

# Argos Farm



Photos courtesy of Argos Farm



**Renee Taylor's life-long love** of working with endurance horses spurred her interest in farming. "You have to realize that until 100 years ago, horses were the farm. You didn't have tractors to do the heavy lifting." She continued, "If you wanted to move anything, it was a horse, a beast of burden. Until the engine became popular, a horse was all you had for centuries." Besides raising and selling horses, Renee also sells angora goats, goat fiber, honey, eggs, chickens, and heritage turkeys. She and her niece, Tiffany, handle all the vetting, feeding, and care for the animals. Renee's love for animals shines through in her education about livestock care, and in the precautionary safety measures she actively pursues on her farm. "It's worth it just to look at them out in the field, even if I don't sell any horses or goats," she states.

The fires in California prompted Renee Taylor and Dan Berger to move to Washington. In 2013, they purchased a 50 acre farm in Montesano. It took until 2017 for them to relocate all their animals to their new homestead and lifelong dream, Argos Farms PNW. "Any day the farm is not on fire, we're in heaven," Renee exclaims.

While they no longer have to worry about having enough water from the Colorado River for the animals, their new farm is bordered by the Chehalis River and much of it is wetland. Now they focus on precautions around potential flooding with the safety of their animals at the forefront of their minds. A robust deck with a ramp was built around the outside of their home. "By chance, we get some kind of tsunami or flood, worse comes to worse, the horses and goats can go right up there." Renee is prepared for the worst nature can bring, even if it means having their animals right next to the house or spending three days straight keeping them watered during a heat wave.

Renee and Dan were surprised to find no farmers markets in Grays Harbor County when they moved to their new farm. After a year, Renee saw an ad in the paper about a meeting to start a farmers market in Aberdeen and she decided to attend. Little did she know, she would leave as the vice president of the board of directors for the Aberdeen Sunday Market. Renee helped with the necessary legal paperwork and through the strength and dedication of the board and many volunteers, the market was born.

Being a livestock farmer, Renee doesn't have a lot of items to sell at the Aberdeen Sunday Market until the fall when her heritage turkeys become available for Thanksgiving. Since the beginning of the market, Renee brought her animals to educate folks on the feeding and care. She also covered the shearing cycles of her angora goats. In the past, Tiffany set up demonstrations for milking and shearing. Children loved petting and feeding the goats. A tom turkey, Junior, was the star of the market. Renee explained that her weekly contribution has largely been an educational labor of love. "I always have someone that I am teaching," said Renee. "People need to know where their food and clothing come from and what is entailed in those processes. Even people living in rural areas still don't know."

Lastly, she gives advice to anyone thinking about farming. "I would say if you want to homestead or to farm, don't wait until you retire, because it's heavy physical work. When you retire you might have the time and maybe even the money, but you might not have the energy or strength. Make it a priority in your life if it's something important to you."

(See farm listing #1)

