

The Farm Weekly

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GLOBAL WARMING ???

When a friend of mine told me she had just brought in an armful of broccoli, it confirmed my suspicion that this summer has been cooler. It would be very unusual to harvest broccoli at this time of year, but since this is a cool weather crop, it is still productive in her garden in August. If I had thought about it long enough, I would recall that the kids have been to the swimming pool half as much as last year as well. To drive home the point, the high in Denver this Saturday is supposed to be 62, 30 degrees cooler than a week and a half ago.

This helps explain why our "warm weather" crops are under-performing. Tomatoes, peppers, cucumbers, and the usually prolific zucchini thrive in the hot weather, but not this year. The question is whether they will kick into gear if the weather warms.

It is terribly frustrating for Tim, who has covered all of the bases he can, but obviously can't control the weather. Last year the summer weather

lasted longer into September than normal, so we will hope that the same happens again this year. Hannah is still stringing the tomato vines, which indicates that they still think there is some summer left, so maybe if we all wish really hard, it will come to pass.

Nothing says summer like watermelon on a front porch, and spitting the seeds out into the lawn to see how far you can make them go. There are two varieties and one or the other will be in your box. The yellow variety is a bit odd to look at, but was a real favorite last year with superior sweetness.

The red variety is just as sweet, but more traditional. We don't include melons on our list of produce in our brochure because they have been risky as a crop, but this will make the second year that we have had them in the boxes. This is probably due to the fact that we have had better moisture both years, but also due to us using black plastic mulch. The black plastic really warms



up that soil and also keeps weeds from taking over the rows.

The cantaloupe that Tim planted have not fared as well. We had a successful crop last year, but were unable to get the same variety as organic seed this year. Another organic variety was purchased and proved itself a failure under our conditions. With this cool weather it may not be a fair test, but since the watermelon did well, we won't be growing this variety again. I guess you don't know until you try.

The fiber judging clinic I attended was very good. There is nothing like schooling to impress upon you how truly ignorant you are, and this clinic was no exception. We worked from 8 to 5 each day and I spent an hour or two each night reviewing. The amazing thing is that I can now actually differentiate 22 micron fiber from 25 micron fiber.

On Friday, I received a cell phone call from Hannah asking permission to purchase several chickens. On August 26th, we will take possession of several bantams, the pretty small chickens, 15 Buff Orpingtons, 15 Barred Rocks, several Ameracaunas, and some Black Silky Cochins. A total of 50 chickens will join the 2 adult guinea hens and the 3 brand new guinea keets that arrived earlier this week. Never a dull moment here!

Pictured above is a Cecropia moth that I spied a few weeks ago while mowing one of our pastures. The moth is brown and has a wingspan of about 6 inches and as I watched it, its wings would pulse apparently helping it inflate and deflate its lungs. We rarely get to see these moths, so it was a real treat. Please remember as you use insecticides that they are indiscriminate and kill the likes of these too! Stay warm!

This Week's Box

Lettuce
Watermelon
Walla Walla Onions
Potatoes
Tomatoes
Garlic

Next Week

Onions
Lettuce
Tomatoes
Potatoes