



Jersey Teacher Has Day To Remember On Mushroom Hunt With Her Daughter

by Dan Brannan, Content Director
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OTTERVILLE - By day, Maggie Bick is a Jerseyville West Elementary School teacher, but in her free time, she loves spending time doing outdoor activities on a family farm - recently, she and her daughter Olivia had a mushroom hunt to remember.

Some of the Morrell mushrooms found on that day are showcased above, held by Maggie and her daughter on their farm in Otterville.

Maggie said they ended up discovering 42 total mushrooms in the one particular day of hunting. To make the day even more special, it was Olivia's first time mushroom hunting at the age of 3 years old. Maggie said her daughter could barely contain her excitement when she found the huge mushroom.

"One of the mushrooms weighed 7.5 ounces. We have never found any this big," she said. "We found most of these next to an Elm tree that was dying. We found a whole hill just covered by mushrooms. Four or five years ago, we found a great batch, but nothing like this. We were really excited to prepare them and eat them."

Morel mushrooms are a type of wild mushroom with an earthy, nutty flavor. They have a meaty texture, unlike the more slimy texture of other mushroom varieties. These mushrooms are a highly desired ingredient among chefs and mushroom enthusiasts. They're only grown in the wild, unlike farmed mushrooms you'll find in the grocery store.

"This was an awesome year for us," Maggie said. "We do this every year, but the last few years haven't been as good. When we get done hunting, we clean the mushrooms and soak them in salt water. We use an egg to dip them and do a kind of a flower and corn meal around them, sometimes we use fish breading, then we cook them."

"Deer hunting and mushroom hunting on the family farm are always some of my fondest memories," she said. "This was definitely a memorable day, one we won't



forget."