Keene
- Extended season shares for Sunrise Farm CSA in White River Junction VT
- Partnership in Shared Harvest CSA for winter shares to Arlington and Canton MA

Locally, Picadilly Farm CSA grew to 275 shareholders, up from 260 in 2011, and very close to our goal of 300 shareholders on the farm. Most folks picked up at the farm. We delivered thirty-five shares to off-farm pick-up sites in Keene, at both the Cheshire Medical Center and the Keene State College Child Development Center. Two gracious shareholder volunteers also delivered a handful of shares to Brattleboro and Greenfield each week. About 85% of local shareholders were Full Season participants (25 weeks), while the other 15% were Summer Season shareholders (12 weeks). Our shareholder retention rate from 2011 was great, just under 90%. The Mix-and-Match distribution style on the farm continued to be successful and well-liked.

We delivered 425 pre-packed shares to pick-up sites in nine eastern Massachusetts towns. Twelve of the sites were at shareholder homes and two were in office buildings. Thanks to all our hosts for hosting us (again) this season! We added three new distribution points in 2012: residences in North Reading and Arlington, and the business office of Abt Associates in Cambridge. Nearly 70% percent of the 2011 shareholders renewed for 2012, which is our average renewal rate for these shares. These Tuesday and Thursday deliveries went off quite smoothly, with just a few bumps and glitches along the way – including a microburst windstorm in east Arlington that closed down that pick-up site one Thursday. A number of shareholders traveled out to the farm over the course of the season, to visit and enjoy the Pick Your Own garden. Eastern Mass shareholders had the opportunity to receive surplus pickling cucumbers and summer squash in addition to the regular weekly box, and some also signed up for an Egg Share each week. Our sales goal was 425 shares, which we met, but only through pro-rated

sales that continued through August, so we fell a bit short on the budget goal for these shares.

Collaboration with Waltham Fields Community Farm (MA) again went well, building on the relationship we've had with this special place ever since Jenny worked there in 1997. Picadilly has been growing the winter squash and potatoes for their 500-share urban CSA for the past six years. For the second season running, Picadilly also grew 100 regular season shares for WFCF. We delivered the produce in bulk along with the boxed-share deliveries to Eastern MA. Then the WFCF farmers folded the produce into their CSA program. The collaboration was fun and valuable – as an urban farm, WFCF has more CSA “market” and less land, contrasted with Picadilly's circumstance of abundant land but lighter population concentration right around the farm.

Picadilly offered 100 “extended season” December shares for local shareholders, with pick-ups at the farm and at The Works Café in Keene. Bruce's brother, Chuck, at Sunrise Farm in White River Junction, VT, again offered Picadilly produce to extend his own farm season into November and December, for about 40 of his regular season shareholders. After the tremendous harvests of the growing season, these boxes were easy to fill, and the shares were larger than normal. Shareholders enjoyed the fresh arugula greens, grown in one of the hoopouses, post-tomatoes.

Our growing for the Shared Harvest CSA continued in 2012. Shared Harvest is a multi-farm CSA that serves shareholders in Arlington and Canton, MA, from October through December. Our organizer, Jane Hammer from Arlington, brings together a number of growers and value-added producers, to create a very nice monthly share of local food. Picadilly again contributed about half of the organic vegetables, with our friends at Riverland Farm in Sunderland, MA, contributing the other half. The mechanics of our six deliveries went smoothly and Jane did an excellent job pulling the details together. Share sale goals fell somewhat short of projections, which in hindsight were just too ambitious.

The contracted growing continued, in which we arranged in advance with other CSAs/farmer friends to grow specific crops for their shareholders. Contracted sales for 2012 were similar to season's past, and included: Waltham Fields Community Farm (potatoes, winter squash), Green Meadows Farm (potatoes, winter squash, sweet potatoes), Appleton Farms CSA (sweet potatoes), Tracie's Community Farm (potatoes, sweet potatoes), and Hillside Springs CSA (sweet potatoes).

With several of our sales goals undersold at the start of June, we planted extra beds of sweet potatoes and fall carrots, crops that grow well at Picadilly and are relatively easy to wholesale in the fall. With abundant harvests all year, there was extra to sell even after our CSA streams were satisfied. In particular, we sold \$16,000 of sweet potatoes and fall carrots to Boston Organics. We also offered much smaller volumes of fall produce to: Greenfields Market Co-op, McCusker's Co-op, Blueberry Fields Market, Wishing Stone Farm, Northfield Mt. Herman school, World Peas CSA, First Light Farm CSA, Windham Farm & Food Network, and Monadnock Menus. Windham Food and Monadnock Menus are relatively new local efforts seeking to consolidate food from local farms for institutional and restaurant buyers.

Sales outlook for 2013: Things are good, so full speed ahead. We'll budget a little more conservatively for share sales this year, so we're not under financial pressure at the wrong times. We are also in conversation with the manager of the new food coop opening in Keene – we may become one of their growers. Administratively, Jenny plans to work this fall on database re-development with a friend, to simplify our shareholder sign-ups and communication.

## **Infrastructure and Equipment**

Picadilly Farm infrastructure and equipment are currently in fine shape, and well maintained.

Our primary infrastructure goal in 2012 was improvement of irrigation capacity. In the spring, we hired a well company to research and install a shallow well that would yield at least the 90 gallons-a-minute necessary to serve a travelling reel used to irrigate three-quarters of our crops. They located the new well adjacent to the smaller wells we have plumbed together for past use, and dug a positive test well. Of course there's always some guesswork and luck involved with underground work... and we struck out. Unfortunately, the completed well would only yield 30 gallons-a-minute, no improvement for our irrigation demands. So, we instead connected the new water source to the nearby crew mobile home, which had been connected to a neighbor's well for the water source – an upgrade, but not the one we sought!

Following that set back, we shifted focus to another potential water source down in the hollow, past the small PYO field behind the greenhouses, near a stream that meanders down to the Connecticut River. Several years ago, Albert installed a shallow, two-inch diameter well there. This well delivers 40-50 gallons a minute, and serves drip irrigation needs for about one-quarter of Picadilly crops. Last summer, Albert installed a second two-inch well and achieved a similar yield. With these two points plumbed together, he created a back-up water source suitable to run the travelling irrigation reel. Timely enough, during the summer drought, we used both water sources significantly. Eventually, as the dry spell progressed, our irrigation withdrawals outpaced re-charge rates in both locations, and we had to ration carefully. Rain at the end of July was welcome, and necessary. We finished the season still puzzling about how to improve water management on this sandy farm.

Additional infrastructure & equipment developments in 2012 included: improvements of the two old hoopouses' structure and soil, to prepare for tomato growing; purchase of a new plastic mulch layer, for use with raised beds and straw mulch pathways; purchase of an additional pickup truck for field service; and purchase of a new laptop computer for the office. Ongoing maintenance highlights included: re-roofing the washbarn roof in metal; replacing a frame section of the delivery box truck; retiring one of the farm field pickup trucks; and improving the performance of our second Allis Chalmers "G" tractor.

Picadilly Farm continues a contract with the Natural Resource Conservation Service, in which NRCS will share costs with us to implement good stewardship practices on the farm. Though we had plans to improve water drainage and mitigate erosion risks through the center of the farm, the NRCS postponed the work due to backlogs in their engineering department.

Infrastructure & equipment priorities for 2013: These days, we mainly focus on maintaining and replacing existing infrastructure and equipment. 2013 may be the Year of the Truck, with replacements pending for the delivery truck, the on-road pick-up truck, and a field truck. We'll begin improvements to the layout and use of our washbarn, to facilitate longer-term compliance with pending regulations of the Food Safety Modernization Act. The crew houses need some maintenance, and the break room/bathroom in the barn could use an upgrade. As the budget allows, the equipment "wish list" includes: a flame weeder; tractor-mounted torsion weeding implements; a second irrigation pump to allow use of both well fields concurrently; and a straw shredder. Following another difficult year for disease in the field tomatoes, we would like to expand our tomato production in covered tunnels; but these likely won't make the cut for 2013. If timing coincides, we'll move forward with NRCS on our current drainage plan.

## **Financial Summary**

Financially, Picadilly Farm is healthy, and 2012 was relatively uneventful. Income exceeded expenses, and we turned a small profit - always a good thing! The business maintains a modest cash reserve to allow for positive cash flow in the winter/spring, and to provide a rainy day fund for unbudgeted and unexpected expenses. It made good sense to add to that, after drawing from it to purchase the crew mobile home in 2011. We paid off

\$10,000 of our farm start-up loan, with \$100,000 still remaining on a zero-percent interest loan from a generous friend. The business also holds a mortgage of \$68,000 on the farm crew house, which is paid from the regular 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 slightly from 2011 to 2012, and our family made our entire living from the farm, with no supplemental work off the farm. As self-employed workers, we are experiencing significant increases every year in the cost of our high-deductible health insurance policy, and a 20% increase in 2012 was actually just par for the course.

Labor costs are by far the most significant expenses of the farm. Nearly two-thirds of every dollar spent on Picadilly produce goes directly toward the livelihood of one of us working here.

We kept a careful eye on the budget all season, in consideration of the reality that we'd planned bullishly for share sales that did not completely come to pass. Fortunately, the cards fell our way, and the season was an excellent one, with strong opportunities for wholesaling the surplus crops we planted for fall harvest.

A summary of the 2012 income and expense report, as well as our budget for 2013, follows below.

	2012 projections		2012 actual		2013 projections	
<b>Income</b>						
Animal product sales	\$17,500	3%	\$33,000	6%	\$9,700	2%
CSA shares, on farm	\$162,500	29%	\$135,400	23%	\$143,000	24%
CSA shares, off farm	\$345,500	61%	\$340,300	57%	\$341,700	58%
Contract growing	\$35,000	6%	\$52,900	9%	\$52,500	9%
Wholesale & shop sales	\$9,000	2%	\$33,000	6%	\$38,000	6%
NRCS Program payments	\$0	0%	\$1,000	0%	\$0	0%
<b>Total Income:</b>	<b>\$569,500</b>		<b>\$595,600</b>		<b>\$584,900</b>	
<b>Operating Expenses</b>						
Animal production	\$11,000	2%	\$24,500	5%	\$7,500	2%
Payroll (J&B excluded)	\$215,000	47%	\$215,300	46%	\$210,000	46%
Admin, Insurance, Certifications	\$17,900	4%	\$19,890	4%	\$22,850	5%
Marketing & events	\$4,000	1%	\$5,550	1%	\$4,000	1%
Purchase for resale	\$4,000	1%	\$4,900	1%	\$5,000	1%
NH taxes	\$2,500	1%	\$2,550	0.5%	\$3,000	1%
Growing expenses	\$66,000	15%	\$80,800	17%	\$77,500	17%
Repair & maintenance	\$22,600	5%	\$25,500	5%	\$15,000	3%
Fuel and oil	\$14,500	3%	\$16,350	4%	\$17,350	4%
Utilities	\$18,000	4%	\$11,900	3%	\$13,500	3%
Farm rent (from J&B)	\$18,000	4%	\$18,000	4%	\$18,000	4%
Crew house mortgage & taxes	\$10,200	2%	\$10,900	2%	\$10,400	2%
Debt repayment	\$15,000	3%	\$10,000	2%	\$10,000	2%
<b>Capital Expenses</b>						
Infrastructure & Equipment	\$35,000	8%	\$18,250	4%	\$39,000	9%
NRCS Program expenses	\$0	0%	\$0	0%	\$0	0%
Mobile Home purchase & renovation	\$0	0%	\$0	0%	\$0	0%
<b>Total Expenses:</b>	<b>\$453,700</b>		<b>\$464,390</b>		<b>\$453,100</b>	
<b>Surplus (pre-tax):</b>	<b>\$115,800</b>	26%	<b>\$131,210</b>	28%	<b>\$131,800</b>	29%

## **Financial Outlook for 2013:**

We are budgeting carefully, as costs of our inputs (seeds, fertilizer and animal feed) continue to rise. After ruthless scrutiny, laying hens are getting the axe (metaphorically), as they haven't made the financial grade. Several capital purchases loom, including replacement of the box truck, which will likely involve a multi-year, short-term loan. We aim to re-finance the mortgage on the crew house, for a better rate. We're just beginning to look into a conservation easement, selling the development rights, on one-third of the property that is not yet protected. While the financial life of the business moves along calmly, we're still looking for ways to make our living just a little more easily.

## **Community Involvement**

Picadilly Farm is a busy place. With our harvest finding its way to well over 1,000 dinner tables each week, with shareholder newsletters and several community events, more and more people are finding sustenance for belly and soul through Picadilly.

Local shareholders are a warm cadre of returning and new faces. We are happy to enjoy deepening connections and friendships among this crowd. This year one of our shareholders, "Cilantro Annie", wrote a weekly "News From the Spice Rack" column for local shareholders, with information about harvesting and using the farm's culinary herbs. Thanks, Jude!

In Eastern Massachusetts, our shareholder community grew both from expanding numbers and from another year together. It was a good challenge to keep up with the email correspondence back and forth. In the Spring, we gathered at several pick-up sites for a meet and greet, including Watertown and North Reading. In September, we gathered in Arlington for a potluck and lacto-fermentation workshop, organized by site hosts Jane Hammer and Peter Bermudes. Whenever we pause to gather with shareholder friends, we feel affirmed and inspired.

This year's Strawberry Concert featured the fabulous Family Folk Chorale for their third spectacular appearance. FFC is 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. In October we hosted a Fall Harvest Saturday, with a few hours of potato digging followed by hayrides and a campfire potato roast. We had a few small potlucks and gatherings around the fire through the summer.

In 2012, Picadilly Farm engaged with the broader community in a number of ways. We donated surplus produce to various hunger relief organizations, via weekly pickups by volunteers from the Northfield and Winchester Food Pantries. A group of high school students from The Waring School in Beverly, MA, visited the farm in June, as part of their study of local agricultural systems. We hosted a fall workshop on CSA operations for the Northeast Organic Farming Association (NOFA). We participated in the annual Health and Wellness Fair at the Winchester School, and gave minor assistance to the school garden.

Picadilly Farm enjoyed some flattering attention this year in agricultural circles. In February, we were the cover story for Country Folks New England Farm Weekly. Picadilly was later named the New Hampshire Co-operator of the Year by the Conservation Districts, based on our conservation practices and successful work with the Natural Resource Conservation Service (since 1946, the NH Association of Conservation Districts has provided statewide coordination, representation, and leadership for Conservation Districts to conserve, protect, and promote responsible use of the state's natural resources). And then, to our surprise, we were nominated and selected as one of four 2013 New Hampshire Farms of Distinction, by our state Department of Agriculture. While this is all well and good, now our work is cut out for us to keep walking the talk.

Outlook for farm community in 2013: We hope for another year to grow community even deeper, within the warming reach of Picadilly Farm. The farm, as it settles and matures, seems to call out for more seasonal celebrations. And yet, with the demands of the growing, and growing children, we find ourselves more extended than we like, and not able to organize much. Is anyone out there called to put together a summer solstice campfire, or an equinox walk, or a volunteer day?

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We are once again grateful for a successful Picadilly year. Through farm work we push ourselves to overcome the challenges, celebrate the good, embrace the weather, and to marry our fortune to an honest livelihood. The farm is our compass, with points true toward earth, stewardship, community, and health.

Let us keep up the good work together!

Warmly,  
Jenny & Bruce Wooster  
Picadilly farmers