

The Farm Weekly

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WEATHER UPS AND DOWNS

While the heat finally broke last week, so did the moisture. Last year we had too much rain and cooler temperatures, but this year the opposite seems to be true. Irrigation is saving the crops, but it takes an enormous amount of time to move the big sprinkler, something that must be done about every 8 hours. In this dry weather, it is essential to have the irrigation running around the clock to ensure that each area has enough water. At these times, Tim's schedule revolves around irrigation and moving the equipment from one area to the next.

This year Tim is trying a new system on the crops that are in the ground long enough to make incorporating it worth the trouble, such as the peppers, tomatoes, and certain types of squash. This system consists of perforated black hoses coupled with black plastic mulch. The mulch helps to control evaporation and especially weeds, since the irrigation tubes keep us from being able to cultivate.

Back in the spring, it was a multistep effort to plant these crops. First, of course, was tilling the soil, followed almost immediately with the drip hose and plastic mulch. A special transplanter was then used to poke through the plastic, creating the indentation and hole for the transplant. Simultaneously water is dumped in the hole and the vegetable is placed in the wet cavity by the worker

riding on the end of this contraption.

In the last two weeks, Tim has finally had the time to attach each of these drip lines to a larger tube that is hooked via special connectors to the irrigation line. Each drip tube has to be specially sized according to the needs of the plant being irrigated, the length of the row, and the number of rows being fed water at the same time. It seems to be working very well so far and is saving an enormous amount of time and water, for the moisture is delivered directly to the roots of the plant instead of the entire bed.

The cool and wet weather last year was disastrous for the tomatoes, but this year it looks as though we are going to have a bumper crop. Some of you have expressed an interest in doing some canning or freezing, so we would like to extend an invitation to you to come and pick your own, if you would like to take advantage of this year's tomato bounty.

We ask that you give us a call first so that we can make arrangements to direct you to where you need to go. You will need to bring your own containers for carrying the tomatoes and we recommend some sun screen and a container of water for sipping. We'll also be happy to transport you to and from the field.

For those looking for something to do with the extra tomatoes, try making salsa with one of your jala-

penos, but do be careful when you deal with these fiery orbs, for the chemicals that give them their heat will remain on your skin and can be rubbed into the eyes by accident. When making salsa, I peel the 5 or 6 tomatoes first by dipping them into boiling water for about 20 or 30 seconds. This allows you to easily slip off their jackets. I then coarsely chop them and place in a strainer to allow some of the excess liquid to drain off.

Chop up an onion,

a green pepper, as much jalapeno or chili powder as you like, a clove or two of garlic, salt and pepper to taste, and stir it all together. I add some tomato paste for thickening and put half of the concoction in the blender to make it thicker. Allow this to meld in the fridge and enjoy with tortilla chips. Edible summer!

For those of you on the payment plan, the third payment is due now. Stay cool!

Most Excellent Zucchini Bread / Muffins

3 eggs	3 cups flour, sifted
1 cup oil	1 tsp salt
1 cup brown sugar	1 tsp baking soda
1 cup white sugar	1 tsp baking powder
2 tsp vanilla	2 tsp cinnamon
2 cups shredded zucchini (unpeeled)	

Beat the eggs in a bowl, then add oil, sugars, and vanilla. In a separate bowl, sift together the flour, salt, baking powder, baking soda, and cinnamon. Add to the first mixture and mix till just combined, then add zucchini. Pour into 2 loaf pans or about 20 muffin tins. Bake at 300 degrees until toothpick inserted comes out clean (20 to 30 minutes).

An excellent variation is to add 2 one ounce squares of semi-sweet baking chocolate that have been melted in the oil and allowed to cool. Then when adding the zucchini, also add a cup of chocolate chips (either semi-sweet or milk chocolate)

This Week's Box

Lettuce
Cabbage
Onions
Peppers
Summer Squash
Tomatoes
Garlic

Next Week

Onions
Summer Squash
Green Peppers
Lettuce (?)
Tomatoes
Cabbage
Melons (?)