



This Week on the Farm

Hello to all members,

The last week of the regular season is here and another growing season is at its end. The greatest emotion that we are feeling is gratefulness. We could not possibly make a living in any type of farming without our CSA and the support of each of our members. We are extremely thankful to each of you for supporting our farm this year. Not only do you provide us with income but you also are helping us to keep small, local farming alive. Your membership also gives us the best ability to steward the land that we have been given. We are grateful that God has showered us with the innumerable blessings that we have been given in many ways throughout this season. We hope that we have been able to return some of those blessings to you.



This time of the year is full of numerous other mixed emotions for us as well. Emotions range from sadness to happiness and exhaustion to anticipation. While the last week of the summer season is not even close to the end of the work to do around farm for the year, it is like taking a huge part of our routine instantly away. We are sad to see all the crops die in these early heavy frosts that we have had. We are going to miss talking with people at all the different sites we deliver to. We will certainly miss our crew and worker share members who are done for another season. And of course by this time of the year we are just plain tired from the toils of another year.

On the flip side there is joy in the fact that we were blessed to be able to produce healthy food for each of you for another year. We will get a brief time to take it a little slower for a week before the winter shares start. What I can't believe is the amount of anticipation I already have for next season. My mind is spinning with what seems like 1000 new ideas and improvements for next year. I usually don't start getting really anxious until sometime in December.

Yearly Summary

As we review the growing season we feel extremely blessed and fortunate to have produced as much as the farm did. We were very fortunate to have avoided the dreaded blight that plagued most of the farmers we spoke to killing both tomatoes and potatoes alike. We had at least 5 weeks of blight free tomatoes before we had any sign of blight. We were extremely grateful to have had our irrigation up and running early this season. It helped greatly to aid production in the dry season we had this year.

By far the biggest weather challenge of the year was the cold. This is by far the coldest growing season I can remember since I have been farming. The cold put a huge strain on both the early spring crops and our emotions. The cold weather also put a stop to a few warm weather loving crops that we would typically provide in an average growing season.

Despite the cold some items really thrived. Our watermelon patch went nuts. We were able to deliver 5 weeks of watermelons to our members. For some reason the egg plant crop, which likes heat, produced extremely well also. It goes to show that when I think I understand the growing cycle of a crop it is still out of my control. We also had a great growing year for cucumbers once we got some modestly warmer weather in the middle of the season. Lettuce plantings also really prospered as lettuce enjoys cool spring weather.

Looking Forward

Looking to next year we have many things we were looking to tweak and improve upon. The biggest change at least for us is going to be switching to a box exchange system at each pick up site. Next year we are going to wash items that need it and pre-box everything at the farm. On pick up day you will simply bring your last weeks box back flattened and pick up a new box full of produce. This is going to add quite a bit more work at the farm. The advantages of putting out an even higher quality product as well as taking some burden off of our sight leaders will far outweigh the extra work and cost. We also plan on having a swap box at each site next year as well. You will be able to put an item you may not like in the swap box and exchange it for something you may like that someone else didn't. Another addition we will have completed by next spring is our website. You will be able to view the website and receive many recipes, newsletters, farm info, event days, and a list of what will be coming in your share for that week. Finally, we are greatly hoping to get back on track next season with some planned event days at the farm.

I am very excited about some of the additional crops we are planning on adding for next years growing season well. There are a couple items we are going to grow more of. I would like to be able to produce 8-10 weeks of carrots as well as 8 weeks of broccoli to be able to offer in next years share. I also plan on adding lettuce to our fall crops cycle. We have many new crops

we are going to add to our rotation as well including brussel sprouts, basil, cilantro, cipolini onions, arugula, cosmic carrots, and others as well. We are also considering putting up a hoop house or two to be able to produce an additional 5 weeks of tomatoes.

Signing up for next season

We have had well over 100 requests already to sign up for next season. So I thought I would take a moment to address it in this newsletter. We will be emailing out all of next years information sometime in the next 3-4 weeks. Hopefully I have it put together by then. All existing members will be reserved a spot until Jan 15 next year. After that it is a first come first serve basis until we are full. We also double checked with all insurance providers to make sure that no matter what year you sign up in 2009 or 2010 you can be reimbursed for the next growing season.

The winter storage share

For those of you who have paid for a winter share you will be receiving an email notification sometime next week giving you further instructions on your winter share pickups. There will not be a winter share pick up next week, they will start the following week.

What we do in the winter

Many of you have asked us what we do all winter. To be honest there is not much of an offseason for us in farming. We will probably not be done cleaning up the farm until late November. There are miles of irrigation lines to pick up, refuse to burn, and mulch to pick up. There is also all of the fall tillage and planting in preparation of next years early plantings. By the time that is all done it is almost December. After that the seed ordering for next year begins. It takes two weeks or more to put a seed order together. There is just an unbelievable amount of planning and coordinating that is involved with producing a wide variety of crops at timely intervals while trying to compensate for weather conditions as well. Believe it or not we start planting for next season in the beginning of February. By mid February we are managing the greenhouse and planting seedlings which is a 6 hour a day job.

I also work with a few partners building rustic furniture, log furniture and beds as well as fine furniture. The business is called cedar creations online.

Special thanks

A special thanks to all of our sight leaders, family members, worker members, and all who have helped us throughout the growing season.

