



# Wake Robin

## A Family Farm

### Where to Find Us

**Wake Robin Farm**  
125 Brutus Rd., Jordan, 315-689-0034  
Our farm store is open 7 days a week, from 7 a.m. to 7 p.m.



[Larger Map & Directions](#)

### CNY Regional Market

2100 Park St., Syracuse  
Find us here every Saturday from 7 a.m. to 1 p.m., year-round. We are in "A" shed from November thru April, and "C" shed from May thru October.

Like us on Facebook

### Local Farms, Foods & Friends

[Cayuga Pumpkin Barn](#)

[Cobblestone Valley Farm](#)

[Creekside Meadows Farm](#)

[Elderberry Pond](#)

[October Rose Farm](#)

[On the Farm Discovery Center](#)

[Owen Orchards](#)

[Stones Throw Farm](#)

[Tim's Pumpkin Patch](#)

[Wyllie Fox Farm](#)

February 2, 2012

Happy Groundhog Day!



Now that the countdown to spring has begun, the bale counting in our hay mow has too. There's an old folk saying that goes:

*A farmer should on Candlemas Day,  
Have half his corn and half his hay.*

I can't say for sure whether we have half of the 5,000 bales of hay we started with left, but I do know that we are anxiously awaiting spring!

Grazing is a way of life on our farm, so last fall, when there was an essay contest about the benefits of grazing, it was "a walk in the pasture" for me to write the following piece. I'm proud that they chose my essay as a winner, and I'm sharing it with you because it helps explain why we are so eager for the grass to start growing again!

Your farmers,  
*Bruce, Meg & Hugh Schader*

### Grazing Works on our Family Farm



Our family starts the countdown to grazing season in January, because this is when we really notice the hay mow disappearing. Five years ago, we wrote "Cows Out" with a Sharpie on our milk house wall, and we note the

date there every spring. Last year, 2011, we had trouble settling on a date to write down, because our cows were out and then back in again several times - Mother Nature just didn't want to turn the corner to spring. In the past, our "Cows Out" date has landed around April 20, which is the day when the cows go out and stay out until winter.

Life is good when the cows are out. Milking and barn chores take an hour less every morning and every night, which means that we have time to tackle all of the other tasks on our list. Since the grazing season is also the time of year when we make hay for the winter, our "to do" list gets longer, so we really need the extra couple of hours a day that we gain by sending our cows out to pasture.

Although we take care to keep our cows comfortable in the winter with a bedded pack in our barn, our Jersey cows just seem happier when they are out on pasture. Correspondingly, we find it easier and more pleasant to move fences around than to move hay in, and manure out of the barn. Since we process all of our own milk on our farm and operate an on-farm store, having the cows out on pasture is also good marketing. Customers love seeing a herd of happy brown cows on green grass.



When we started our dairy, we didn't even think about whether we were going to graze our cows or not- it was a built in assumption that we would. In the beginning, we received assistance from [Onondaga County Soil & Water Conservation District](#) in planting our pastures and designing our paddock system, and our NYS [Grazing Lands Conservation Initiative](#) specialist helped educate us about how to supplement with grain and supplements. Last year, the [USDA National Resources Conservation Service](#) helped us to improve our laneway systems, which has made the walk to and from the pastures cleaner and more efficient.

Grazing cows harvest their own feed and spread their own manure. What a simple, beautiful system it is! We merely bring them in to harvest the rich, yellow milk they produce from the vitamin rich grass. During the grazing season, we our cows are in the barn less than an hour a day, which improves our quality of life, and gives us time to invest in the web of relationships that we rely on to support our family farm.

Grazing works for our family farm. It is healthy for our cows, pleasant for us, and it creates a beautiful landscape for our customers and neighbors to enjoy. Actually, my favorite tasks on the farm are bringing the cows into the barn in the morning, and walking them out to the pasture at night. Most of the time I do this work alone, but it's even better on the days when I have my husband, my son, and my dog along to help.

### Buy 1 bag of cheese curds, get 1 free!

While supplies last - usually available Friday through Tuesday at the farm, and all day Saturday at market.

Offer Expires: Sunday, February 12, 2012  
One coupon per family, please.