

FARMLOG

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WEEK OF APR 25TH

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SCALLIONS

ROMAINE LETTUCE

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GREEN CURLY KALE

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Gearing up for the season

The start of the CSA season is an exciting and busy time on the farm. For a successful start, we fire up the greenhouse in January to get our seedlings started. By this point in the season, we've typically filled up the start house three times. We start with the cold hardy crops, mostly the brassicas (kales, cabbages, etc.) and alliums (onions, leeks, etc.), and move into the summer veggies as soon as possible.

Our high tunnels, which are basically unheated greenhouses, allow us to get a head start on planting summer veggies in the ground. Although we don't add supplemental heat to these structures, they protect our crops from freezing spring weather by accumulating solar heat during day time. At night, we pull a thin blanket over the crops to create a warm microclimate for the sensitive crops.

Over the winter we spent quite a bit of time building new high tunnels and expanding our existing ones to extend our harvest season as long as possible. We are working to harvest vegetables from our farm year round, keeping our minds and bodies in that groove. This previous winter is the first year we've consistently had greens for sale at the farmers market, and things don't seem as stressful this year as in years past. Keeping the rhythm of harvest throughout the year seems as though it will yield more than just the veggies.

COOKING WITH YOUR CSA SHARE

Using your CSA veggies can be an exciting adventure. Past members have told us that they have learned to eat veggies that they would not have tried otherwise. We have learned to keep it simple when it comes to cooking and eating fresh from the garden. Simple salad dressings for your greens or roasting veggies with a bit of olive oil and salt are almost always appropriate ways to get the best of your weekly share. We will be sharing recipes in each of the newsletters. For today, check out the New York Times Cooking website where you'll

IN THE KITCHEN

ASPARAGUS

Asparagus is easy to store, prepare, and enjoy. Trim the bottoms ¼" and store upright and uncovered in a small glass of water in the fridge. It will stay fresh for several days. Find more recipes at our website.

PEA SHOOT MICROGREENS

These tender greens come from the first sprouts of Austrian Winter Peas. We like to add these as a garnish on salads or roasted veggies. Because of their size and tenderness, pea shoots should be used within 48 hours to insure quality. They should be stored in the crisper drawer until eaten.

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see a number of recipes for how to prepare asparagus - one of the first delicacies to enjoy this spring. Don't want to turn the oven on? Just chop up the asparagus and toss into a green salad made with your CSA goodies.

FROM THE FARMER

With the warm weather this spring, my mind goes to memories of drought. In 2012, the year our son was born, we hit 90 degrees in March. The spring rains also stopped in March, and it didn't rain again until July 8th, the day he was born. In many ways, a drought is easier for us to manage than a flood. We have the ability to irrigate our crops, but we depend a municipal water supply. While this is reliable, sanitary, and relatively secure, it can be very expensive! It wouldn't take many water bills during a drought to pay dozer for an irrigation pond, so we decided to investigate.

We've had a great relationship with the USDA Natural Resource Conservation Service, and they offer expert advice on projects of this nature. Our local officers and the state geologist came out to evaluate our site. The bad news came pretty quick, and the geologic maps indicated a lot of fractured limestone bedrock, and that problem was compounded by the lack of enough clay to line a pond. After much deliberation, they couldn't recommend any pond site on our land. Also, we lack major fracture lines in the bedrock that was lead to a productive well. So, we're back to the original plan of continuing to build a drought resistant, high organic matter content soil. And, we will try not to complain when it rains!

MAKING CSA WORK FOR YOU

Inevitably, whether its vacation or some other schedule conflict, there will be times when you won't be able to make it to CSA pickup. We appreciate your effort to keep changes to a minimum, but we will work to make it easy for you. We finalize the delivery schedule on Fridays for the following week, so please have any special requests to us by noon on Friday. We will include a link in your pickup reminder emails, which you can use to communicate these requests. Also, please don't hesitate to call! Our phone numbers are included in the column on the left.