Dear Teacher(s),

 We are looking forward to you and your students visiting our farm. For some of you this will be a new experience and one that I hope you will enjoy so much that we will see you year after year. I wanted to go over a few things with you before you arrive so there will not be any surprises. We are all things fall and not all things Halloween for our pumpkin patch. We love Halloween and candy just as much as the next but we do respect that some children can be frightened by many of the decorations. We are a farm that loves fall so you can come out and experience a wonderful day and all that fall brings.

 **YOUR VISIT:** You will be visiting a sixth-generation family farm. As growers, we feel that it is very important that young people gain a real understanding about plants, food and farming. Your tour is typically managed by Rhonda. She has a background in biology and loves to find new ways to spark the interest of a young mind. All lesson times are tailored to the age of the children. Many of the lessons during the fall will give the children an opportunity to dig right into some of our favorite vegetables. They may learn anything from how important bees or to exactly what makes a pumpkin happy. We invite you to request specific topics that might be needed to fulfill educational requirements. Ms. Rhonda hasn’t met a topic that she can’t tackle. During the fall it is all about fun. We want the children to experience all of the joy that comes with visiting a farm.

 **PARKING:** If your group is arriving by bus then you will notice that there is a circle drive at the farm house near the entrance. If the drivers would please pull into that circle to park. This will give them easy access to depart. Under no circumstance should the bus driver pull further down into the parking area. If your group is arriving by car or if you have chaperones that are following in cars, if they would please pull into the grass lot that is located to the right of the main entrance. It is marked as pick your own parking.

**ARRIVAL**: Once your group has all arrived, please have them gather together around the bus parking area. Have one adult come to the store or check-out barn and let us know that everyone has arrived. We will come to you and help direct your group and get the visit started. The parking area can be hazardous so we ask that the children wait with the buses until directed. If you have come in multiple cars then we ask that you please do the same.

 **PUMPKIN PATCH**: Visiting the pumpkin patch will be an exciting trip for all of your young people. The patch is located away from the parking area so we will give the children and adults a ride on a tractor drawn trailer. This usually delights the kids! There is limited seating on the trailer so we will work to get each class to the patch together. Teachers will be transported with their children. Parents will be transported secondary to the children. It is possible for the children to sit in their respective adult’s lap if it facilitates the trip. If you have multiple classes, it may be possible for the classes to visit the patch in shifts. The children may visit the animal barn while they wait or possibly a story under the shade tree while they wait. We will work with each of our groups to make it a great visit.

**PUMPKIN TAGGING**: The pumpkins that each child will be able to choose are going to be too large for most containers and plastic grocery bags will probably tear from the stem. We will provide the teachers with markers and once each child has selected their perfect pumpkin then you may write the child’s name on the pumpkin. The pumpkins that the children will select are a size appropriate for painting but not carving. They tend to have a thicker rind on them.

**THE REST OF THE FARM**: There are many different things for the children to experience while visiting the farm. If you choose, you may take the children to visit the animals in the barn and/or allow them to visit and feed the goats in our feeding area. No feed purchase is necessary to visit the animals. If the children are old enough to understand the process, we also have hydroponic area set up near the animal barn that they may walk through.

**BATHROOMS and HANDWASHING**: You will find the bathroom facilities near the animal feeding area adjacent to The Dessert Barn. There is also a large hand washing sink located in the outdoor animal feeding area.

**PICNICS:** We are glad that you want to spend extra time with us during your visit. Unfortunately, we do not have enough picnic tables for everyone so we encourage you to bring picnic blankets. The century old trees at the entrance to the farm make a wonderful place to have a picnic. As with most old farms, these trees seem to always have a wonderful breeze. If the group has ordered ice cream, then we have it waiting for you at The Dessert Barn. Please send some of your chaperones to The Dessert Barn to get your ice cream. Please indicate if you would like to order extra ice cream of the chaperones.

**CHAPERONES & TEACHERS**: All adults that visit with the children are not charged a per head fee. If any of the adults would like to pick their own pumpkin then they will simply pay for their pumpkin separate. Please let all of your chaperones know that we are check or cash. We do have an ATM on site if needed. There are also produce items that will be available in our store for purchase if they choose along with items in “The Dessert Barn.” There is also no additional charge for any siblings that attend the field trip but if they would like a pumpkin then the parent would be responsible for that purchase.

**HAYRIDE**: Each class will remain together with the teacher riding along. Any adult chaperones will be given a ride after the children are taken to the field. We will instruct the children to remain in an area until we give them the okay to approach the tractor. If the children do not abide by our instructions, then we will allow them to walk to and from the patch. We take safety serious on a farm and will not permit children or adults to ride the tractor drawn trailer if they prove unruly.

 **WEATHER**: We are here rain or shine but that does not mean that we expect you to be. You know your children and parents better than we do. If you feel that the weather is not suitable for your visit then we understand. Please give us a call and let us know. We will do everything to work with rescheduling you if the weather interrupts your visit.

 **PAYMENT**: You can pay us with either a check or cash. This can be taken care of at any time during your visit. If you need to send payment after your trip then that can be arranged as well. If you should have a student that cannot make the trip because of financial issues, then PLEASE arrange for that student to come. The fee for that student will be waived. It is more important for me to have the student present.