

January 2012

Northeast Connection

Woolly alpacas feel right at home in Zena



COVER:

You don't have to own an alpaca to enjoy its ultra-warm fleece. The unique fiber properties of this curious-looking animal make its fleece highly sought after by clothiers worldwide. Alpaca fleece is both extremely light and naturally hollow making it the perfect insulation against temperature extremes. Zena Suri Alpacas is a local alpaca breeder and has won numerous awards for its fleece.

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Events are published as space allows and must be submitted at least 60 days in advance. Include a telephone number for publication. Send information to Northeast Connection Events Calendar, P.O. Box 948, Vinita, OK 74301. Email: clint.branham@neelectric.com, or fax: 918-256-9380. Please call ahead to confirm dates and times.

JANUARY 1-2 • Ketchum

Winter Wonderland Lighting Display
Pine Lodge Resort (nightly from 6 p.m. to 10 p.m.)
918-782-1400

JANUARY 4 • Pryor

Pryor Forum
St. Marks Catholic Church (11:45 a.m.)
918-825-0157

JANUARY 15 • Vinita

Harlem Ambassadors Basketball Show
Vinita High School (3 p.m.)
918-256-6143

JANUARY 17 • Miami

Miami Chamber of Commerce Banquet
Buffalo Run Showplace (6 p.m.)
918-542-4481

JANUARY 19-21 • Miami

NEO High School Invitational Basketball Tourney
Various locations
918-542-8441

FEBRUARY 3 • Vinita

Vinita Chamber of Commerce Annual Banquet
Home of Hope Community Room (6 p.m.)
918-256-7133

FEBRUARY 4-5 • Grove

"Sam and Laura" Performance
Playmakers Community Theatre
918-786-8950

FEBRUARY 11 • Vinita

Be Mine Wine & Dine Valentine's Lunch
Summerside Winery & Bistro
918-256-3000

FEBRUARY 13 • Miami

Miami Travel Club presents "America Sea to Sea"
NEO Student Union Center
918-542-5427

FEBRUARY 18 • Vinita

Taste the Magic of Mardi Gras
Summerside Winery & Bistro
918-256-3000

FEBRUARY 19 • Miami

B.F. Goodrich Exhibit
Dobson Museum
918-542-5388

FEBRUARY 23-26 • Miami

Miami Little Theatre presents "Steel Magnolias"
Coleman Theatre
918-540-2425

Statement of Nondiscrimination

Northeast Oklahoma Electric Cooperative, Inc., is a member-owned, not-for-profit service organization that adheres to rules, regulations, and policies, which provide that no person on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, age, religion, union affiliation, veteran's status, or disability shall be excluded from participation in, admission or access to, denied the benefits of, or otherwise be subjected to discrimination under any of this organization's programs or activities.

The person responsible for coordinating this organization's nondiscrimination compliance efforts is the Human Resources/Benefits Administrator. Any individual, or specific class of individuals, who feels that this organization has subjected them to discrimination may obtain further information about the regulations listed above from and/or file a written complaint with this organization. Complaints must be filed within 180 days after the alleged discrimination. Confidentiality will be maintained to the extent possible.

Northeast Oklahoma Electric Cooperative, Inc.

Equal Opportunity Employer M/F/V/D

Lucky Account Number

Check your copy of the *Northeast Connection* each month and see if you are the lucky winner of a \$25 electric credit. Match the number in the box below to the account number on your monthly statement and then call 1-800-256-6405 ext. 9340 to claim your prize.

This month's winning
account number is:

946794





Membership matters

By and large, we don't get to choose who provides our electric service. Folks on opposite sides of the road may be served by different electric providers—some by a stockholder-driven investor-owned utility, others a city-owned municipal electric system or an electric cooperative.

There are major differences in these entities.

Your electric provider is Northeast Oklahoma Electric Cooperative—a not-for-profit electric cooperative owned by you and your fellow members.

Every home or business that receives power from an electric cooperative—18 million in 47 states, to be exact—owns a portion of the utility. As a result, anyone who receives cooperative electric service becomes a member and consumer, not a customer. Across the nation, electric co-ops serve more than 42 million people.



Dandy Risman
**Board
President**


Being a member matters. Northeast Oklahoma Electric Cooperative doesn't exist to make profits for distant investors on Wall Street. We exist to provide you with safe, reliable, and affordable electric service—and doing so in a way that raises the quality of life in our communities. Because electric co-ops operate on a not-for-profit basis, they have no need to increase revenues above what it takes to run the business in a financially sound manner. This structure helps keep your electric bill affordable.

Membership also matters because electric co-ops care about improving the quality of life in the areas they serve. From sponsoring the scoreboard at the high school football stadium or helping a local senior citizens center make facility improvements, Northeast Oklahoma Electric Cooperative invests in local communities where you live and work.

Membership matters because it entitles you to certain benefits like free energy audits that help you find ways to lower your electricity use, or college scholarships for your children. You receive this newsletter because you're a member of an electric cooperative that wants you to stay in touch with important co-op news and events. The Co-op Connections® card even gives you discounts from national chain retailers and restaurants and local stores in your community. Check out www.connections.coop to find discounts in your neighborhood.

Membership matters because you have a voice and a vote in how your co-op is governed. Through democratic control, members like you elected me and others from our co-op to serve on the board of trustees. Control stays in local hands. Your board of trustees, along with those who work for your co-op, are your friends and neighbors.

Membership matters because you receive returns on your investment in your co-op. Electric co-ops aim to operate at-cost, so any excess revenues, or margins, are returned to members in the form of capital credits, based on their electric use.

The bottom line: Membership matters because you matter to your electric cooperative. 

Northeast Connection is published monthly as an effective means of communicating news, information and innovative thinking that enhances the profitability and quality of life for members of Northeast Oklahoma Electric Cooperative.

Please direct all editorial inquiries to Communications Specialist Clint Branham at 800-256-6405 ext. 9340 or email clint.branham@neelectric.com.

Vinita headquarters: Four and a half miles east of Vinita on Highway 60/69 at 27039 South 4440 Road.

Grove office: 212 South Main.

Business hours: Monday-Friday, 8 a.m. until 5 p.m. Offices are closed Saturday, Sunday and holidays.

A representative is available 24 hours at:
1-800-256-6405

If you experience an outage, please check your switch or circuit breaker in the house and on the meter pole to be sure the trouble is not on your side of the service. If you contact us to report service issues or discuss your account, please use the name as it appears on your bill, and have both your pole number and account number ready.

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Miami's Coleman Theatre spectacular

We've had a blast living in the past during our Route 66 road trip through northeast Oklahoma. We began our journey in Foyil last June and made pit stops in Chelsea, Vinita and Afton in the months that followed.

Along the way, we've thrilled at the historic conquest of an amazing athlete, enjoyed quirky landmarks, grabbed a bite to eat at an iconic diner, seen classic cars, crossed bridges that seem to defy time, and much more.

Some 60 miles later, during the fifth and final installment of the series, we find ourselves standing on the sidewalk on Main Street in Miami, staring in awe at a magnificent building that looks as out-of-place as any in Oklahoma.

Commissioned by local mining magnate George L. Coleman, the Coleman Theatre opened to a full house of 1,600 guests at a whopping one dollar per ticket on April 18, 1929. Visitors were reportedly "struck aghast" upon arrival, astonished at the sheer beauty of what many knew to be the premier theatre of its time.

From the floral arrangements to the tall-boy seats to the glistening crystal chandeliers, guests were impressed by what Mr. Coleman unveiled that night. It was the town's first taste of big-city vaudeville and, according to news reports, citizens embraced the theatre with great gusto.

The three-deck Mighty Wurlitzer debuted that night as Owen James brought the crowd to its feet as they sang "America." A talking picture held the attention of the standing-room-only crowd, a 10-piece ensemble offered an overture from the orchestral pit, "athletic" girls danced, and men with comedic flare summoned roaring laughter from the crowd.

Theatre manager J.H. Griffin called it "the biggest moment" of his life.

The Coleman Theatre has been dazzling visitors ever since. Its rich legacy includes appearances from such notable figures as Will Rogers, Bob Hope and Bing Crosby.

Originally a vaudeville theatre and movie palace, the opulent structure is a masterpiece of Spanish Mission Revival architecture, punctuated by gargoyles and other hand-carved figures on the building's facade. The elegant Louis XV interior features gold leaf trim, silk damask panels, stained glass, a carved mahogany staircase, a 2,000-pound chandelier, and decorative plaster moldings and railings.

The historic structure was donated to the City of Miami by the Coleman family in 1989. Restoration and renovation of the theatre has become a labor of love in the community. Efforts have included returning the Mighty Wurlitzer pipe organ to its original home and restoring the magnificent chandelier.

Hundreds of volunteers have given countless hours of labor, raised funds and promoted a variety of events

to appeal to all tastes and ages. From this movement was formed a non-profit organization known as "Friends of the Coleman."

"The restoration of the Coleman is a project in process," say the Friends of the Coleman of the ongoing effort to preserve the theatre's legacy. "Our vision is a highly functional theatre restored to its former elegance and grandeur. We don't own anything. We hold it in trust for the next generation."

Among the projects undertaken by Friends of the Coleman is renovation of the original upstairs meeting hall for use as a conference center and ballroom.

The Coleman Theatre today is a thriving hub of activity for the community. A full calendar of events is scheduled, including musical performances, ballet, opera, silent movies, recitals and pageants. The theatre



Miami's Coleman was the premier theatre of its time.



conference center can also be booked for receptions, meetings and holiday celebrations.

Free tours are available Tuesdays through Thursdays from 10 a.m. until 4 p.m., and on Saturdays from 10 a.m. until noon. A gift shop is open during these hours where souvenirs can be purchased, along with nostalgic reminders of the theatre's glorious past.

Tax deductible contributions are gladly accepted and the Friends of the Coleman group is always enlisting membership support for various projects, as well as the ongoing maintenance of the theatre.

For more information about the Coleman Theatre, call 918-540-2425 or visit online at www.colemantheatre.org.

There are other notable landmarks along Route 66 in Ottawa County. Here are a few you'll want to experience.

Sidewalk Highway

Ottawa County is home to the last remaining sections of the original Route 66 roadway. These vintage segments of pavement are known in travel publications as "Sidewalk Highway" or "Ribbon Road" and must be traveled with some caution since they are a little bumpy and only nine feet wide.

Legend has it that Oklahoma's budget was so tight when Route 66 was constructed that rather than covering half the mileage, officials chose to cover half the width.

The longest stretch of Sidewalk Highway is located on the southern skirt of Miami. It is recognized as an Oklahoma landmark and is listed on the National Register of Historic Places.

To travel this section of old Route 66, stay on Miami's



A stretch of the original Route 66 alignment winds its way through the Ottawa County countryside just south of Miami.

Main Street south all the way to the T intersection, turn right and proceed onto the narrow road, following it roughly three miles—and around two sharp curves—to a junction with the main route.

A secondary section of Sidewalk Highway can be found a little farther south. Pass through the Narcissa community and continue five miles to a right turn at the Northeast Technology Afton Campus. This stretch also takes you about three miles before you reconnect with the main roadway.

Route 66 Vintage Iron Motorcycle Museum

Located at 128 South Main Street in downtown Miami, Route 66 Vintage Iron Motorcycle Museum is a nostalgic marvel that opened its doors in 2006. Take a ride back in time while enjoying an impressive Evel Knievel exhibit, as well as a number of rare bikes, including a Steve McQueen Husqvarna, a 1917 Harley Davidson, a 1949 Indian Golden Scout, and the only known 1919 Australian GCS left in existence.

A 2000-square foot motorcycle superstore and gift shop adjoins the museum, which is open Monday through Saturday from 10 a.m. until 6 p.m., and on Sunday from noon to 5 p.m. The museum is handicap accessible. There is no admission, however, donations are accepted.


Visit www.route66vintageiron.com or call 918-542-6170 for more information.

Dobson Museum

Just a block off Route 66 at 110 A Street Southwest in Miami, a stop at Dobson Museum will be rewarded with some unique historical exhibits, including a tribute to professional baseball legend Mickey Mantle and artist Charles Banks Wilson. An Indian cultural collection and an area mining display will also be enjoyed.

The museum is open to the public and free of charge. Hours are Wednesday, Friday and Sunday from 1 p.m. until 4 p.m. Phone 918-542-5388 for more information or visit online at www.route66memorabilia.org.

Mickey Mantle's home

Known as the Commerce Comet, Major League Baseball Hall-of-Famer Mickey Mantle once lived at 319 South Quincy Street in Commerce. A museum in his honor is planned at a site on Mickey Mantle Boulevard in Commerce. Phone 918-542-6087 for more information. 

Warm and woolly

Zena farm makes unique alpacas feel right at home in northeast Oklahoma

Last year's record cold temperatures have many people wondering if Old Man Winter will give a repeat performance in 2012.

Show of hands: anyone up for another round of 30-below? No one?

While we can't control the weather, we do have complete control over how much cold we *feel*. Yes, the battle against sub-zero temperatures is as good as won, thanks to the luxurious fleece of a funny-looking animal raised right here in northeast Oklahoma.

Perhaps you've heard of the alpaca. If you've ever seen one, it's likely not an image you'll soon forget.

Alpacas are awkward in appearance with their long necks and flowing locks. If you've never had the pleasure of viewing one of these unique creatures up close and personal, just imagine an animal that is equal parts camel and sheep.

Alpacas are indigenous to the mountains of South America, where they have been bred for thousands of years for their prized coat, as well as meat. They were introduced to the United States in the 1980s and were bred with little consideration for fleece production.

"People were just selling the animals. That was the market. They were considered an exotic animal. People would buy several and just let them graze. The alpacas were really nothing more than fancy lawn ornaments," explained Kathleen Callan.

Callan and husband Tom own a herd of Suri alpacas at their home in Zena.

"Alpaca ranches would have barns half-full of fleece. They didn't know what to do with it or how to process it. There has always been a cottage industry of hand-spinners, but a lot of fleece was simply discarded."

Interest in alpaca fleece has surged in recent years. It is unrivaled for softness and warmth. The ultra-fine fibers have a distinct hollow core and are characteristically lightweight, water-resistant and fire-retardant. Since it contains no lanolin, the fiber is also hypo-allergenic.

Alpaca fleece is in high demand from top fashion designers like Armani. You'll find alpaca garments on sale at high-end retailers like Nordstrom or Saks Fifth Avenue.

Alpaca can be blended with other fibers such as acrylic or wool. Garments made with 100 percent alpaca fleece can be quite expensive.

You don't have to break the bank to purchase quality alpaca items. Local alpaca growers usually offer finished

Kathleen Callan knows each of her nearly fifty alpacas by name.



products such as hats, mittens, scarves, socks, sweaters and more. People in increasing numbers are recognizing the light weight and great comfort provided by alpaca fleece.

Of course, not all alpaca fleece is created equal. Simply shearing an animal does not necessarily guarantee one a paycheck.

Fleece can vary from animal to animal and can change as the animal ages. Fineness is carefully graded on a scale of one to five and there are 22 natural color variations with white being predominant. Fleece found across the back of the animal is considered the best. It is called the "blanket."

Zena Suri Alpacas is especially proud of the fleece

(continued on page eight)

Cute alpaca mittens and slippers.



Zena suri alpacas are consistent producers of top quality fleece.



How about a warm shawl or sweater for those chilly winter evenings?

The warmest gloves you'll ever wear.



Chullos and stocking caps are popular items.

Zena farm makes unique alpacas feel right at home...

(continued from page six)

it produces. Animals here have received numerous blue ribbons at shows and the Callans understand that their success is no accident. They are sticklers when it comes to genetics and attribute their success to the close attention they pay to the bloodlines of their herd.

“Most of our animals here produce fleece that is on the finer side of the scale,” said Callan. “We have something going on here that judges call ‘lingering fineness.’ We believe its largely genetic. We breed for it.”

Fleece grows at a rate of about a half-inch per month. It is harvested once yearly—usually around mid-April. The coat is several inches long when it is shorn and some animals may produce up to ten pounds of fleece.

“It partly depends on the season, it partly depends on the animal,” Callan said.

The Callans moved to Oklahoma from Utah in 2009. They were beckoned by a friend who had fallen in love with Grand Lake. The move presented Kathleen the opportunity to realize her childhood dream of raising alpacas. The 80-acre property was purchased and the ranch was built from the ground up.

Another key component to the success of the farm is its manager, Staci Forshee. Forshee arrived in May 2011. She has been raising llamas and alpacas since the age of 13—more than half of her life—and managed a herd of 700 alpaca in Oregon.

“She’s just great. She has a wealth of experience. We are lucky to have her,” said Callan of Staci.

Zena Suri Alpacas also prides itself on staying abreast of the alpaca industry. They spend a good deal of time preparing for and traveling to shows, where there is a good exchange of information. Callan says there is always more to learn.

“Everyone in the alpaca business is still learning,” she said. “We have a book that is kind of our alpaca Bible. There are communities on the Internet and a lot of heavy-

duty mentoring goes on there. Or, you can always pick up the phone and have a conversation with someone.”

The environmental impact of Alpaca operations is minimal. The animals are relatively easy to care for, they have few health issues and they are extremely clean. They even use communal scat piles, which makes clean-up a snap. Alpaca manure also makes tremendous fertilizer for vegetable gardens. Zena Suri Alpacas sells it for \$5 a bag.

Alpacas are quite adaptable, even in Oklahoma’s climate of extremes. As it turns out, the same fleece that keeps the alpaca warm in winter also shields the animal from intense summer sun and heat.

“It kind of acts like air conditioning,” Callan explained. “We’ll coat them in the winter if it gets too cold, and in the summer we give them belly baths to help cool them down. Of course, they can always come into the barn. We run fans for them and it stays 10-15 degrees cooler. They are also pretty adept at finding shade and they know how to keep their bellies against the cool ground.”

Added Callan: “Alpacas are raised in every state in this country. Even in Hawaii and Alaska. But, no matter where you are, you always have to be prepared to make concessions when the weather is especially divergent.”

The Zena Suri Alpaca herd numbers nearly fifty and Callan knows each of the animals by name. Around a dozen babies (or “crias”) are expected to join the herd this spring.

“A lot of people may have only two or three alpacas. And then there are a few operations that have hundreds of animals,” said Callan. “I prefer to keep the herd a reasonable size so that I know everybody. I like to be able to shut the gate at night and do a bed check.”

Zena Suri Alpacas is located on 580 Road, just a half-mile north of Highway 127. The farm offers free tours daily and operates a gift shop. There is a large selection of alpaca fleece apparel, yarn, toys and souvenir items to browse.

For more information about group tours and special events, or to stock up on winter gear, call ahead at (804) 389-2579 or visit online at www.zenasurialpacas.com.



Calling all youth

Entries sought for Youth Tour, Energy Camp and scholarships

Northeast Oklahoma Electric Cooperative understands that today's teens are tomorrow's cooperative members and leaders. That's why the cooperative is committed to supporting teen programs and opportunities for growth and leadership.

In addition to its involvement in numerous activities that promote the interests of youth throughout its service territory, the cooperative is proud to sponsor two essay contests and four college scholarships annually.

The cooperative is excited to extend an invitation for area youth to take part in some exciting opportunities for fun and adventure in 2012—not to mention a little extra cash for college. Cooperative membership is not a requirement to participate in either Youth Tour or Energy Camp.

Information packets are available to eighth grade and high school junior classroom instructors in Craig, Delaware, Mayes, Ottawa counties, and Chelsea High School in Rogers County. Scholarship applications will also be made available upon request.

Please request information by calling NEOEC Youth Programs Coordinator Amy Claborn toll free at 1-800-256-6405, ext. 9392. Information is also available online at www.neelectric.com under the *Community Services* tab.

"The youth programs offered by the cooperative provide a tremendous opportunity for kids in our service area to participate in some truly unique opportunities," explained Claborn. "Youth Tour and Energy Camp are truly once-in-a-lifetime chances to have fun, make new friends and explore new horizons. In the case of the scholarship program, it is always nice to be able to defray the many expenses of a college education."

Youth Tour

Northeast Oklahoma Electric Cooperative will be sending four high school juniors from its service area on a week-long, all-expense-paid tour of our nation's capitol in 2012 as part of its annual Youth Tour Contest. If you are in the eleventh grade and are enrolled in a school or home-schooled within the cooperative service area of Mayes, Delaware, Craig, and Ottawa Counties, or Chelsea High School in Rogers County, you are eligible to enter



and win this contest.

Youth Tour winners will tour Washington, D.C., June 15-21, 2012. The deadline for the contest is **March 7, 2012, at noon.**


YouthPower Energy Camp

Four eighth-graders from the cooperative service area will enjoy a week-long adventure at Canyon Camp near beautiful

Red Rock Canyon in Hinton, Oklahoma, during the 2012 YouthPower Energy Camp. A winning essay will earn these lucky eighth-graders a chance to take part in a fun and educational opportunity that comes around only once.

YouthPower Energy Camp is scheduled May 29 through June 1, 2012. The deadline for the contest is **noon on March 21, 2012.**

College Scholarship

High school seniors whose parents or guardians are Northeast Oklahoma Electric Cooperative members and who live in a household served by NEOEC electric are encouraged to apply for one of four available \$1,000 college scholarships. Application deadline is **noon on March 14, 2012.** 

Fact or fiction?

Debunking energy myths an important first step to lowering utility bills

Interested in saving energy to lower your electric bill, but confused about new technology and information available to help you do so? Separate fact from fiction with the following energy-saving myths.

Myth #1: It takes less energy to have my thermostat maintain a comfortable temperature while I'm away than it does to have it heat up or cool down my house when I get home.

If you're going to be gone for more than a few hours, then it is more cost-effective to turn heat or air conditioning on once you return than it is to maintain a comfortable temperature while you're out.

ENERGY STAR, a joint program of the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and the U.S. Department of Energy, recommends adjusting your thermostat up in the summer and down in the winter by 8 degrees Fahrenheit while you're asleep or away from your house.

Myth #2: I can save money simply by installing a programmable thermostat.

On their own, programmable thermostats do not make your heating or cooling system more efficient. Their money-saving value lies in their ability to, once properly programmed, automatically regulate the temperature inside your house to coincide with when you're there and when you're not. If you need help programming your thermostat, directions are usually available from the manufacturer's website.

Myth #3: When I turn off electronics (like my TV, game console, or computer) they stop drawing power from the outlet.

Even when turned off, most modern electronics consume a small amount of electricity if they're still

plugged in. Chargers for mobile devices also consume electricity if plugged in, even when they are not actively charging the device. This wasted energy, called "phantom load," accounts for as much as 10 percent of a home's total electric use, according to the Lawrence Berkeley National

Laboratory. The solution: unplug your electronics when you've finished using them. Using a power strip can help you conveniently unplug multiple devices at once, while newer, "smart" power strips can automatically cut off phantom loads on their own.




Myth #4: Compact fluorescent lightbulbs (CFLs) take forever to reach full brilliance, have inadequate light quality or unpleasant color, and make no difference on my utility bill.

As with many products, CFLs vary in quality. Color and brightness differ across manufacturers, and some bulbs simply work better than others. Looking for the ENERGY STAR symbol ensures that you're purchasing a high-quality product. Also, be sure to install CFLs in fixtures that remain on for long periods, or that you use often, to get the maximum energy savings out of your bulbs. In addition, specialty CFLs are available for applications such as spotlighting or bathroom vanity fixtures.



Myth #5: It is not worth my time or money to seal small air leaks around my windows and doors, or to make sure my home is adequately insulated.


According to ENERGY STAR, air leaks around cracks and gaps throughout your home become the equivalent of leaving a window open all year long. Typical homeowners can save up to 10 percent on their total annual energy bill by sealing and insulating their home. 

Generator know-how

Portable generators are useful when temporary electric power is needed, but they can be hazardous. Primary hazards include carbon monoxide poisoning, electrocution and fire. Here are some steps you can take to prevent the loss of life and property resulting from improper use of portable generators:

- Always use generators outdoors on a dry surface under a canopy, away from doors, windows and vents. Install a carbon monoxide detector in your home and test often.

- Plug appliances directly into generator or use an outdoor-rated extension cord. Make sure the extension cord is free from damage and the plug has a grounding pin.

- Never plug the generator into a wall outlet. This can cause an electrocution risk to utility workers and others served by the same utility transformer. If necessary to connect generator to house wiring, have a qualified electrician install appropriate switching equipment. 





Watts for Dinner TAILGATE TONIGHT



There is no need to wait until the big game to enjoy some of your favorite tailgating foods. Pizza is a popular choice with every crowd, and there is nothing more satisfying than a pie you've prepared yourself. It just so happens that this month's Watt's for Dinner feature offers a suggestion that pairs two popular products produced locally and sold at your neighborhood supermarket: pork sausage from Greer's Ranch House Sausage and mushrooms from J-M Farms.

Greer's Ranch House Sausage has been serving northeast Oklahoma and the four-state area since 1966 from its headquarters on north Highway 69 in Pryor. The Greer's name invokes a proud tradition of whole hog sausage made from the finest cuts of pork. Greer's sausage and bacon have been enjoyed by families throughout the four-state area for 45 years.

J-M Farms, meanwhile, was founded in 1979. The company has expanded multiple times since those first mushrooms were picked in March 1980 and delivered fresh to Associated Wholesale Grocers in Springfield, Missouri, but its commitment to quality has never wavered. Today, J-M Farms packs under the J-M Fresh label. A fleet of trucks deliver product to eight states, including Oklahoma, Texas, Arkansas, Mississippi, New Mexico, Kansas, Missouri and Iowa.



Remember to add a package of Greer's Ranch House Sausage (in your choice of hot or mild) and a carton of sliced mushrooms from J-M Farms to your next shopping list. Your sausage and mushroom pizza can be as easy as you want it to be. You can use a prepared crust or make one using a boxed mix or refrigerated dough found at the grocery store. Better yet, create a delicious made-from-scratch crust from the recipe provided here. The same goes for pizza sauce. You may prefer to use your favorite jar sauce or try the recipe we've provided. Serve up a sausage and mushroom pizza for your next family dinner or make it the centerpiece of your tailgate party. Either way, it's sure to score big with your crowd! If you decide to include it in your tailgate party spread, don't be surprised if your guests forget about the game entirely!

Greer's Ranch House Sausage and J-M Farms mushrooms are truly a winning combination, and Northeast Oklahoma Electric Cooperative is a proud provider of electric service to both companies.

Pizza Sauce

- 1 tablespoon olive oil
- 15-ounce can tomato puree
- ½ teaspoon minced garlic
- 5-ounce can tomato paste
- 1 teaspoon dried marjoram
- 1 teaspoon dried basil
- 1 teaspoon brown sugar

Combine all ingredients in a sauce pan and bring to a simmer for five minutes. Spread over pizza dough and top with toppings and cheese.

Pizza Dough

- 4 cups flour
- 1 cup warm water
- 1 egg
- 1 tablespoon olive oil
- 1 package yeast
- 1 teaspoon sugar
- 2 ½ teaspoons salt

Combine yeast, water and sugar in a bowl and mix lightly with a spoon. Let stand for 10 minutes. Place yeast mixture in a stand mixer with a dough hook. Add remaining ingredients to mixing bowl and mix until flour is incorporated. Scrape dough out of mixer and place into floured bowl. Cover bowl with towel and let stand for 45 minutes. If desired, dough can be made in advance, placed in a plastic bag and kept in refrigerator for two days. When ready to bake, place pizza stone or large baking sheet on the middle rack and preheat oven to 400 degrees. Lightly dust your countertop or cutting board with flour. With a floured rolling pin, roll dough to desired size, shape and thickness. Once the oven reaches the desired temperature, pull the baking stone or baking sheet out of the oven and sprinkle cornmeal on the surface. Slide dough on top and bake for 5-10 minutes until crust is lightly golden. Remove crust from oven and brush with olive oil.

Topping your pizza

Crumble sausage into a skillet and cook on medium heat until brown. Remove skillet from heat and place sausage on a plate covered with paper towels to drain. Rinse and slice mushrooms. Top cooked crust first with sauce, then sausage, sliced mushrooms and generous amounts of mozzarella cheese. Bake on a pizza stone or baking sheet for 15-20 minutes or until cheese has melted and crust is golden brown. Serve with grated parmesan cheese and red chili flakes on the side.





We're ready when the weather strikes

Northeast Oklahoma Electric Cooperative is dedicated to providing members with reliable electric service. We're continually pursuing innovative ways to ensure we're meeting that goal.

We know it's impossible to eliminate all power outages. Circumstances such as lightning, high winds and ice are simply beyond our control. But you can be certain that response will be swift when we are called upon to take action.

In the event of a widespread power outage, work first begins on restoring power to transmission lines and substations. Often, service can be returned immediately to a large number of members by restoring power at the substation.

Next, major distribution feeders are repaired. These are the lines that come from the substation. If energy isn't flowing over these lines, your home cannot receive power.


Tap lines are repaired next. These are the lines carrying power to groups of homes from distribution feeders.

Sometimes taps need to be disconnected to get the main lines back on.

Finally, individual service lines are repaired. While the cooperative is responsible for getting the electricity to your meter, members must contact an electrician to repair damage to member-owned electric equipment beyond the meter.

The cooperative offers several ways for members to receive updates during a major outage. Tune in to local radio station KGVE 99.3 for news on outage progress and anticipated restoration times.

Members who have Internet access via computer or smart phone can get a host of information through the cooperative's website at www.neelectric.com and our Facebook account at www.facebook.com/neokrec.

Our dispatch center is manned around the clock so you can always call and speak to a dispatcher or member services representative by phone at 1-800-256-6405. 



Restoring service quickly is a priority for our cooperative.