



“This beautifully told story about an eccentric matriarch-farmer and her village of Corrales is an absolute treasure. Anyone who has called New Mexico home, whether for a very short time or for generations, needs to sit down with [this book] for the sheer joy of reading it and for the portrait it makes of a New Mexican farming community and the values that make it so.”

—Deborah Madison, author of *The New Vegetarian Cookbook for Everyone*

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Monday, April 14, 2014

SACRED LAND AND CULTURAL TRADITIONS CELEBRATED IN BOOK

Corrales, N.M. —*If There’s Squash Bugs in Heaven, I Ain’t Staying*, celebrates Evelyn Curtis Losack’s life on her farm in the beautiful village of Corrales, New Mexico. She was born on the farm 85 years ago today.

“Spring,” the first chapter focuses on her farm life just as planting time begins. A small community on the northern outskirts of Albuquerque, Corrales is part of the Rio Grande Valley, and has a centuries-long history of agriculture. Author and Corrales grower Stacia Spragg-Braude writes about their village and Losack’s long life there with poetic insight. The title of the book refers to the bane of Corrales farmers’ existence: squash bugs.

If There’s Squash Bugs in Heaven is a record of Losack’s devotion to her land and is a delightful history of this special place. In words and images, the author introduces the reader to the ancient rhythms of Losack’s 150-year-old family farm: “It all begins when the sandhill cranes leave, and it ends as they come back. When they leave, you plant. When they return, you harvest.”

Evelyn Curtis Losack remembers the legendary cherry trees in Miguel Griego’s orchard, planted in 1914 and now long gone. She passes by the crumbled adobes of her ancestors that now anchor old orchards where her grandchildren once played. Losack sings Italian arias among her apple and pear trees. She fights for the conservation of water as if it were her own blood. She pays for her perms with her apricot jam.

“She’s from the old families,” people here say, referring to the dwindling few who still embody and guard the village’s heart. It’s a difficult mission to hold down her farm in a time when small family farms must compete with huge megafarms that can produce shippable tomatoes and apples in February. This book is a journey through the seasons with Losack and her land.



ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Stacia Spragg-Braude is a writer and photographer who lives along the Rio Grande in Corrales. A former photographer for the *Albuquerque Tribune*, she is the author of *To Walk in Beauty: A Navajo Family's Journey Home*.



PRAISE FOR *IF THERE'S SQUASH BUGS IN HEAVEN, I AIN'T STAYING*

“Stacia Spragg-Braude’s lively homage to Corrales and its heroes and characters is a fine example of how to celebrate a small community through preserving its individual and collective memoirs for future generations.”—Stanley Crawford, author of *A Garlic Testament: Seasons on a Small New Mexico Farm*

“Evelyn Curtis Losack is an unselfconscious octogenarian heroine, tending the land and the history of Corrales, New Mexico; selling her peaches, tomatoes, and chiles at the Corrales growers’ market; making the best apple pies, writing letters, teaching music. I am grateful to know Evelyn through the enchanting storytelling hand of Stacia Spragg-Braude, who is willing to learn, and to teach us, about the uncertainties and inspirations of every season.”—Margaret Wood, author of *A Painter’s Kitchen: Recipes from the Kitchen of Georgia O’Keeffe* and *Remembering Miss O’Keeffe: Stories from Abiquiu*



IF THERE'S SQUASH BUGS IN HEAVEN, I AIN'T STAYING:
Learning to Make the Perfect Pie, Sing When You Need To, and Find the Way Home with Farmer Evelyn
By Stacia Spragg-Braude

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