

The Farm Weekly

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TWELVE YEARS AS A CSA!

Today marks the start of our twelfth 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, and 2010 is no exception with the early arrival of summer weather. The warmth has allowed us to start the CSA a week earlier than last season. A dry spell gave Tim the opportunity to catch up with transplanting, but it also brought out the irrigation equipment for a day or two. That is definitely unusual!

First, a bit of house-keeping: We do send out emails to let members know about special announcements regarding the CSA, and use a company called Constant Contact, so please set your spam filters to allow emails from Constant Contact or from our email address, bluebirdhills@voyager.net.

Secondly, we can't stress how important it is to

treat the boxes kindly. Please open and collapse the boxes without tearing them. We all want to be "green" so help us make these boxes last as long as possible.

Shares are still available, so let anyone you think might be interested in our program know about the CSA, and be sure they put you down as their referral so that you can receive a \$25 credit or refund. It is best to simply direct them to our website, but we can send them a brochure if you let us know where to send it.

We have added a new pickup to the CSA down in Liberty Township, so check it out if you think this might be more convenient, we would be happy to change your pickup location if you would like. We need a few days lead time to do this and can't have folks switching back and forth for fear we will make a mistake. The address for

the Liberty Township spot is on our Maps page and I hope to have a map to the location available there in the next few days.

The boxes contain some Chinese cabbage which may be new to many of you. This vegetable can be used much like regular cabbage, but is best cooked just long enough to soften it slightly, so that it keeps its crunch. It is trimmed up just like lettuce or celery, removing the tough root end and then rinse the leaves to free them of dirt.

Pak Choy is most popular in stir fry and has a very mild, gentle flavor that allows it to be combined with all sorts of other vegetables. We simply stir fry it with some onions, carrots, a little minced garlic and add a small amount of soy sauce and corn starch mixed with a little water to prevent lumps when it is cooked, all to give it a slight coating of tasty sauce.

When stir frying, you cook the ingredients in an order that allows those that take the longest to go into the wok first, and the quickest cooking items go in at the very end. There are also bottled sauces available at the grocery that are quite tasty and take the guess work out of creating a yummy dish. By the way, you don't need a wok, you can do the same in a cast iron or stainless steel fry pan.

The boxes also contain a chive plant and a German thyme plant and there will be a few others over the next couple of weeks. This is a way for you to get fresh herbs when you need them, not when we pick them. The plants do well in average soil and can be planted in your garden, or into pots to put on your door step or even in a sunny window. It seems counterintuitive, but the flavor of herbs such as thyme and oregano are actually enhanced by drier, less fertile soil, so don't baby them.

There also will be 2 cherry tomato plants so that you have those for salad, for they do not tolerate picking and packing well. There is also a jalapeno pepper plant this week. The tomatoes and pepper plants will appreciate more fertile, loamy soil, and even watering over the course of the summer.

Today, after packing boxes, the gang were working on putting an extra electric fence around the veggies to keep the deer out of the garden. This makes a double fence with a gap of 2-3 feet between them to inhibit the deer from jumping over.

To make sure that the deer are "trained" to the fence, we bait it with little caps filled with peanut butter, which they evidently find irresistible.

That's it for this week! Thanks again for signing on with us, and have a safe week!

This Week's Box

Spinach
Lettuce
Bunching Onions
Pak Choy
Radishes
Chive Plant
German Thyme
Jalapeno Plant

Next Week

Bunching Onions
Spinach
Lettuce
Kohlrabi
Cherry Tomato
Lime Basil Plant
Oregano Plant