



New Year, New Us

A letter from the editor of Hobby Farms.

By Karen Keb Acevedo

January is informally “get organized” month, so at HF we take that seriously and plan accordingly.

Now I know no one likes to think or talk about death, but disregarding it doesn't mean it isn't going to happen.

Hobby Farms sponsored the American Livestock Breeds Conservancy's 30th Anniversary Conference in November, in the ALBC's hometown of Pittsboro, N.C. Managing Editor Sarah Coleman (right) and I loved mingling with the horses at Fearrington Village during its presentation of rare breeds (Akhali Teke, owned by Jacque Munn, shown.) When you have a farm, excess baggage goes with it, above and beyond what our suburban neighbors carry. Don't leave loved ones holding the bag(s)! To jump-start your thinking about estate planning, read “Till Death Do Us Part” on page 58.

January can also be considered “makeover” month, with “new year ... new you” and all that. With this in mind, we're introducing a few new features to the magazine.

Our newest column, Food for Thought, by contributing editor Carol Ekarius, will highlight one of myriad food-and-farming issues constantly emerging in the news. From local food to E. coli scares, Carol will offer the insights of influential figures in the fast-growing field of food historians. She kicks off the column by speaking with Barbara Kingsolver about her new book, *Animal, Vegetable, Miracle: A Year of Food Life*, on page 84.

Another addition beginning with this issue is “How Do I ... ?” which focuses on back-to-basics skills we all need to hone on the farm. We begin with how to build a fire on page 74—a skill most of us could probably execute to save our lives, but perhaps one small tip can turn your fire from flickering to roaring.

An article not to miss is “Process of Elimination” on page 42. Many of you have asked about how to connect the dots from pasture to table and hopefully Matt John's article will answer all the questions you have on the nitty-gritty aspects of fulfilling your food animals' intended purpose.

In case the winter doldrums have you in a funk, read “Why We Stay” on page 76, which describes three farm families in Wisconsin and their reasons for willfully remaining on their farms, despite long hours and the lack of an “Easy” button to push.

I hope January is as productive for you as it is for us. As I write, we're working on yet more changes, so look for a fresh new design in our March/April issue!

Back to the Jan/Feb 2008 Table of Contents