

This One's for You

A letter from the editor of Hobby Farms.

By Karen Keb Acevedo

We've all seen those establishment signs announcing the present as "Customer Appreciation Day/Week/Month" accompanied by a tray of doughnuts or, in the best-case scenario, huge discounts or free merchandise. I've always thought those pronouncements were nice ("at least they appreciate the business!") in this day and age when you can hardly get a store clerk to say "thank you" after your purchase.

However, over the course of the seven years I've been with Hobby Farms, I don't recall ever expressing my sincere gratitude for your support. Well, it's about time, so here it goes ...

On so many occasions, I've received letters saying that "this magazine changed my life" or, that based on something they saw in the pages of HF, they've made an important decision, or even just that we offered information about a breed or project that arrived "at the perfect time!" Michele Pfaff, via e-mail, says "Hobby Farms helped me make a decision about which animals to have because I spin and weave. I thought sheep were best, but now I love angora goats. You are putting out magazines that really make a difference for someone like me who can't do this on a big scale, but needs the right info to make the right choices. Thanks and never stop, please."

These letters positively make my day! It's extremely fulfilling to do work that helps people, that inspires people and that encourages our modern "back-to-the-land" movement that's getting folks reacquainted with things that actually matter in the world: self sufficiency, working with one's hands, responsible stewardship of land and independence of spirit.

I log on to our community forum every day and read the conversations and debates taking shape. People are wondering about building raised beds; keeping chickens and ducks together; and keeping sheep and goats in the same pen. Others are seeking advice on how to make the most use of one acre. There are so many questions and so many people with great ideas who are willing to help. When I'm reading through your posts, I almost always think to myself, feeling like a proud mama ... "they're doing this—they're really doing this!"

What I've learned over the last seven years is this: Farmers are truly kind and giving souls, and you are the sort of people I want to be surrounded by. Thank you, from the bottom of my heart, for surrounding Hobby Farms and building this supportive community we can all feel comfortable leaning on.

As you're writing letters, asking questions and trying to navigate this multifaceted way of life, just remember what Beverly Sills said ... "There are no shortcuts to any place worth going," and it will get you through. Hobby farming isn't an easy life, but it's definitely a place worth going, thanks to you.

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