

Tour an Illinois Berry Farm July 27

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John and Judy Schlafer own and operate J and J Berry Farm in Dow. Their farm is the location of a tour sponsored by University of Illinois Extension from 1:00 p.m. to 4:30 p.m. on Tuesday, July 27.

“We retired in 2003 and started the berry farm a year later,” said John Schlafer. “Today we have 400 strawberry plants, 200 blackberry plants, a 600 foot row of raspberries, 500 blueberry plants, 15 gooseberry plants, a couple huckleberry and boysenberry plants, and jostaberry, which are a cross between gooseberry and currant.”

Schlafer noted that nutritional research on berries suggests that berries are rich in antioxidants and phytonutrients which are associated with improved memory and disease prevention.

“We also have about a dozen different herbs grown in raised beds and a few honey bee hives from which we extract honey,” Schlafer said. “The bee hives will not be part of the tour, but we will show the honey extraction process from the combs after the combs are removed from the hives and brought to our commercial kitchen.”

At the Stine Farm, owner Kathy Stine will share information about her vegetable garden and her chicken and egg operation.

After the tour of the Stine farm, there will be local food sampling at E.F. Carpenters Restaurant. The afternoon tour will conclude with a trip to the State Street Farmers’ and Artisan Market.

The cost of tour is \$20 per person, or \$30 for two adults when registering together. Children under the age of 10 attend free. Cost will include tour, local food sampling and a free market bag.

Registration at least one week in advance is required.

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