

The Farm Weekly

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OUR TENTH YEAR BEGINS TODAY!

Today marks the beginning of our tenth year selling our produce as a CSA. It certainly doesn't seem like that long, but the "Volume 10" written above indicates that time is whizzing by faster than I thought!

We have been growing organically for sale for a few more years than that, but it seems like only 3 years ago since we had several long discussions about whether to adopt the CSA concept and make it our own. We are happy with our decision, but it does add a level of stress, knowing that you are starting the season deeply indebted to several hundred families. We truly want to thank you for placing your trust in us and want you to know that we will do everything possible to guarantee you are happy with your decision to join our CSA.

As always, the challenges continue with weather. We went from wet and cold to very dry. The wet delayed transplanting, and the dry limited the plant growth once we got things in! In spite of weather chal-

lenges, Tim is actually in a better position at the start of this season than we have ever been in past years. Transplanting is caught up, cultivating is on schedule, and I have been mowing cover crops before they set seed.

Marco, Pedro, and Hanter arrived on Friday evening of Memorial Day weekend, and the Department of Labor and Department of Homeland Security are now moving things through much more easily.

We had a minor complication getting the irrigation equipment turned on last week when the pump for the well failed. Mason, one of our plumbers, and Crabtree Well Service are on their way, but since over **4 inches of rain** finally fell on Wednesday and early Thursday, the pressure is off for now, and we are certain we won't be seeing them show up anytime soon!

The biggest hiccup so far is that the groundhogs have been seeing their shadow with regularity in the lettuce rows.

Tim was heartbroken to find all of the first plantings damaged, keeping lettuce out of the boxes this week. Unlike the deer that chew the heart of the plant, the groundhogs seem to prefer the outer leaves, so all is not lost and several plantings are already in the ground for many weeks to come. He now has traps set for their removal.

The boxes hold some Japanese greens this week. These plants can be treated like cabbage or spinach, so they may be eaten raw or cooked. They are jam packed with vitamins and fairly mild flavored. If you enjoy stir frying, these are great for that. Just trim the stem a bit and mix into a salad with lettuce or throw into a pot, although they will cook down to nothing just as spinach does.

We have included 4 plants in your boxes as well. This is a way for you to have fresh herbs when you need them, as opposed to when we provide them. It is also a way for you to have cherry tomatoes and jalapeno peppers when you like.

Some members may simply transplant them into pots for the window sill or back stoop, while others have space in their garden to accommodate them.

This week we have included chives, oregano, parsley, and thyme. You can differentiate the thyme by its taller growth and

smaller leaves, while the oregano grows lower and has the larger of the leaves. We will assume that you know the difference between parsley and chives. Each of these plants will require less than 1 square foot of garden space and are very tolerant of different soil types.

The other excitement this season has been the bee activity. Tim has several hives, and as you noticed, this has been a gorgeous spring for flowering plants with the bees taking full advantage of the pollen and nectar. As a result, the hive populations have swelled and 4 or 5 of the hives have swarmed. Fortunately, they haven't gone far, nor high, and Tim has gone from 6 hives to 10 hives in just a few weeks. More Honey!

I am still working on credit card charges, so it will be few weeks until I am completely caught up. For those of you that have only mailed a deposit, the remainder of your CSA fee is due now, and for those of you on the payment program, your next \$100 payment is due now as well.

Lastly, we have set the date for the annual Open House for the farm. It is Saturday, July 19th. There will be more details in coming newsletters, but mark it on your calendars now. It is great fun and wonderful to get a chance to meet everyone!

Have a great week!

This Week's Box

Bunching Onions
Oriental Greens
Chives
Oregano
Thyme
Parsley

Next Week

Bunching Onions
Greens
Lettuce
More plants