

The Farm Weekly

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JUST PLUGGING ALONG

We had been feeling a bit sorry for ourselves with the lack of rain, but a day trip to east of Findlay to Tiffin cured that. Up there the rain has been very sparse so the corn is curling up tight, the grass is brown, and the soybeans are only a few inches tall. As I type, it is raining here, and though we are running a bit behind, it could be much worse.

Life is settling into a routine again, albeit a busy one. The CSA is sold out for the year which will make bookkeeping much easier. Tomorrow the alpaca half of this farming couple is going to take some gals to Chicago for breeding and the weather looks perfect for that. My last trip there included a stretch south of Chicago in stopped traffic and the thermometer registering 110. I thought I had baked my alpacas, but they survived just fine.

We have started a new employee on the cultivating tractor. Our son Luke is now gainfully and productively employed, and his mother is ecstatic that he

isn't sitting in front of an idiot box that's wired to the computer or satellite receiver. Hannah is on tomato stringing and Nicky and Ian assist with packing boxes.

Deliveries are going exceptionally well this year, and we will provide an updated pickup schedule in the next newsletter when we are certain of Kevin's arrival times at each location.

The humidity makes for slower work. Tim and the guys are working on getting the fall "cole" crops transplanted. These include cabbage, broccoli, kale, and collards. Luke has been taking care of the weeds and Hannah has been bringing home her new "friends", huge tomato horn worm caterpillars that she finds on the tomato plants. She places them on our dining table on our attached screened porch to let them go free out of the reach of her father's boot sole. That's what I deserve for allowing our children to commune with nature. These worms will strip a tomato plant of its leaves if

left to its own devices.

The herbs this week are the last to land in your boxes. These are two kinds of basil. Only their scent will allow you to tell the difference. One is cinnamon basil, and Tim thinks it has a slightly serrated leaf edge, but the cinnamon scent is obvious. The other is lemon basil. These are annuals and may do better in a richer soil than the other herbs you have received. Basil and tomato are an excellent combination, and snipping these leaves into little bits and adding them to a tomato salad is a perfect way to enjoy them.

Almost all Italian dishes will include basil, and of course, there is pesto, that scrumptious mix of parmesan, garlic, olive oil, and basil. What a great way to dress a piece of chewy bread or fresh cooked pasta.

Someone sent an email last week asking the best way to keep the veggies. Of course, that varies some from one type to the next. My Mother-in Law would take her lettuce the minute it landed on her counter and clean it, separating each of the leaves completely. After cleaning, she would spin it dry or try to get it drier with paper towels and then store it in a plastic bag in the fridge. Onions that have not been cured, will do best if kept in refrigeration, in fact, almost

MARK YOUR
CALENDARS!

**FARM
OPEN
HOUSE**

SATURDAY
JULY 21ST

11:00 TO 4:00

everything will do better that way, except the basil.

Most will do best at temperatures between 40 and 50, which is why refrigerators have vegetable drawers that help keep some moisture in, and colder temps out. As a rule of thumb all green and leafy things will do better sealed up and cooled, but be sure to remove excess moisture first. Tomatoes stay out on the counter with the stem end facing down, but it will be a few weeks before we have to worry about that.

Cured onions and potatoes can be stored in a dry, dark place, but it will be a while before we have to worry about that either since all of your spuds and onions will be fresh picked for quite a while.

Stay cool and enjoy Independence Day. God bless those that have served and continue to serve to protect this great country.

This Week's Box

**Lettuce
Pearl Onions
Kohlrabi
Summer Squash
Cinnamon Basil
Lemon Basil**

Next Week

**Lettuce
Onions
Broccoli
Summer Squash
Garlic**