

# The Farm Weekly

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## ELEVEN YEARS YOUNG

Today marks the start of our eleventh year as a CSA, and even though we have been doing this for eleven years and growing organically for longer than that, every year is different with new challenges and new lessons.

This year, like many springs, the rainfall made getting into the fields a challenge, but Tim managed to get everything planted in a fairly timely fashion only to end up in a drought! The poor plants didn't meet the challenge as well as Tim did and sat in the fields dumbfounded.

Tim scrambled to get the irrigation equipment up and running a month earlier than usual, and slowly the plants awoke from their stupor to start growing again. We are starting a week later than usual, but everything seems to be moving along just fine now.

Another change for this year is labor. Those of you who have been with us before know that we have acquired visas for 3 Mexi-

can fellows, a father and his 2 sons, for the last 8 or 9 years. Due to the economy, we didn't feel right about giving jobs to folks outside our area, so have hired locally. Included in the mix are our 4 kids, so it will be a different but fun summer without a language barrier and working side by side with our own munchkins.

The boxes hold a beautiful bag of spinach, a bag of lettuce, and some bunching onions. All of these will be familiar to everyone, so I won't go into any care instructions, other than to be sure to store all of it in the fridge. Some folks will clean both the lettuce and spinach when they get home with their boxes so that you can just grab it over the week.

You are welcome to cook the spinach, but you will be amazed at how it will cook down to such a small quantity, so be prepared!

As in year's past we have included herb plants in the boxes. This helps to make up for the boxes being light until the

crops really start to come on, and also enables you to go out and help yourself to your own fresh herbs whenever you need them.

There are two basil plants, a purple basil and a cinnamon basil. The other smaller plant with small leaves in Sweet Marjoram, similar to Oregano. The last plant is flat leaf Italian Parsley.

The basil is a great addition to salads, casseroles, soups, and is absolutely delicious with fresh tomatoes. Of course there is always pesto and we have a great recipe for pesto on our recipe page.

These plants can do well in pots on your back porch steps, or they can be transplanted into your garden. Most herbs are pretty tolerant of poor soil, but will fare better in a loose potting soil, or soil with a fair amount of organic matter. If you place them in a pot, you can bring them in for the cold months, although they probably won't grow as well there.

You will also be getting 2 cherry tomato plants, a jalapeno pepper plant, some thyme, oregano, and sage over the next 2 weeks. The cherry tomatoes are a variety that will melt in your mouth. Hopefully this will be a better tomato year than what everyone had last year.

Since you can expect a fair amount of lettuce and greens over the course of the season, I want to encourage you to experiment with making your own salad dressings. I have provided a great and easy recipe below to provide an introduction. You will be amazed at how much better they taste.

One tradition of the CSA is for our members to share their recipes here in the newsletter. Please email them to us and we will share them with the rest of the gang!

That's it for now. Thanks again for joining us for what we expect to be a great year growing healthy, full flavored, organic produce.

*This Week's Box*  
Spinach  
Lettuce  
Bunching Onions  
Basil Plants  
Sweet Marjoram  
Italian Parsley

*Next Week*  
Bunching Onions  
Spinach  
Lettuce  
Cherry Tomato  
Sage  
Oregano  
German Thyme

### Ivy's Salad Dressing

3/4 cup canola salad oil  
3/4 cup sugar  
1/4 cup cider vinegar  
1/3 cup ketchup  
1 medium onion, chopped fine  
1 1/2 tsp salt  
2 Tbsp Worcestershire Sauce

Combine all of the above in a 1 quart jar and shake well. Make a day ahead for best flavor. This is also great for spinach salads.