

The Farm Weekly

VOLUME 6, ISSUE 16

6 SEPTEMBER, 2004

PICTURE PERFECT LABOR DAY

We don't remember ever having a more beautiful day for the Labor Day Holiday. It was a great day to try out the 4 new employees Tim has hired. Our kids were formally initiated into the work force here at Bluebird Hills Farm as Tim put them to work picking tomatoes. Just to keep them hopping, their pay was based on the number each actually picked, in order to guarantee that nobody was a slacker and each were appropriately compensated for the work they performed.

Last Thursday, the total picked for the Friday deliveries was close to 225 pounds. Today the grand total was 530 pounds. This means our new employees have passed their probationary period with flying colors. It also proves that the sharp decline in our tomato production was secondary to the cooler weather, and now that the weather has warmed up, the tomatoes have kicked back into gear. There are still plenty of green tomatoes, and as long as the weather stays warm, production should continue.

While Tim and the kids picked tomatoes and then went swimming, I mowed some of the alpaca pastures to nip the weeds in the bud, literally. The girl's pasture has been overrun with an extremely prolific plant known as Sweet An-

nie. I have been told that this aromatic plant is included in pot pourri and dried flower arrangements. In small doses it actually is rather pleasant, but it is overpowering when you are mowing an acre infested with it.

Ragweed was the next most common plant pest. Luckily, it was not blooming. Over the last few weeks while picking corn, everyone has been sneezing and wheezing. The ragweed has infested the rows and simply brushing by it while picking the corn sent greensish yellow clouds into the air.

Goldenrod is now the big bloomer around the farm and Tim's bee herd is busy stocking up on the prolific pollen. The walnuts have practically dropped all of their leaves and their fruit is starting to follow their lead as the lane becomes littered with walnuts. In the farm fields the soy beans are turning yellow.

While signs of the coming fall are all around us, the "cole" crops, broccoli, cauliflower, and cabbage are acting as though it is October. The cool weather several weeks ago gave them the go ahead to kick their growth into high gear. The broccoli we were expecting to put in the boxes in a few weeks is ready for harvest now. I guess this is consistent with the inconsistency of this

year.

On the other hand, the cucumbers and squash seem to be reading the signs of fall and are slowing down. Powdery mildew usually takes a toll on the squash family by this time of year, but the cooler weather seems to have interfered with this disease, so that the production has been steady. The squash never did reach high gear this year, but there has been decent production, just not the levels that have us picking almost daily.

Picking is taking the majority of everyone's time, but there was some to spare last week for weeding the fall carrots and cultivating some lettuce. We continue the fight with the deer over the lettuce. On the back of this page, we have photos of the wiring system Tim is using. We think it

looks like some sort of front line in a combat zone. It is impossible to do any weeding once the wiring is up, so the timing can be difficult. You want to wait to the last minute to put the wire on so that you can maintain access for weeding, and yet if you wait too long, it becomes deer dessert.

Obviously, the efforts to save the lettuce are paying off. The varieties in your boxes over the last several weeks are known to tolerate the warmer weather of summer, however they aren't terribly tender. The varieties that are starting to come on now should be more tender.

Any free time over the next two months will be spent getting the fields ready for next year's crops. Tim mowed this past weekend to knock things down enough to do some tilling in the near future. After tilling there will

This Week's Box

Red Onions
Summer Squash (?)
Lettuce
Corn(?)
Yellow Beans
Tomatoes
Cucumbers(?)
Watermelon (?)
Broccoli
Eggplant
Cauliflower
Basil

Next Week

Onions
Lettuce
Summer Squash(?)
Tomatoes
Corn
Beans
Cucumbers
Carrots
Broccoli
Spinach

be grass seed to put down. All of this is an effort to increase the available organic matter in the soil for future growing as well as to stabilize the soil from the erosion that would occur if the ground was left bare.

On the electronic front, we did finally find our website shadowing our original. A talk with the web elves at the other end of the phone line got the old web site erased into cyber heaven and then I reinstalled the new version. There are still a few kinks to work out, but at least that was accomplished!

On the banking front, we have been informed that all accounts charged twice will be given a credit to negate the early July charge. This should have been accomplished by the time you read this, so if you haven't received this refund, contact us.

The last payment is due and we sent out statements to all those who still owed us money several weeks ago to inform you of your balance. If you still haven't sent in your payment, we would be happy to accept that at any time now.

Have a wonderful week!



T Posts holding hot wires over lettuce for deer defense.

AS THE DAYS GET SHORTER, PLEASE TRY TO PICK UP BY 6:00 PM SO THAT YOU DON'T DISTURB THE FOLKS THAT PROVIDE OUR PICK UP LOCATIONS

—Also—

WE ARE STILL HAVING PROBLEMS WITH BOXES. PLEASE REMEMBER TO RETURN THEM, AND BE CAREFUL WHEN YOU OPEN THEM



Close up of lettuce wired

Confetti Salad

From CSA member Karen ?

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|-----------------------------|-------------------------------|
| 1 Red Bell Pepper, chopped | 2 Scallions sliced diagonally |
| 1 Yellow Pepper, chopped | 2 Tbsp. Olive Oil |
| 1 Green Pepper, chopped | 1 Tbsp. Red Wine Vinegar |
| 1 Tomato, chopped | 1/2 tsp. Sugar |
| 1 small Zucchini, chopped | Salt & Pepper |
| 1/2 Cucumber, chopped | 1 Avacado, chopped |
| 2 Tbsp. Flat leafed Parsley | 1 tsp. Lemon Juice |

Toss the avocado with lemon juice. Combine peppers, tomato, zucchini, cucumber, parsley, and scallions. Whisk oil, vinegar, sugar, salt, and pepper and then pour over salad. Before serving add the avocado tossed with the lemon juice.