



News from the Farm



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Managing The Market Garden In The Heat

THERE have been a couple of mentions in the past two newsletters about the extraordinary heat and the impact on our harvest of produce.

A large part of the off-season planning is spent in calculating our seeding and transplanting so that we can continuously assure you of a full share box, regardless of weather factors. This means searching for and ordering varieties that tolerate heat, wet conditions, dry conditions, or cold spells... pretty much the full range of possibilities for the growing season. We also try to offer several choices in each category of vegetable in the garden, such as 3 types of kale, 1 type of chard, collards, and spinach for cooking greens.

Specifically, when this extreme heat strikes, we take several actions. First is to place row cover over crops that we have found will



survive the blistering sun better when provided the protection of the cover.

Second, we begin a rotational schedule to keep water on the entire garden through our drip irrigation system. Lindsey has designed and set up a series of lines that are individually controlled. The drip tape (not a hose, but a flat tape with pin-hole size openings) is laid under a layer of

mulch, usually straw, and delivers a steady slow stream of water to the roots of the produce. Keeping the water at the root zone reduces evaporation and conserves water.

Third, many spring-planted crops respond to day length and temperature to trigger the production of flowers and seeds. The term for this transition is "bolting." When the greens bolt, they are no longer usable and must be replanted. However, when possible, we can hold off the bolting by nipping off the stems that begin to show up above the leaf tops. Sometimes we can get one or two more harvests before the leaves become tough and strong flavored.

We're doing our best to keep your share box full.



Recycled drip tape waiting to be set back out in the garden when the heat strikes.

Special points of interest:

- Managing The Market Garden In The Heat
- What is in your share box this week?
- Attracting Beneficials of All Types
- Makin' Hay
- Questions and Answers
- Recipes using this week's produce

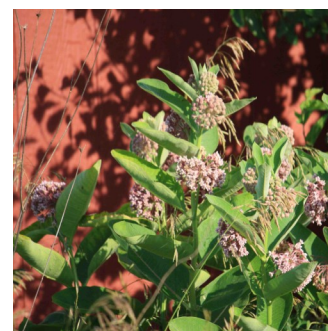
What is in your share box this week?

Broccoli*
 Summer squash
 Basil
 Fresh Garlic
 Fresh Onion
 Taxi Tomato

Lettuce head
 Cucumber
 Green beans
 A few notes: **Taxi tomatoes** are just the beginning. Yellow tomatoes are low acid. Do NOT refrigerate for best flavor.

First of the season **Basil** will keep best on the counter, too. It HATES to be moist and will turn black very quickly. Keep in a glass of water out of the sun on the countertop.

* Featured Produce for the week



Milkweed attracts butterflies and other beneficial insects.

Attracting Beneficials of All Types

This is one of my favorite topics and I attended a seminar this past February at the MOSES Upper Midwest Organic Farming Conference on the subject.

Beneficials in the landscape perform several functions. They are pollinators, they feed on harmful insects, and/or they improve the soil. Not limited to just insects, beneficial are also earthworms, certain plants, and even mammals and birds such as bats and birds.

In the insect world specifically, the lady bug, common lacewing, praying mantis, and all types of bees are especially desirable in the garden. Without their diligent visits to flowers and voracious appetite for harmful insects, the organic farmer would be hard pressed to be able

to practice effective non-chemical insect control. To attract beneficial insects, we have planted and inter-planted plants and flowers especially attractive to a large number of beneficial insects. Sunflowers, yarrow, purplecone flower, Black-eyed Susan, and bergamot are all in our planting plan.

To continue to enjoy the benefits of our earthworm population, we practice no-till in rotation, provide mulches and moisture, and return spent plant materials to the soils. Our earthworms are abundant and we are grateful for this fact.

And, finally, both bats and birds provide another layer of insect control, consuming huge numbers of mosquitoes and other swarms of flying insects.



A tiny jewel in the garden, the green lacewing is a beneficial insect that pollinates and feeds on harmful insects.

Makin' Hay

By now the hay is curing in the field, all rolled up so it can be moved, eventually, down to the barnyard area for winter feed.

Most farmers don't consider haying anything but a routine task, but this effort was actually an important milestone for Grassroots Farm. Just 3 years ago we barely had pasture, let alone enough growth that hay that could be cut and baled.

With this first cutting of hay, we have decided it would be feasible to try a

couple of head of cattle back on the farm. Just a few, mind you. They will be managed very closely using rotational grazing, with confinement by electric fencing.

Over the winter, the cattle will be sheltered and bedded in the walk-out lower level of the barn and use the no-freeze waterer already in place.

Stay-tuned for a possible "new arrival" in the spring?????



This roll of first cut hay looks small, but in perspective, is about 4' in diameter, 5' wide and weighs about 1,000 lbs.

Questions & Answers

Q. Will you have sweet corn this year?

A. In short, we do not grow sweet corn. So many farmers have so much sweet corn that we do not feel we can be competitive in price. Having said that, we ARE growing both heirloom decorative corn for the fall and popcorn.

long weekend, we will assist you in finding local accommodations. More on this event in a later newsletter.

Q. I know you have dogs on the farm. How do you keep them away

from the fields?

A. Our two farm dogs, Ryegrass ("Rye") and Colby Chevre ("Chevre") are trained to walk the grassy strips between field beds and to patrol the perimeter of the fields. Their services are essential in keeping the critters out of the garden. We use scare crows, too, but the dogs are key to keeping bad bunnies, browsing deer, shrews, moles, field mice, and other potentially damaging critters out of the market garden.



Featured Produce — Broccoli

ANOTHER nutritious member of the cabbage family, broccoli was served as far back as Roman times. Italians particularly value this vegetable as a valuable food source.

Like other members of the cruciferous family, broccoli is high in Vitamins C and A and fiber. Whether steamed (never boiled) or raw, broccoli packs anti-cancer, anti-viral, and anti-bacterial power boosts into your diet.

A regular addition of broccoli to your meals helps to lower

cholesterol and helps reduce inflammatory conditions.

We have become accustomed to preparing mostly the tightly closed flower heads (crowns) of the broccoli plant. However, don't be tempted to discard the thick stems. Try to shred the stems like cabbage and toss with shredded carrots and/or red cabbage and treat as you would a cole slaw. We also shred the stems and add to a vegetable stir-fry for color and nutrition.



Packed with good nutrition, our broccoli has flavor and personality to spare.

Back of the Box Pasta Salad

An old stand-by in our house. Don't just follow the recipe, however. Add your own touches.

1 1/4 c. uncooked tri-color spiral pasta
 1/4 c. chicken broth or vegetable broth
 3 T. red wine vinegar or cider vinegar
 1 T. canola oil
 1 garlic clove, minced
 1 t. sugar
 1 t. dried basil

1/2 t. salt
 2 c broccoli florets
 1 c. halved cherry tomatoes
 1 large sweet red pepper, julienned
 1/4 cup grated Parmesan cheese

Cook pasta according to package directions; rinse under cold water. Drain. In a large bowl, whisk together the broth, vinegar, oil, garlic, sugar, basil and salt. Add pasta, broccoli, tomatoes, pepper and Parmesan and toss to coat. Chill.



Broccoli Slaw

Crisp, colorful, zesty.

2 cups shredded broccoli stems, unpeeled
 2 red apples, quartered and cored

2 T. apple cider vinegar
 1/3 c. canola oil
 1 clove garlic, peeled
 1 T. liquid honey
 2 t. Dijon mustard
 1 t. caraway seed
 1/2 t. sea salt
 1/4 t. freshly ground black pepper

Using a medium size grater, shred the broccoli stems. Cut apples thinly into matchstick pieces; place in a serving bowl.

Place all dressing ingredients in a blender or food processor and process until well combined or shake in a container with tightly-fitting lid.

Pour dressing over fennel and apples and toss; let stand for 5 minutes,

A Word About Edible Flowers

If you are tempted to try any of the edible flowers available from other sources than an organic operation, please be sure they are specifically labeled for culinary use. Flowers are not typically grown for the commercial trade in a manner that would make them safe to eat.

