



FROM OUR FARM TO YOUR KITCHEN

Karl Family Farms

Modena, NY

karlfamilyfarms.com

In addition to their livestock, Karl Family Farms offers fresh produce from their acre vegetable patch run by Kathleen, a college friend of Kris and his wife.

kris Karl loves that everyday is different in farming, yet he begins them all in the same mindful way: “The first thing I do is come out and check every animal. Even with the sheep, there’s a lot of them, but I know who’s who, and if somebody’s limping or a little lethargic when they’re not normally, I can nip it in the bud before it’s an issue.”

Before he walked his farm at sunrise to greet the herds of sheep, cows, goats, pigs, and flocks of chickens and turkeys, he attuned his observation skills as a Public Service major at Providence College in Rhode Island. He worked on conflict and gang mediation, and he loved it, but he was quickly getting burnt out on city living. His mentor suggested that he hang out with Patrick McNiff, the young farmer behind Pat’s Pastured, a livestock farm in Jamestown, RI.

“I thought, ‘Farming? What are you talking about?’” Kris explains, “But the next thing I knew I was working for him for a year. And while every piece of land is different, a lot of what we do here is influenced from that experience.”

Kris established Karl Family Farms in 2011, after convincing his cousin, Alex, to move



“Seeing death, seeing life, seeing birth – I feel much more connected with it all than I ever did before.”

– Kris Karl

from California to be the Farm Manager. Alex was a carpenter for 10 years and his building talent is evident all around the farm. The Karls manage their livestock in an open pasture system, and one of the keys is to keep the animals moving to fresh pasture regularly.

For the chickens, Alex custom built a large, two-story coop on wheels, and the Karls move it everyday. For the pigs, he built a shelter that’s slightly elevated, with a bar that separates the shelter from the ground underneath. Why? After a female pig has given birth, the design allows the piglets to roll out of the shelter whenever Mama starts to lie down. The bar protects them from her tired girth.



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