

# The Farm Weekly

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## OUR 8TH SEASON AS A CSA BEGINS!

Once again we would like to thank you for participating in our CSA. It is hard to believe that this is our 8th year marketing our produce this way. While each season is different the challenges generally remain the same, weather, labor, and deer.

Each of these has been at work here at the farm creating obstacles for us except the laborers. We are bringing Marco, Pedro, and Hanter up from Mexico for another season and as always acquiring visas has been difficult. The consulate in Monterrey issued them 2 days ago, so they are on there way!

The effort to employ temporary laborers from Mexico has cost us over \$2000 in fees that the department of Labor and Homeland Security require of us. On the home front, we have distributed about 10 applications for employment locally and have not had one returned.

The cool and damp weather last month, put all of the plants on hold that were already in the field. The spinach is not quite ready as we would have expected, but it should be next week. The rain also delayed transplanting, so the greenhouse 2 weeks ago was a little overcrowded, but over the last 2 weeks, Tim drove the tractor while I sat on the transplanter setting out over 1000 tomatoes, 1000 pepper plants, eggplant, melon plants, and cucumber plants, so we are caught up there.

The deer have done their usual lettuce consumption. Tim spent time this winter clearing brush to eliminate their cover, and is now going to build an electric fence within our electric fence to keep from dining on your lettuce.

In the boxes this week you did get one head of lettuce which should be

easy to pick out as are the scallions. The lone onion looking item that resembles a scallion on performance enhancing drugs is young garlic. Comparing the leaves to the scallions you can see how garlic is actually more similar to a leek. You can use this in any way you use garlic regularly and the strappy leaves might be used for flavoring a stock for soup. I would think they are a bit tough and chewy for eating, but I have never tried.

The Komatsuna and Mizuna, the leafy stuff in rubber banded bunches, or Japanese greens that found great popularity with our customers in the last 2 years. These are cool weather crops and are used very similarly to spinach. They can be eaten raw in a salad, braised, stir fried, or added to soup. Just like spinach, they are packed with vitamins and minerals. The Komatsuna has the bigger leaf, while the Mizuna is smaller and resembles a dandelion.

We provide herb plants to our members at the start of each season so that they can have some fresh herbs all year long to accompany their veggies. This also helps to fill up the boxes some at the start of the season. If you are not familiar with herbs, you can go to the web for popular ways to use them in cooking or check in a cookbook.

All of these plants are suitable for placing in pots on your porch or in a very sunny window in doors.

This week in your boxes we have placed German thyme which is the smallest leafed plant. The largest leafed plant is Sage and when you rub its leaf, it will probably remind you of either sausage, or stuffing at Thanksgiving. The inbetween leafed plant is Sweet Marjoram. I am no gourmet cook, but the Marjoram is very similar to oregano.

All of these plants are perennials if planted in your garden, meaning they will survive winter here. They can tolerate poorer soils and require about 1 square foot in the garden. They will also do well in pots. The sage will grow more upright, while the thyme creeps along the ground. None of them are invasive, so you don't have to worry about them taking over your garden.

That's it for this week's newsletter, we are hoping that everything will run smoothly, although we always expect a few glitches. We still have some space available, so if you know of someone who might be interested in joining, direct them to our website or have them give us a call.

Have a great week!

### *This Week's Box*

**Lettuce**  
**Scallions**  
**Young Garlic**  
**Mizuna**  
**Komatsuna**  
**Marjoram**  
**Sage**  
**German Thyme**

### *Next Week*

**Lettuce**  
**Spinach**  
**Scallions**  
**Japanese Greens**  
**More Herb Plants**