



BROOKFIELD FARM SHOPTALK

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Distribution Week #8

WHAT'S NEW THIS WEEK

Sweet and Sassy!

Cippolini Onions: These were a successful experiment the past two years, so we grew even more this year.

These are small, flat Italian onion (red and yellow) that mature quicker than our storage varieties. Use like any onions and let us know how you like them!

Red Cabbage: These heads are amazingly dense and tasty. Cut them into a salad for a purple flair or make purple cole slaw for cooling down in the hot weather. We'll have this crop for a couple of weeks and then another crop in the fall.



WHAT'S ON THE WAY

MELONS
RED KALE

BULK PRODUCE

PICKLING CUKES,
SLICING CUKES:
.50C/LB
BEETS: \$2 / BU
CARROTS, EGGPLANT:
\$1 / LB

sions have been irrigated a few times and look pretty good at this point. Beyond that, though, crops are cranking and we spent busy hours in the cukes, the eggplants, carrots, beets, and tomatoes.

When we had a minute, we separated our yearling calves from their moms, who are moving towards the time when they will birth their new calves. Usually our cows eat grass from May - November. Last week, though, we ran out of grass. It's just not growing back without any water. So, we began to feed our winter hay (while we look for more, which will probably start getting expensive soon). And on Friday, we had a little sprinkle overnight, and then a cloudy morning, so we planted our final two lettuce beds and then our two-week-late cauliflower, broccoli, etc. Now we wait and hope for that 50% chance of a sprinkle on Sunday. At least the forecast is for 75F, which would be a welcome change.

Farm Tour

Friday August 12, 4 - 5:30 pm

This will be a general overview of our Pick Your Own operation. Our Assistant Manager Zoe Abram will be giving this tour.

Hot Weather Baba Ganoush

2 pounds eggplant
2 T tahini
4 T lemon juice
1 clove garlic (opt roast)
parsley
salt to taste
olive oil to taste

This is a flexible recipe and you may cook the eggplant in your oven, but Karen tried it outside on the grill and loved staying cool and loved the taste. The recipe may be cut in half. Experiment with how much of each ingredient you like.

Place eggplant on medium hot grill and bake approximately 25-35 minutes, or until outside is charred and center is super soft. If the juice drips out, that's great. Let cool slightly and scoop eggplant out into colander or salad spinner. Let drip in colander for 1/2 hour or spin to get some of the water out (it will be creamier and thicker if you do this step). Add additional ingredients, except parsley and olive oil, and puree in food processor or blender until smooth and creamy. Add olive oil, if desired, to make in creamier. Add a little cayenne or zatar to spice it up. Serve with pita, flatbread, veggies or crackers. Great in a pita sandwich stuffed with fresh tomatoes and cucumbers.

And finally we have also heard from some of our friends and neighbors this week who have water sources that have completely dried up. Our best thoughts go out to them while we continue to have gratitude for what we do have (which is a lot). For them and for us...here's hoping for rain one day soon!

We hope you enjoy the harvest.

Your Farmer,
Dan
(for Karen, Abbe, Zoe, John, Rebecca, and Sunny)

HOW WE FARM

Irrigation - Water Sources



Vegetables are 80 - 95% water. So, when you grow a lot of vegetables (250,000 lbs) you need a lot of water. While it's nice to have free water fall from the sky, you can't rely on it. So the most basic insurance most vegetable growers purchase is irrigation equipment. There are 4 components to all irrigation systems - water source, pump (with fuel - electric, diesel, gas, propane), transfer lines (to the fields - ours can be up to 1000' away), and delivery systems (sprinklers). The final three are all pretty straightforward to plan for and purchase. You just need some money (!) and a great source of equipment (we love Rain-Flo irrigation in Pennsylvania!).

The first one though, the water source, is tricky to develop. The biggest problem is that you need *a lot* of water. When we irrigate an acre of crops, we use 20 sprinklers. Each one uses 8 gallons per minute (gpm) to operate correctly. That means we need 160 gpm to run the entire system. To get an inch of water (recommended per week) we need or run it for 4 hours - so... $240 \text{ min} \times 160 \text{ gpm} = 38,400 \text{ gallons}$ to irrigate an acre. If you are going to irrigate up to 20 acres a week we are going to need 768,000 gallons per week. Wow!

In 1998 we worked with Dana Snyder to dig a pond at Snyder Pond. We cleared the trees, he hired Karl's Excavating and they dug a pond 100' x 200' x 10' deep. The pond is re-charged with underground springs. When it is totally full, we estimate there are 1,496,103 gallons in storage (200,000 cu. ft x 7.48 gal/cu ft). But this pond re-charges at some unknown rate, so even if we pump all week we only bring the pond down about 6" It's only after sustained pumping (over 8 weeks) that we begin to



PIC(S) OF THE WEEK

Non-irrigated Sweet Corn



Irrigated Sweet Corn



Calves eat winter hay while they wait for the grass to return

see this source start to go down significantly - about 5' now.

Over at Hulst Rd (near our barn) we didn't have an appropriate site for a pond, so we decided to dig a well - much more expensive and difficult to plan. We were incredibly lucky (very long story) and were able to get a well that pumps 90 gal per min. We are able to irrigate about 2/3 of an acre at a time, and have been able to pump and pump for these past 8 weeks with no loss in pressure, temperature, or quality. Of course, who knows when it will go dry? This remains a very unanswered very big question!!

Together these investments cost us around \$40,000. (\$10k for the pond, \$30k for the well, including pump, electric wiring, etc). This seemed like a lot of money at the time. And we worked hard over many years to pay off the loans from those investments. On dry years like this (just like 1999) we realize that we would be completely shut down without them. We are extremely thankful to have ground-fed, clean water sources to irrigate our crops during very dry years.



BIKE TO BROOKFIELD:

A fundraiser for the Rail Trail

SUNDAY, AUGUST 21st, 3 to 7 PM

Bike to Brookfield Farm (24 Hulst Rd., Amherst) for live music by the No Nos! Food from Wheelhouse Farm Truck! BYOB!

No cover. Donations optional. All proceeds benefit Friends of Northampton Trails and Greenways

Questions? sean@speedandsprocket.com

