

Get to Know Your Farmer: Proeun and Amy Doeun of Crazy Boy Farm

Proeun and Amy Doeun, third-year participants in Minnesota Food Association's farmer training program, come from very different backgrounds. Amy was raised in the suburbs and, though all her grandparents farmed and her parents had a background in the outdoors, she was very much a “city girl.” Growing up, she was more interested in coffee shops and restaurants than gardening.



Proeun was born in the mountains of Cambodia. His first home was a three-sided hut in the region of Dangrek. His family survived by farming and harvesting wild plants and animals from the jungle. Proeun was born in 1975, in the height of the “Killing Fields” era. At six months of age, his family journeyed over the mountains into Thailand to escape the war. It took two nights of traveling the back roads to reach safety. The whole village left: 127 people traveled together. Seven did not make it.

Once in Thailand, Proeun's family became refugees where they spent three years before the family came to the United States. Proeun has great memories of long summers and rural adventures living in Alabama. He always hoped that he would have a farm.

When Amy and Proeun's first son was born, he showed an immediate interest in the outdoors. By the age of three, he knew the names of more animals than his parents! He also decided he wanted to be a farmer. Amy and Proeun decided to help make their son's dream come true. Their farm, “Crazy Boy,” is named after him.

Amy and Proeun started with an urban homestead, which included a vegetable garden and four chickens. When green beans came to their garden, their son picked and ate them right off the plant. He got a dreamy look in his eye and said, “So we are farmers!”

Food is an important topic for Amy and Proeun. They want to eat seasonal, locally grown and organic food as much as possible. The couple believes it is the healthiest way and good for the local economy and environment.

At the 2008 Living Green Expo, Amy and Proeun learned about the Minnesota Food Association (MFA). It seemed meant to be: MFA's farmer training program could help them realize their dream. In 2009, Amy and Proeun spent their first year in the training program where they had an opportunity to learn with other farmers, to improve their soil, practice crop rotations, find resources for seeds, learn to stake tomatoes and work with irrigation systems. Their entry into the program marked the transition from backyard gardening to farming on a production scale.

Today, Crazy Boy Farm is in its third year of producing certified organic, heirloom vegetables which they market through their own CSA in addition to Big River Farms CSA. Amy and Proeun are excited about the opportunity to establish relationships with their customers. Within the next five years, they hope to move to the country and buy their own land. Until then, they are having a great time working the fields as a family.

To learn more, visit Amy and Proeun's website at www.crazyboyfarm.org.