

# The Farm Weekly

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## I MUST ADMIT WE ARE A BIT ODD

When I was growing up, my parents had a large planter in our dining room filled with tropical plants that would often grow so tall that they would have to be dug out and removed or at least cut back so that we could see out our windows again. This planter was shaped like an "L", 2 feet deep, 2 feet wide and about a total of 12 feet long.

Needless to say, we also had issues with insect pests particularly the white mealy bug. The solution was to import a praying mantis to set up residence. Somehow we found one in our yard and we opened up our home to him. There was one point where the fellow came up missing, and we thought that perhaps the dog had eaten it or it died of more natural causes. Imagine our surprise when he crawled out from under my sister's chair as we were eating breakfast one morning.

Most would have

jumped up from the chair, but we all sort of celebrated the resurrection of our green friend!

The other big event that came far too infrequently was the night the Night Blooming Cereus, a desert cactus that we had acquired from our neighbor Dr. Jim Gianakopolous, bloomed.

I don't think we cared so much about the novelty of this plant that only blooms one night per year, but we loved that we got to stay up past our bedtime to watch it! The flower was beautiful, by the way, with a lovely fragrance, but you can see that I come from a line of folks that are sometimes a bit quirky.

I didn't realize the trait was genetic until Luke came home 2 weeks ago with a praying mantis that he had found while trimming around fences in preparation for our open house. The little guy was only about two inches long.

It seemed only fitting to bring him to our back porch for observation, shelter, and fine dining. Raccoons have torn through two of our screens, and the dogs have made those holes larger so that we have bountiful bugs for him to snack on. I am happy to report that "Percival" has doubled in size and ate a moth this morning for brunch. At least he is not in the house, but then we don't have a large planter with mealy bug infested plants to keep him happy.

We had our third mechanical breakdown last week when the small Farmall Cub that Luke was using stopped midfield without even a sputter. Tim ordered new battery cables which were needed, but did not do the trick. He then spent half a day testing various wires to determine where the problem was, and discovered the battery was defec-

tive. Now with the new battery, all is well and Luke can hop back on tomorrow to finish cultivating the winter squash.

If Tim's repairs had not been effective, we would have been faced with trying to get it out of the field with the cultivating equipment still buried in the ground. I am not sure we could have even done that.

Tim has given up on his battle with the flea beetles. With a weather forecast on Friday claiming no chance of rain for 4 or 5 days, Tim had Pedro dust all of the plants with the DE I spoke about last week. Seven hours later all the plants were dusted. It rained on Saturday morning. So the fall broccoli and cabbage are on their own to sink or swim. We shall see, but it isn't looking good at this point.

I hope that everyone is keeping cool. Remember to drink plenty of water!

### *This Week's Box*

Onions  
Potatoes  
Green Beans  
Lettuce  
Summer Squash  
Green Peppers  
Tomatoes  
Cabbage  
Garlic

### *Next Week*

Green Beans ?  
Potatoes  
Summer Squash  
Lettuce  
Onions  
Green Peppers  
Egg Plant  
Tomatoes

### **BEET SALAD** from CSA member Mary C.

2 or 3 large beets or 5 or 6 small ones  
1 Tbsp Olive oil  
1/4 cup feta cheese  
1 can mandarin oranges, drained  
1 Tbsp Horseradish  
1/4 cup chopped pecans

Clean and remove the tops from the beets, and then roast at 375 degrees for one hour. Cool, remove the skins, and dice the beets.

Mix a tablespoon of horseradish with a tablespoon or so of olive oil, then mix with the beets.

Sprinkle feta cheese over the entire dish of beets (about 1/4 cup or to taste). Sprinkle the pecans over the beets and cheese and follow with the drained mandarin oranges.

Serves 4