

On the road again...

with University of Illinois Extension

September 22, 2009 – Tuesday

River Front Berry Farm

Marinton

9:00 am – 1:00 pm

Bob and Coleen Blain retired as educators in suburban Chicago in 1994 and returned to Bob's roots in Iroquois County to a farm originally purchased in 1906 by Gilbert Demierre, Bob's grandfather. River Front Berry Farm takes its name from its border along the Iroquois River in Martinton.

Visitors will learn about growing strawberries, red and black raspberries, blueberries, and gooseberries as well as other fruits such as apples, cherries, and peaches. And although "berry" is in the name, the farm also grows and sells vegetable crops such as asparagus, garlic, sweet corn, and over 20 other garden vegetables.

The Blains sell their produce at farmers' markets, but because they can't always be available to their customers at the farm, they rely on the honor system for the on-farm market. Signage in the market instructs customers on self selection, weighing, and packaging of the produce. Then customers are instructed to place payment for their purchase in the money can and to record their purchases on the form provided.

DIRECTIONS

From the south: Take exit 293 at Ashkum. Turn right (east) onto Rt.116. Continue east. At the 2nd 4-way stop Rt. 116 ends. Continue east on Rt.52, cross the Iroquois River and turn left at the 2nd cross road (1700). We have signs at 1700. Continue 2 miles north. We have a River Front Berry Farm sign at the end of our ¼ mile lane.

From the north: Take exit 297 off of I-57 at Clifton. Turn right onto the Clifton Rd. Continue east going through the junction with Rt.45/52, cross the Iroquois River to County Rd. 1700. We have signs after crossing the river. Turn right on 1700, continue 1 mile to our lane on the right. As above we have a sign at the end of the lane.

From the East: Turn west off of Rt. 1 at the 4-way stop with Rt. 52 south of Martinton and north of Watseka. Continue west on Rt. 52 to County Rd. 1700 (4 miles). Turn right on 1700 for 2 miles to our lane. The farm sign is at the end of a ¼ mile lane.

A fee of \$20 per person will be charged for each tour, which includes lunch. Registration at least one week in advance is required. Visit www.extension.uiuc.edu/smallfarm/ to register and for more details about each of the tours, including a map and agenda. To register by phone, contact Donna Cray at 217-241-4644. For more information, contact Deborah Cavanaugh-Grant (217-968-5512; cvnghgrn@illinois.edu).



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University of Illinois - U.S. Department of Agriculture - Local Extension Councils Cooperating. University of Illinois Extension provides equal opportunities in programs and employment. If you need a reasonable accommodation to participate in this program, please contact Donna Cray at 217-241-4644.

The tour is sponsored by the University of Illinois Extension Small Farm Program, University of Illinois Extension Ford/Iroquois County Unit Office, North Central Region Sustainable Agriculture Research and Education (SARE) Professional Development Program, Agriculture and Tourism Partners of Illinois (ATPI), Agroecology/Sustainable Agriculture Program (ASAP) at the University of Illinois, and the Peoria Chapter of the Initiative for the Development for Entrepreneurs in Agriculture (IDEA).