

Time for Summer Fun on the Farm

A letter from the editor of Hobby Farms.

by Karen K. Acevedo

Summer on my farm is utter chaos. Honestly. There always seems to be a big list of fun things I want to do because the weather is nice and everyone is calling for “outdoor living.”

But after a Saturday spent weeding, watering, harvesting garden veggies (and being discouraged by pest damage!), battling bugs, bathing animals, cleaning and filling a gazillion hummingbird feeders and shooting photos for the magazines, I barely have the energy to figure out what to fix for dinner with all that produce piled up, let alone fix myself up for some fun event in town.

Most days, I'm so busy I can't even find time to think—and I'm sure I'm not alone in this sentiment. I often envy my friends and co-workers without farms—they seem to come and go quite easily, blazing off to happy hour at a moment's notice or attending art functions downtown —on a week night! Instead, I calculate what I'll have to sacrifice on the home front in order to do something “fun.”

So much emphasis is placed on how much work we do and what we accomplish (admittedly in this magazine, too) that it's easy to lose sight of the reasons we chose this life, often mistakenly referred to as “the simple life”—nothing like that Paris Hilton/Nicole Ritchie rubbish.

One of our HF contributing editors, Sue Weaver, had an epiphany the other day after being knocked unconscious by a low beam in her sheep shed (and awoke to goats feverishly munching on all the grain she dropped). She realized she had run herself ragged with too many animals and too many chores, and that all the fun had gone out of it for her. This saddened me to no end and it got me thinking about priorities—not that I've had time to reprioritize anything just yet.

However, my advice to you is to preserve your sanity, particularly during the “rush hour” season of summer; put aside some of the ambitious projects that can wait (sometimes forever) in lieu of doing a few things you actually want to do—things that make you feel human again. Lisa Kivirist notes in her article “Summer Love” on page 16, that “The key to finding balance between summer sanity and lunacy is accepting ... that: You'll never be ‘done.’” So go to Shakespeare in the Park on Saturday night, invite friends over for an impromptu campfire or just kick up your heels in the air conditioning and watch the game (gasp!).

Sue figured it out and took steps to get back on track. She's walking for an hour every morning at dawn for some quiet meditation, and she and her husband have decided to return home to a farm in Minnesota, the place they love, with a select few members of their livestock herd.

So, the take away is this: Don't get caught up in being an overachiever. My favorite saying, which I have taped to my computer at work, is “the main thing is to keep the main thing the main thing.” Now, get back to work!

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