

# The Farm Weekly

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## IRRIGATION TURNED ON

While we all are enjoying the drier weather, it comes at a cost in the garden. The expense is in moving the irrigation pipes and sprinkler, and turning the pump on an off. It sounds simple enough, but it takes at least an hour out of the day to accomplish.

Things were tense last week when Tim went to turn it on for the first time this season. We had several thousand feet of drainage tile and irrigation pipe laid in the spring to take care of both extremes of the moisture factor. At the start up of the irrigation, the pressure was not high enough to create much more than a dribble out of the pipe. Meanwhile, newly transplanted vegetables were fading rapidly in the field.

One call to our friend Joe, of Pro Plumbing, brought one quick repair, but it wasn't until his second trip out at 6:30 PM on Thursday evening that things were turned around. We now have 75 pounds of pressure going to the sprinkler and all is well, but the heat definitely wasn't the only reason Tim was sweating on Thursday.

Challenges continue with the deer, but we are still addressing that issue and appear to be making some headway. They are hitting Tim "below the belt", walking down row after row of lettuce eating

their fill. We are still working hard at eliminating that problem, and seem to be having a positive effect, although we never expect to be totally free of them with as large a population as we have here.

Last week Tim and the fellas transplanted the fall broccoli, cabbage, cauliflower, and collards, as well as some more summer squash, basil, celery, and cucumbers. All of these were then irrigated to guarantee successful relocation.

With the planter on the back of the tractor, the last of the corn, beans, carrots, beets and greens were planted to keep things coming in succession. This week more lettuce, cucumbers, and zucchini will move out of the greenhouse and into the field.

Labor problems have smoothed out a bit. We seem to have found 5 reliable folks after going through 12 or more in the last 6 weeks. In the past we have used identified workers from Mexico using a special program called H2A by the feds. For the previous 2 years, we had used an agent in Texas to wade through the paper work, but he goofed and sent our paper work to the wrong regional office and put us nearly 2 months behind schedule to get Marco and Pedro here again this summer, ending that.

After several weeks

of folks not showing up for work, or not working when they showed up, we decided to do the H2A process ourselves.

It is incredible to us that following the rules to immigrate workers from Mexico should require so many hoops to be jumped, along with deadlines requiring overnight mailings and bitten nails over whether forms have been correctly completed. Did I mention the radio advertisement we have to do along with 2 classified ads?

If we just went around to places like Scarffs' nursery or a local Mexican restaurant, we could have had a couple of illegals in a few days. It seems ironic that our government makes it so difficult to do the right thing.

After all of this effort, we now have a new employee who has a visa and came down from the Toledo area after hearing about the position through the state job and family ser-

vices office. His wife is to join us at the end of July, so we hope to be moving in full gear soon, since we are moving away from training a new person every other day.

I have spent most of my free time over the last several days recuperating from losing our computer hard drive. The bulk of it is going toward rewriting our web site, but fortunately much of the copy can be downloaded from the web.

We are also catching up on our bookkeeping and I would like to thank all of those who have been so prompt with their payments. We have a few stragglers out there, but we always expect to have to remind folks. We will not be sending out invoices for payments to those of you on the payment program. Consider this your reminder. You should be close to making your third payment now. If you have any questions about your balance, give us a call.

Another gentle reminder is for the return of the

*This Week's Box*  
**Walla Walla Onions**  
**Summer Squash**  
**Cabbage**  
**Broccoli**  
**Dill**  
**Sugar Snap Peas (?)**

*Next Week*  
**Basil**  
**Onions**  
**Summer Squash**  
**Cucumbers**  
**Cilantro (?)**

boxes we place your veggies in. Please be sure to get these back to us and take it easy opening and collapsing them. One of our pick up locations said that several had been returned to them completely torn apart.

Plans are coming together for the Open House on Saturday the 17th. We invite you to bring along your family, friends, neighbors, and co-workers. We are working at broadening the event to have something for everyone to enjoy, so please come! One family has written to see if they could be included as artisans selling their wares. Anyone who is interested in participating should give us a call and we will see what we can do. You will have to provide your own display equipment, such as tables, shelves or chairs, so let us know and we will see what we can do.

Lastly, thanks again to those who have sent their recipes! We have included a pesto recipe this week in anticipation of the basil that you will be getting in the next week or two. The dill in your boxes has a number of uses besides making dill pickles. The aromatic leaves are a wonderful addition to many dips and dressings as well as a great addition to breads or spreads. To keep some for later, you can suspend it in a cool, dry place upside down until dry. Some will place it in a paper bag and hang the bag. When it is dry, strip the leafy parts from the stem and the seeds from the flower (if there is one) and store in an airtight container to keep it fresh. Use it in a recipe that calls for dill weed. I guess the term "dill weed" distinguishes it from "dill seed" in recipes, but it doesn't sound very nice.

This week's sugar snap peas have a wonderful, sweet pod, so do not discard it. These are wonderful stir fried so that they keep their crunch and sweetness, or eat them raw with some dill dip! If you just have to get those peas out, shell them and reserve the pods for eating later. Remove the string, if there is one, as you would for a green bean. These were always a hit at the farmer's market, and quickly sold out, so we hope that you enjoy them.

## **PESTO**

**1/3 cup basil leaves, chopped**

**6 tablespoons olive oil**

**2 tablespoons Parmesan Cheese, grated (preferably fresh)**

**3 tablespoons toasted pine nuts or walnuts, chopped fine**

**1 clove of garlic (or more if you love it!)**

**salt to taste**

Put all of the above ingredients in a blender or food processor, and blend until smooth. This can then be used to toss with spaghetti, spread on toasts, or to garnish vegetable dishes. It can be kept in the refrigerator for up to 3 weeks in an air tight container. Just place it in the container and cover with a thin layer of olive oil.

# **FARM FEST**

**Saturday, July 17th from 10:00 AM to 4:00 PM**

**3617 Derr Rd. Springfield, Ohio**

**Wild Prairie Breeders and Bluebird Hills Farm would like to invite you to**

**our Farm Fest where there will be something for the entire family.**

*Rug Hooking, Ceramics, Buffalo Products, Natural Soaps,*

*Spinning Demonstrations, Grilled Foods,*

*Horse Drawn Wagon Rides, Paper Creations, Alpaca Clothing,*

*Hiking, Angora Rabbits*