

# merry 2007 christmas



Greetings from Brad, Jackie and Lauren. What a wonderful year we have had. Since last Christmas, we have really been on the move; not only with trying to keep up with Lauren, but also with the farm and various other endeavors we seem to get into along the way. Lauren has definitely grown throughout the year as seen in these photos. As the weather outside was still cold, we spent time playing with her, watching and learning



more and more about parenthood. With the Chicago Bears in the Superbowl, we had to have a party, and a new big screen for the living room. We also began planning and ordering seeds for a new and much larger vegetable garden for summer sales at the Bloomington farmer's market. By starting the seedlings in the basement under grow lights we tried to get a jump on spring. With Brad teaching during the day at his high school and evenings at ISU he, along with Jackie's help, took care of the new spring shipment of 300

day old chicks to raise for more eggs this year. Continued care of the already 300 laying hens, collecting, washing, packaging and delivering their eggs turns out to be a full time job for Jackie, as she is now in full swing as a "stay at home mom." Jackie also continues to sell AVON and earns awards and recognition in leadership and sales. As Lauren turned 1 in March, that kept the spring eventful and blessed as well. April brought about the tilling and breaking ground for the new gardens as well as planting more berries and trees in the orchards. Jackie did find time to



make her annual venture to Lombard's Lilac Festival in honor of Mother's Day. This year was special because Lauren, Jackie and her Mom all made the trip and spent the day immersed in the fragrance of the spring lilacs. Late spring, Brad continued with some much needed lawn care, building the deck around the swimming pool in the back of the house and two new chick brooding houses. Summer was full of time spent harvesting vegetables and selling every Saturday morning at the Farmer's Market. Brad also had the bright idea to order 5,000 seedling trees to plant in containers to sell later as they grow. That turned into a stressful and unfinished endeavor as another large hen laying house needed to be built before he went to the



University of Arkansas to teach a workshop for two weeks in July. We took time to enjoy the pool and hot tub as Lauren loved to get in and splash as she learns to swim. We relaxed during the Fourth of July with a cookout with friends and Lauren spent time playing with our dog, Abby. While Brad was away for 2 weeks in Arkansas Jackie took care of Lauren, the farm chores, the booth at the farmers market and tended the gardens.

We are thankful for our good friends and wonderful grandmas, who helped us survive. It was great to have Brad home again! As tomatoes and peppers flourished, we turned some attention to canning. We canned juice, salsa, stews, jellies and jams that we continue to sell from our farm throughout the year. As fall approached, we ordered yet another 350 chicks to replace the older 2 year old layers that will be butchered this winter for stewing meat to sell. In October, we attended the Morton Pumpkin festival and Lauren loved



the pumpkin ice-cream. In November, Lauren went to her first football game at ISU. She loves to watch "foothbaw" with daddy and even dressed up in her Bears Cheerleader outfit for the Denver game. We enjoyed spending time with family during Thanksgiving. Now that December is in full swing and decorations fill the home we focus on Christmas and the joys of the season. We plan to spend more time with family and friends and just enjoy our time together as we know how precious those things are. We pray you too remember the reason for this season and celebrate the birth of our savior Jesus Christ. With blessings, we wish you a very Merry Christmas.



Love, Brad, Jackie and Lauren Dearing

