



THE DIRT

OCTOBER 2010

NEWS FROM THE OCCIDENTAL BOHEMIAN FARMERS MARKET

WWW.OCCIDENTALFARMERSMARKET.COM

farmer profile

RAINBOW'S END

BY SARAH HADLER

RAINBOW'S END
13140 FRATI LANE
SEBASTOPOL, CA 94572
www.rainbowsendfarm.org

distance from market:
2 MILES

At the very end of Frati Lane lies the entrance to the aptly named Rainbow's End Farm. I park in the gravel lot, hop out, and after ringing a bell, am happily welcomed by Nan Koehler, the heart and soul behind Rainbow's End Farm. True to her character, she is pushing a wheelbarrow full of items that will assist her with her various chores. She invites me along and immediately starts telling me the history behind the land. She is a wealth of knowledge, and a wonderful storyteller to boot.

Nan and her family have been farming various sections of her land, which covers almost 20 acres, for the last 33 years. Part of the land was originally a Native American burial site. She reckons the

original homestead was built around 1915 and during Prohibition time, the owners ran a grappa speakeasy there! During the 1960s, it was a major counterculture site; the first homebirth meeting and the first herbal retreat took place there. Nan continues the traditions of the land, from having ceremonies, to planting as many fruit trees as she can, to sharing her knowledge and wisdom with the community around her (she hires local kids in the summer to help her and she has two seasonal interns). Nan shares her bounty of certified organic fruit, including an amazing plethora of berries, yummy baked goods and her delicious green spread, made with olive oil, garlic, rosemary and salt, at both the Occidental Bohemian Farmers Market on Friday evenings and at the Sebastopol Farmers Market on Sunday mornings.

As Nan and I wander around doing chores, she peppers my visit with interesting information and stories. Nan was born in Germany and came to the U.S. when she was five years old. She says that the gardening gene has always been in her family, and her mother, who spent the last four years of her life at Rainbow's End, has always supported Nan's farming, both emotionally and economically. Nan has raised her five children on the farm, and at different times, they have tried their hands at farming as well. One of Nan's sons, Josh, at his mom's urging when jobs were scarce, planted raspberries and they ended up being a good cash crop. As we walk and talk, Nan fills her apron with peaches, Asian pears, and the last blackberries of the season, each time handing me something to taste—and it is always delicious. Nan tries to preserve everything she can, letting nothing go to waste; she makes jam and dries her fruits as well.

Nan uses no machinery or gas, she does everything with her hands and body; she is almost 70 years old, and she is spry, strong and quick-witted. "One thing I know how to do is to get milk

**"ONE THING I KNOW HOW TO DO
IS GET MILK OUT OF A GOAT."**

—nan koehler



CONTINUED ON REVERSE

out of a goat," she tells me as she rapidly fills a bucket with fresh, warm goat milk. To be at Rainbow's End is to be around animals. Nan has dogs, goats, and various flocks of turkeys, chickens, ducks, and geese running about. She claims that "my goats and dogs are the driving wheel of my farming effort." The dogs are essential in protecting the goats and chickens from coyotes, bobcats and other predators; the goats' manure goes right back into the ground to fertilize the fruit trees, and the goats produce the milk that gets turned into the butter and cheese that provide the foundation for Nan's wonderful baked goods. Nan sells four dozen duck eggs a week to Peter Lowell's in Sebastopol, who uses them for its pasta dough.

Before I know it, the entire morning has passed. On the way out, Nan takes me into a garden full of roses and patches of mint. She picks the most incredible smelling pink rose in the world and hands it to me to take home. I pick a couple sprigs of mint and I carry my treasures with me as we walk through a grove of redwoods on the way to my car. As I hug Nan goodbye, thanking her for an inspiring visit, I realize I truly have found the pot of gold at the end of the rainbow!

a decade of community

the occidental farmers market celebrates ten years in 2011

As our 2010 season winds down, closing with our 6th annual Harvest Market Festival on October 29, we look excitedly towards 2011 and celebrating ten years of service to our community.

The Occidental Bohemian Farmers Market was launched as a certified farmers market in 2002 by a handful of folks eager to bring consumers closer to the people who grow incredible food in our own community. Originally a member of the non-profit Countywide Farmers Market Association, the OBFM incorporated as a stand-alone non-profit with the state of California in 2007—thanks to an endowment from the Occidental Community Council—and soon thereafter registered as a 501(c)6 with the IRS.

Over the last decade, the Market has grown into a bustling and vibrant community center, recognized by locals and visitors alike as a destination—the OBFM has enjoyed accolades by Michele Anna Jordan at the Press Democrat, Sunset magazine, and Lonely Planet's California guidebook. Better than that, though, is the tradition of gathering amongst friends and neighbors that has developed on Friday evenings in Occidental, and the prosperity of our local farmers, artisan food makers, and crafters.

We're pleased that the Market continues to thrive with the support of the community, and look forward to many more years of service to the people of Occidental. Thank you for your patronage!



YES, I'm pleased to sponsor the Occidental Bohemian Farmers Market. I know my contribution will help support local agriculture and our local economy—and connect our community members to the food they consume.

- \$50 SEED LEVEL
 \$100 BLOOM LEVEL
 \$250 HARVEST LEVEL
 \$ _____

NAME _____

STREET _____

CITY, STATE, ZIP _____

PHONE _____

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Please make checks payable to Occidental Bohemian Farmers Market, and mail to PO Box 782, Occidental CA 95465. The Occidental Bohemian Farmers Market is a non-profit mutual benefit corporation registered with the State of California.

MARKET VENDORS

Farmers

Armstrong Valley Farm
 Bella Ridge
 Blasi Ranch
 Bloomfield Bees
 Bohemian Farmers' Collective
 French Garden Farm
 Hands Full Farm
 New Family Farm
 Rainbow's End
 Sam Kim Mushrooms
 Singing Frogs Farm
 Smiling Sun Farms
 Star Mountain Gardens
 Swallow Valley Farm
 Twin Peaks Orchard
 Victorian Farmstead
 Vine Hill Farm

Prepared Foods

Bennett Ridge Baking Co.
 Gerard's Paella
 Kashaya's Pizza
 The Hummus Guy
 Lata's Indian Cuisine
 Mommy's Yammys
 Paul's Smoked Salmon
 Salt Side Down Chocolates
 Sensational Soups & Sauces
 Wild Rose Ranch

Crafters

Varies

Services

Relax Systems Massage

Community

Master Gardeners
 Occidental Center for the Arts

Please email to confirm attendance by vendors on any given week: info@occidentalfarmersmarket.com.