

Going for the good stuff

Tempel Farms cultivates a future in organic food

By Beth Kramer

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OLD MILL CREEK — Four hundred baby chicks are peeping, fluttering their wings and occasionally jumping into a warming light at a budding organic farm.

The 3-week-old chicks are part of Tempel Farms' preparations to go organic. In about 4½ months, these chicks will become laying hens, expected to produce about 170 dozen organic eggs a week.

"We understand the (organic) guidelines. That's why we got these ladies (the chicks) at a day old," said Tania Cubberly, who co-manages the organic farm with her husband, Chris.

What makes them organic is the way they are raised. Their soy-based diet excludes hormones and antibiotics. The chickens will be raised on pasture land, meaning they will get a ready supply

ORGANIC ILLINOIS

There were about 285 certified organic producers and handlers in Illinois in 2008.

SOURCE: ILLINOIS DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

of pasture greens, fresh air and sunshine, Chris said.

"People really like our eggs. They're low stress and relatively happy birds. Their yolks are a deep orange color," Chris said.

Tempel Farms Organics will grow about 50 different crops and 150 varieties of those crops. The farm will grow a variety of produce, such as spinach and lettuce, potatoes, onions, tomatoes and carrots.

The results of the organic labor will be available at the Grayslake Summer Farmers Market and at the Logan Square Farmers Market in Chicago. Tempel is a new vendor at the Grayslake

market and one of two organic farm stands.

"The summer market averages over 1,000 people a day ... it's a party as well as food — it's about meeting your neighbors (and) reconnecting with friends," said Pam Navarre, president of the Grayslake Farmers Market.

Eventually, Tempel is planning to build a farm stand on Millburn Road north of Wadsworth Road.

"With the economy as it is, we're holding off on that a little bit, but we'll do that in the future, Chris said.

The farm is expecting to get its organic certification through the Illinois Department of Agriculture in



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Baby chicks are warmed at Tempel Farms in Old Mill Creek, where Tania and Chris Cubberly are developing an organic farm called Tempel Farms Organics.

2011. Until then, the farm is operating as if it were already certified.

"Even though we can't say we're certified organically, we still grow that way because we know it's healthier for the environment and for the individual," Tania said.

An increasing number of people are trying to get cer-

tified, said Illinois Department of Agriculture marketing representative Delayne Reeves.

"There seems to be quite a demand for organic certifications," Reeves said.

Organic farming involves keeping the acreage free of toxic pesticides and fertilizers and documenting

farming techniques.

The Tempel Lipizzans, a world-famous breed of show horses, provide fresh fertilizer for the organic farm.

"(Organic farming) is very satisfying — it's pretty popular now. People are willing to spend some of their income on quality food," Chris said.



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Così fan tutte

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