“Eating is an agricultural act,” as Wendell Berry famously said. It is also an ecological act, and a political act, too. Though much has been done to obscure this simple fact, how and what we eat determines to a great extent the use we make of the world - and what is to become of it. To eat with a fuller consciousness of all that is at stake might sound like a burden, but in practice few things in life can afford quite as much satisfaction. By comparison, the pleasures of eating industrially, which is to say eating in ignorance, are fleeting. Many people today seem perfectly content eating at the end of an industrial food chain, without a thought in the world; this book is probably not for them. But in the end this is a book about the pleasures of eating, the kinds of pleasure that are only deepened by knowing” (Pollan, 11).

I arrived at the farm at 9 a.m. on a Friday morning. The Bennett’s were getting ready to go to Saratoga Springs, where Brian would give a speech as the keynote speaker of the NOFA conference because he had been selected as the Farmer of the Year! I was so happy for him and his wife, who were finally getting some recognition that they so much deserved. I was also scared out of my mind. Because Brian and Ann leaving the farm and that meant other people had to step in and run it for them while they were gone. That weekend, I was “other people”. To make matters worse (or better?) Rebecca and Sassafras, two Tamworth pigs, were extremely pregnant and likely to give birth while Brian and Ann were gone. That morning I sat at the dinner table, eating a homemade chocolate chip muffin, and listening to every worse case scenario along with how to remedy it. I learned piglet CPR that morning, among other things. Now, Brian and Ann Bennett are some of the kindest, most patient people I have ever met. Which means that if they came back from a much-needed two-day rest and all of their piglets were dead and it was my fault, they would not blame me. But I would blame me. I knew that it was my responsibility to keep them alive, no matter how inexperienced I was with them. Directions were written down, a list of contacts was assembled for every situation possible, food was prepared, and the Bennett’s were off to Saratoga Springs. I knew the bare basics: keep the piglets warm, don’t leave them alone but also keep yourself warm and fed.

Lessons learned

• The importance of community
• Farming is supposed to be frustrating, joyful, scary, fun, and emotional.
• I am not strong enough to control a 500 pound animal, but if I work with her we can both accomplish our goals happily.
• Large agro business is not sustainable
• There are no fail safes on a farm- students live in a bubble at St. Lawrence.
• The power of story telling
• Buy local! Know where your food comes from!

Bittersweet Farm will become...

Bibliography
