

November 16, 2011

Dear Members:

Well, winter is starting to set in and we are finishing up the last of our farm winterizing and sneaking in some plantings of garlic and some more bunching onions for our spring shares. Last Monday we took our turkeys to the processor. One came back without a wing, so I guess that one's mine. (Sometimes the equipment that removes the feathers damages the wings, so they just remove the entire wing before they vacuum pack the turkey.) I roasted that turkey for lunch yesterday and it turned out perfect. I love to cook and you can always count on me to taste test everything we raise!

I used a simple preparation of seasoning the cavity with salt, pepper and sage, and added sliced apple and onions to flavor the pan juices. I didn't even brine the turkey, but the breast meat was still moist and juicy. Farm raised turkeys cook faster than store-bought, so I recommend carefully monitoring with an accurate instant read thermometer. To be safe, start taking the temperature of the drumstick about an hour sooner than you would on a conventional bird. The target temperature for the drumstick is 165 degrees F. (Remember, after you remove a roast from the oven, the temperature will increase by another 10 degrees. So I shoot for 150 degrees when I take it out of the oven.) Please remember that farm raised birds COOK FASTER. They are leaner and firmer and have not been injected with anything, and it makes them COOK FASTER than a grocery store bird. That also means that there will be less pan juices (which is water and liquefied fat), for making gravy. Here's some information on handling and cooking from the USDA: http://www.fsis.usda.gov/factsheets/lets_talk_turkey/index.asp

Collecting the turkeys and transporting them to the processor was quite the experience. This is the first time I've had to load them by myself, so I needed a strategy. Full grown turkeys are amazingly strong and if you don't catch them just right and tuck their wings under your arms, they will fight you by smacking their wings intThey have a wingspan with the feathers attached of about four feet. One of the big toms caught me in the face with a wing pretty hard. My strategy was to leave him behind and



grow him out even bigger! I'm just curious now, but I want to see if I can get him bigger than our farm record of 42 lbs. live weight. I'm shooting for 60 lbs. Here's a picture of them peeking out of the side of the trailer just before we left the farm.

OK, farm stories aside, here is how we are doing our distribution this year.

Location:

Freedom Organix: Saturday, November 19, 2011 1:00 – 5:00 p.m. (I may be working and have to adjust this a little.)

Barrington (Roslyn Road) Sunday, November 20, 2011 12:00 p.m. – 1:30 p.m.

Libertyville (Catalpa) Sunday, November 20, 2011 2:00 p.m. – 3:30 p.m.

Most of you have made a deposit which will be deducted from your balance and I will have a receipt for you at the time of pick-up. Our price per pound this year is \$4.25. We accept cash and checks as payment.

Please drop me an e-mail telling me which location you will pick up from. It will help me greatly in packing the coolers. Also, if we made special arrangements (as in your turkey is for Christmas and I agreed to hold it because you are out of freezer space, please remind me.) Any questions, please call.

Thank you so much for a great season and for selecting Freedom Organix to be your farmer. We greatly appreciate your business and wish you a happy holiday season full of good health and good food.

Best regards,

Cindy Nawiesniak