

# Farm Girl Field Notes

June 16, 2014



My boys love splashing in mud puddles and I love letting them. In those brief days when it stopped raining, they were quite disappointed that the puddles were all dried up. Grady's "froggy" boots, passed down from Dudley, had finally lost their ability to keep out water. So, I bought a new pair and he wore them for the first time to pick strawberries last Friday.



It was one of those busy days for Kerry, when she has a lot of quarts to get picked and not enough pickers. The boys seemed content to wander the patch (needing a few reminders to walk between and not on the rows). Grady followed behind Kerry for a bit, while Dudley found the cornfield and rocks to throw. After helping gather full pots of berries, I thought I could get to work picking.

Kerry had me start in the next variety, Honeoye, to see how far along they were; if they were ripe enough to have others start picking there too. To pick well, you really have to lift up the plant and look the whole berry over before picking the strawberry. Many are still orange or the tip is still green. These aren't fully ripe and get left for the next time through the row in another few days. The Honeoye were coming, but I found many green tips and the picking was steady but not fast like it is in the middle of the season.

Dudley started throwing rocks toward the strawberries (and pickers) and Grady, who had started coming down with a cold, decided he'd had enough. Guess, I wasn't going to be much help picking, I had only gotten 2 quarts!!

We headed back to the barn with two cranky boys and a gator full of strawberries. As we pulled up to the barn, I noticed Grady was missing a boot; it wasn't on the gator and wasn't on the ground nearby. I didn't have time to go back and look for it as more berries were needed on the stand, there were customers to be waited upon and I needed to leave for Medina soon for the CSA pick up.

We arrived at my parent's and Mom took the boys so I could get the CSA set up. To their delight, she had gotten a water table. The cold front hadn't gone through yet, so they were able to splash to their hearts' content in the backyard. Grady was barefoot and happy for the time being.

It ended up being a long day as poor Grady continued to feel worse. He refused to take a nap and was one sleepy boy on mama's hip as the last of the CSA customers picked up their fruit shares. He is still under the weather and napping at the moment. He was up at 4:00 this morning and would only sleep with me rocking him. I was still rocking him, when I got a message from Kerry this morning. The lost boot had been found! She had told her pickers to keep an eye out for a little boot. I'm sure glad they found it. I am sure Grady will be feeling better soon and back to having fun in the mud puddles.



-Guin Panek

