

## SIXTY POUNDS FOR JUICE

The next weekend, a guest in one of the groups was visiting from Poland. Agnieszka Ostrowska-Walawski drove two hours from Arlington Heights, Illinois, with her mother, Krystyna Ostrowska, and friend, Magdalena Fraczek, to Coldbrook Farm ([www.ColdbrookFarm.net](http://www.ColdbrookFarm.net)) in Momence, Illinois. By the time they arrived, it was pouring. They sat in the SUV.

John Pilcher, the grower, picked a few berries amid leaves turning scarlet and orange, put them in a small bucket and showed them to the driver in the car, saying, "This is what you came for." The women put the bucket in the back. Later, while it was still raining, they pulled the bucket out and Krystyna, visiting from Wroclaw in southwest Poland, got out of the front seat.

"I offered her a chance to reach in and take them out," Pilcher said, "but instead she cupped her hands for me to pour from the bucket until she had enough."

Meanwhile, I'd joined my husband in the car. About 45 minutes later, I told him I thought he should let them quit. John returned to the back of their car to commiserate. He gave each a small tub of his dried sweetened aronia berries from the field where they were to pick. "They made it clear they were going to wait out the rain," he remarked.

The three knew how to read the line of the scattered showers and were willing to wait for them to pass. Not much later, impatient, they had waited out most of the rain and stepped out of the SUV. I met all them for the first time. When it was Krystyna's turn, she said to me, "Polish!" with great pride, in English so I could understand. She wrapped herself in a bright blue hooded plastic poncho that crinkled in the wind.

"We want 60 pounds of berries," Magda announced. "I'll make juice for the children," a boy and girl. She wanted to know how many buckets that would be.

"Nine," John replied.

"So we'll pick nine," she asserted.

The three had brought their own



Agnieszka Ostrowska-Walawski (left) and Magdalena Fraczek (right) stave off much of the rain with a beach umbrella so they can pick aronia at Coldbrook Farm in Momence, Ill., about a two-hour drive from their starting point in Arlington Heights, Ill. (Photo Courtesy of Coldbrook Farm Inc.)



Chicago-area residents Magdalena Fraczek (left), Krystyna Ostrowska (center) and Agnieszka Ostrowska-Walawski (right) showcase their bounty from picking aronia in the rain at Coldbrook Farm in Momence, Ill.

(Photo Courtesy of Coldbrook Farm Inc.)

surgical-style gloves. "I thought about a small umbrella," Aga said. "Then this other one for the beach. Maybe this will be good." The three trekked out to the field. From the car, John and I watched the bright umbrella travel up the row, with lime, pink, magenta, orange, aqua and turquoise stripes, fluttering in the breeze as the two friends, laughing, cleaned the bushes.

Krystyna picked by herself, using two hands while sitting on a white bucket. Plop, plop went the berries into each orange bucket. Once, when she came to the stand for another bucket, she looked up at us, gave us a thumbs-up and said, smiling, "Okay." Her hip replacement surgery posed no obstacle in the aronia field.

They made themselves at home. Magda, after dropping off a bucket, would pluck a berry from the bush and eat it on her way back to the beach umbrella. She and Aga posed for photos to send to Aga's husband.

"Okay, we're done," Magda said more than once. And then they picked some more.

"We are done picking and it stopped raining," she observed.

Standing around, I told Magda to tell Krystyna that she'd blessed our field. "Thank you," Krystyna said. Later, at the very end, Krystyna looked up high into the sky and put her arms out, palms up, to signify, "Beautiful."

All three picked the bushes clean, but Krystyna outstripped the others with nine, while Magda picked six and Aga, five. Sixty pounds for juice a something a little stronger for the adults? They walked away with 98.

Mildred L. Culp

## Oscar-nominated "The Deluge" restored



Daniel Olbrychski (center) in Jerzy Hoffman's "The Deluge."

Jerzy Hoffman's Oscar-nominated movie "The Deluge" has been restored for the 40th anniversary of its release and it will open the 39th Gdynia Film Festival this month.

Based on a volume of a trilogy by Nobel Prize-winning author Henryk Sienkiewicz, the film follows the adventures of a group of nobles in war-torn 17th century Poland, in the spirit of Dumas' *The Three Musketeers*.

"The Deluge" ("Potop"), which originally premiered on September 3, 1974, has been painstakingly re-edited and restored under director Hoffman's supervision, with the two-part epic trimmed to 185 minutes.

The restoration, which is being released in Poland under the title of "Potop Redivivus," was carried out by the National Film Archive.

"I thought that it was worth showing the restored film to everyone who could

not see it in the cinema, especially to young people who only know 'The Deluge' from television sets, VHS and DVDs," Hoffman said, as cited by the Gdynia Film Festival's web site.

"But will the contemporary viewer want to spend over 5 hours in the cinema?"

"Thus, I have recreated 'The Deluge' in a three-hour version. The film lacks none of the most important threads, loses nothing of its readability, and it takes on an incredible speed at the same time."

Michal Oleszczyk, artistic director of the festival has enthused that the film was the natural choice to open this year's event, reflecting that it is "a beautiful way" to honor the anniversary.

The 39th Gdynia Film Festival runs from September 15 to 20, and the film will go on general release on October 3. A trailer of the restored film has been released by the distributors. (Polish Radio 1 / nh)

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