

The Farm Weekly

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PICKUP TRUCK BITES THE DUST

Last Tuesday, Tim phoned me around 6:30 and told me that he was going to a bit late to dinner, for he was having some trouble with the truck. Now, this truck is the same truck we made deliveries with for the first year or two of the CSA, as well as taking produce to farmers' markets for a few years before that. Even though you know it is an inanimate object lacking a soul, we do get attached, and we have known that the truck was close to the end of its days.

The Master of understatement, Tim's "trouble with the truck" turned out to be, "the gas tank fell off." So now begins the truck shopping saga, deciding what we need, what we want, how much mileage is acceptable, and the "biggy", how much do we want to spend. Just what Tim has time for! So when you see Tim's truck at the bottom of the drive, now you know why.

The weather is forcing alterations to Tim's day.

Twice a day now Tim must move the irrigation equipment, for the heat and constant sunshine have really started to dry things out.

This year Tim has been irrigating the potatoes frequently at the suggestion of Marco, one of our Mexican workers, who worked out west many years ago on a potato farm prior to coming to work for us. Marco told Tim that potatoes get irrigated every three days, regardless of the weather. In past years, we have not experienced the yields out of the potato plantings that we should, so Tim decided to follow Marco's advice and drastically increase the irrigation. Perhaps it is coincidence, but yields are much improved and this week, you get to experience the beginning of the potato bounty.

These potatoes were dug just 2 days ago. Potatoes usually are cured so that the skins toughen allowing them to be stored without refrigeration. Because these have not had a

chance at curing, they need to be stored in the refrigerator, or they might spoil if left in the plastic bag. You could also transfer them into a paper grocery sack to allow them to cure, but I recommend that you eat them right up, for they are delicious! These are new potatoes and simply roasting them with a little olive oil, or steaming them until fork tender makes a quick and easy and delicious addition to a meal.

The boxes include basil this week. Basil does not take refrigeration well if it is damp, so we pack it uncleaned. It is important that you rinse this off before using it. The quantity we provide is great for making pesto, but you can also just pluck from the stems over the next several days and add it to dishes, salads, or fresh tomato dishes. Treat it as though it is a cut flower and place it in a vase with water, but pluck out any leaves that would be submerged, for they will just spoil under water. Basil pairs very well with tomatoes, but is also delicious in scrambled eggs.

Tim was hoping to have lettuce this week, but it was too small to pick. We should have more in the boxes next week. The summer squash is not living up to its reputation. The first 2 plantings were held in the greenhouse until the ground dried enough for transplanting. Tim thinks that this

causes the plants to be stunted in growth and production. Fortunately the next batch will be ready for transplant next week, so there will be more later, but the zucchini definitely is not living up to its hype!

Off the topic, but interesting for us was a program out at CJ Brown reservoir last night. Betty Ross from the Glen Helen Raptor Center gave a presentation on Ohio owls before releasing 4 fledgling screech owls. About 50 brave and hot souls attended at the visitor center as she introduced us to 4 different species of owls, the screech owl, the barred owl, the barn owl, and the great horned owl.

If you ever have the chance to attend one of these releases, please do. It was very interesting and completely free, plus it was great to get a chance to see these creatures that are normally hidden by the dark of night up close. At the Raptor Center at Glen Helen, they have several birds of prey that are incapable of surviving in the wild. If you have never had the chance to visit "the Glen", do check it out. It is one of the gems of the area, and to top off your day, you can visit Youngs' Jersey dairy, just a mile north on State Route 68. It's a great and inexpensive family adventure.

Hope that you are able to find a cool space this weekend. Have a great one!

This Week's Box
 Walla Walla Onions
 Cabbage
 Potatoes
 Broccoli
 Green Beans
 Summer Squash
 Garlic
 Basil

Next Week
 Green Beans
 Potatoes
 Summer Squash
 Cucumbers?
 Lettuce
 Onions
 Peppers?