

the new American style • prairie collectibles

PREMIERE ISSUE

# romantic prairie style™

PEOPLE | PLACES | GARDENS | FOOD | PROJECTS

173 WAYS  
to MAKE OLD  
feel FRESH

*Field to Table*  
HOMEGROWN  
FUSS-FREE RECIPES

Summer 2012



Display until July 30, 2012

**AFFORDABLE & EASY**

Upgraded Log Home • Barn Revival  
Restored Farmhouse • Revamped Ranch



# Ripe For The F



## Raising Canes

Heritage raspberries thrive in the New York State "berry belt." Sara supplements her berries with the bounty of local farms.

Soon after moving to a Victorian-era home in bucolic Marlboro, New York, in 1999, Sara and Tim Higgins confronted a problem we'd all like to have: how to keep up with the profusion of plump, sweet raspberries ripening in their yard.

"Our house was originally a fruit farm 150-plus years ago," says Sara. "It had 75 raspberry bushes, and I just kept reading cookbooks and food magazines to figure out ways to use them."

Sara especially wanted to convert this bounty of fresh fruit into healthful meals for her then-small children, Zachary, Sage, and Aidan (today they are 18, 16, and 13, respectively). So she began experimenting with a granola recipe that had been in her family for years, perfecting it and tweaking it with sunflower seeds, honey, and the addition of dried whole raspberries, a clever way of preserving this highly perishable fruit.

"The goal was to make the recipe healthy, to get flaxseed, organic rolled oats, and other nutrients into my children," says Sara. Her trick worked: Her kids happily ate the Mom-made granola. Soon Sara was packing up doggie bags for her kids' friends (and their parents) to bring home. "This could work outside of Marlboro!" they'd say.

At the time, Sara had a home-based gift basket company operating full throttle, so she was no stranger to running a business (she also used to manage a shopping complex). On a whim, she baked up a granola batch for a local upscale supermarket chain, dropped it off with a home-made label in a plain brown bag, and three days later had an order for six cases. "I've never really had to 'sell' the granola," says Sara. "Just having people taste it is enough."



The Higgins family found the recipe  
for happiness while growing their  
granola business batch by batch in their  
New York 19th-century farmhouse.

TEXT Mary Forsell  
PHOTOGRAPHY Tony Cenicola

# e Picking



That was in 2001 and Raspberry Fields Farm was officially born – or reborn. A little outbuilding on the property became a seasonal cottage store where the whole family pitches in, selling the granola, fresh berries, and artist-made items to the many local visitors to pick-your-own farms in the area. Other farms began carrying the product in their shops, and many local businesses came on board. The biggest coup was Whole Foods, which rolled out the product in 21 stores.

At this point, Sara had to step up production: Tim built the granolary, whipping up a commercial baking facility with professional certification out of the old summer kitchen. The whole family helped to make deliveries all over the Hudson Valley. Today the business includes two employees plus a college student.



## *Some Like It Hot*

Sara serves up granola hot or cold, and family members add Greek yogurt or milk – and a sprinkle of fresh berries in season.

## *Family Affair*

Sara and Tim Higgins' granolary produces healthy, nutritious granola the artisan way. To learn more about Raspberry Fields Farm visit:  
<http://blog.raspberryfieldsfarm.com>  
email: [mail@raspberryfieldfarm.com](mailto:mail@raspberryfieldfarm.com)  
Phone: (845) 236-2551





### ***Woolly Workers***

Annabelle and Lillie Mae are purebred Babydoll sheep, who share space with assorted chickens in the barn. "Our flock helps with the weeding," says Sara.



It didn't take long for customers to ask, "What else do you have?" So Sara and Tim brainstormed. "We realized we could do something with all of the apple trees on the property. We started using the same recipe with a different fruit," says Sara. French Apple Pie Granola actually tastes like a slice of apple pie. "Heat it up in the microwave, add some yogurt, and it tastes like pie a la mode without the crust," says Sara. These days, the farm kitchen also bakes up soft, chewy raspberry-chocolate chip cookies and offers a line of party favors packaged with Harney & Sons tea, another Hudson Valley purveyor.

Every time you visit Raspberry Fields Farm, you're sure to discover something new. Babydoll sheep and chickens now roam the property, enhancing the farm ambience. "We're very much like the American farms of yesteryear and European farms of today," says Sara. "It's a return to simplicity."

### ***Breakfast Club***

The family gathers around the dining room table. Meal-times are sacred in the Higgins household. "We truly start every day with granola," says Sara. Sage, Aidan, and Zachary were raised on this recipe and have found endless ways to eat it – including topped with ice cream.

