



June 1st is today. It is my favorite month. Warmer weather, the start of summer, my birthday (and Kerry's too), and of course, strawberries!

The sunny days of the past week have certainly helped, but we still expect the crop to be delayed a bit. The cool rainy April and early May kept the plants from blooming. We have flowers now and some tiny strawberries starting, but it will likely be the second week of June before we have any ripe.

With the recent warm weather, we have been putting in long days and getting much done. All the new strawberries we planted need to have their buds removed. This is so the plant sends its energy into growing lots of leaves and getting strong. Making flowers/berries takes much of the plants' energy reserves and if we let them fruit now, the whole plant would suffer and not produce as much in the future. Plants are spaced a foot apart. We walk down the rows, bending and clipping the buds off. Our backs definitely need a stretch at the end of each row! Weeding takes time too, but is a necessary task to provide the plants with a healthy growing environment. Weeds compete for the nutrients in the soil and can block sunlight from reaching the strawberry plants. So...the weeds have to go!

Rain free days have also meant our men are hard at work, getting the field crops planted. It is a necessity of farm life that some weeks mean long, long days. We don't complain, because earlier this year, we thought we might not get everything planted. So, when it was dry enough this week, it was the start of "go time!" "Go time," means gone by (or before) first light and home long after the kids are in bed. It is a rush to get the fields prepared, fertilized, and planted before it rains again.

For a farm wife, we understand these times, and although we can get to missing our husbands, we are grateful for being able to bring them lunch and dinner. It gives my boys time to see their Dada and if we are lucky, we get to ride a few rounds in the tractor.



On Friday, we made one such trip to Lyndonville. Alan was going from field to field, so we ended up driving on a few different back roads, as our meet up location changed. We got over to East Yates Center Road, to be greeted by a localized rainstorm! The temperature dropped 15 degrees in a matter of minutes, but it was blue sky all around. By the time we got to Route 63, it was letting up. We found Alan, and then saw a beautiful double rainbow over Oak Hill Farms! I was able to point it out to Dudley and get some pictures on my phone. A truly beautiful blessing from God!

It is a crazy busy, full life and I wouldn't trade it.

-Guin Panek

