

Farm Tour in Woodford County Kentucky

Hobby Farms learns during tour of school, farm market, nursery and historic farm in Woodford County, Kentucky.

I felt like a school girl again when we got on the yellow school bus for a tour of Woodford County agricultural activities the other day.

Northside Elementary

Students Help Conserve and Restore Stream, Park Area

After a big Kentucky breakfast, including the requisite biscuits and sausage gravy (good thing--we needed the energy!) we climbed into our bus and headed to Midway's Northside Elementary School.

Our lesson from Northside teacher Shelby Ison: It's possible to reclaim a stream disrupted by years of development and invasive species growth.

Ison--and recently named 2006 Conservation Teacher of the Year--incorporates the stream restoration project as part of her classes, as well as an after-school club; they remove the invasives and plant native Kentucky species and more. In addition to student-power, the project get help from government grants.

Honest Farm

Quick make sure local products get noticed

"Pure Kentucky"--a market run by Susie Quick, owner of Honest Farm--had us knee-deep in local produce and products from green beans to Broadbent bacon. No product she features travels more than 100 miles to get there.

Besides raising people's awareness about the benefits of local food, Quick's runs a demonstration farm with activities for children, provides stalls for local farmers to sell their produce and makes farmers market space available near her shop in town.

She regularly reaches out to restaurant owners in Midway, Louisville and elsewhere, enticing them to put local produce on the menu.

Highland Moor Nursery

Native plants thrive in McNeil's greenhouses

Awestruck is the only way to describe how we felt during the tour of Kristine McNeil's Highland Moor Nursery.

This young woman--and mother of a 9-month-old Emily--keeps the hydrangea, native perennials, trees and other cultivars growing in her five huge greenhouses very nearly on her own.

Her business activities include providing hydrangeas, hibiscus, calla lillies and other bright beauties for the cut-flower trade, propagating local trees, shrubs and plants for the nursery industry, as well as offering tours and educational programs.

She describes receiving her education in part from the University of Kentucky, from her father and from her daily work in the dirt! And from the look of things--she's headed for more success.

Valley View Farm

Historic farm is one of oldest in central Kentucky

And who knew a farm could be considered an historic place! The Valley View Farm is just that; it's ruins are one of the oldest standing structural remains in central Kentucky and is listed in the National Register of Historic Places.

Our lunch under the large shade trees on the farm included Jackson County-Ky. fried chicken, fresh local veggies and homemade icecream, all prepared by Slow Food Bluegrass, a nonprofit, local convivium of Slow Food USA.

The Woodford County Farm Tour is presented by the Woodford County Cooperative Extension Service.