

BROOKFIELD FARM SHOPTALK

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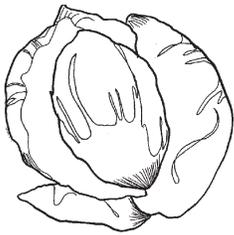
July 7, 2018
Distribution Week #5

WHAT'S NEW THIS WEEK

Summer Salad Season!

Cabbage: Summer Cabbage is here. We grow an heirloom variety called "Early Jersey Wakefield" known for its sweet taste and distinctive conical shape. We have a good crop this year and should have this for a few weeks. Now is the time for summer slaw (see recipe below).

Radicchio: This purple and white ball is an Italian import which has a bitter flavor. Chop it up to make an excellent addition to a fresh salad (see below) or cut it into quarters, brush with olive oil and grill it for a tasty treat.



Cucumbers: These cool crisp delights are just starting to ripen. You can eat these "picklers" fresh or make dills. Our slicing cucumbers should start next week, and hopefully we'll have cukes from now through early September.

WHAT'S ON THE WAY

TOMATOES
FRESH GARLIC

BULK PRODUCE

ZUKES & SUMMER
SQUASH: .50C/LB
GREEN KALE,
COLLARDS,
SWISS CHARD:
\$2 / LB

to purchase bulk produce:

in the farm shop:
just come on in and see the farm shopkeeper

in the Boston area:
visit our new Bulk Produce Shop on our website:
www.brookfieldfarm.org/
bulk-produce/

WHAT'S HAPPENING ON THE FARM

Turn Up The Heat

It's raining now. And the feeling of sweet relief is in the air. The moisture, from the sky, is promising to replace the moisture that has blanketed every pore of our beings for the past 7 days. The weather forecast of a low of 50F tonight promises to give us back a few winks of sleep, lost to the tossing and turning of heavy air.

On Saturday, the temps soared (as predicted) to the mid-90s. And that's where they stayed through Thursday, only taking a break to get up towards 100F on Sunday and Tuesday. While we have been changing our shirts as quickly as our minds, pouring water over our heads, and sometimes running through the soil after trellising tomatoes (since we left our shoes at the far end, and it is starting to feel like hot coals), all of the plants around us have been thriving and exploding. We have spent our week keeping from being deluged - by over-producing plants, both the ones we want and the one's we don't.

The week of July 4th brings certain yearly milestones. The first carrots are ready to be dug. The winter squash needs to be hoed. Time to seed the fall carrots. And so we set to it; The carrots were dug, along with the squash to be picked, the scallions to be bunched, and the cabbage to be womped. The biceps on the weeder crew are sore after 3 acres of hoeing, but our plants returned the favor, by exploding out into the newly freed space. They then turned their attention the nearly-engulfed sweet peppers, which now stand tall with the promise of huge August harvests. Then Jake prepped the beds, and I sowed several miles of fall carrots and beets. And now this rain is settling them in for (hopefully) a quick germination next week.

Cabbage & Carrot Slaw

1/3 cup white wine vinegar
1 tablespoon sugar (optional)
1 clove garlic, finely chopped
1/8 teaspoon ground cumin
1/8 teaspoon dried oregano
1/8 teaspoon dry mustard
4 cups finely shredded green cabbage
2 cups shredded carrots
1 cup thinly sliced scallions
1/2 teaspoon salt
Ground black pepper, to taste

In a large bowl, whisk together vinegar, sugar, garlic, cumin, oregano and mustard just until sugar is dissolved. Add cabbage, carrots, green onions, salt and pepper and toss gently to combine. Cover and chill for at least 4 hours before serving.

This one comes from our friends (and former manager) Kerry & Max at Provider Farm - they love cabbage (among other veggies) and this is delicious!!

We are having a little trouble completely enjoying the sweet relief of this thunderstorm because of the weight of the huge Friday harvest and the impending avalanche of cucumbers on the immediate horizon. Alas. Nothing a nap won't cure. And some iced coffee. And the realization that is just where we were hoping to be.

We hope you enjoy the harvest,

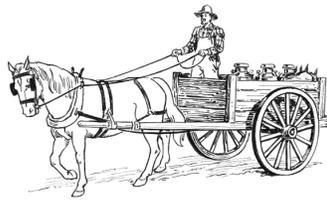
Your Farmer,
Dan

(for Karen, Zoe, Abbe, Ellen, Alex, Ben, and Jake)

HOW WE FARM

Mechanical Cultivation

Now that we have most of our planting behind us and our harvesting in front of us, this is weeding season. We farmers like to be distinguished and call it cultivating. We mostly use tractor cultivation, with three small tractors (and three small apprentices) driving up and down the fields during the months of June and July and August.



PIC OF THE WEEK

The Weeder Crew Sets to Work
Hoing The Winter Squash Field Field)

If we are timely we can get most of our weeding done now, and put us in good shape once the big harvests of late-August begin. So before we can be picking and grinning we have to be sweeping and basket cultivating (technical terms for weeding a lot). All weeding works best on warm sunny days, when newly pulled seedlings die quickly in the sun. When it's wet, we frequently have to do a job twice or three times that would be easily done once in a dry year.

The tractors can't get big weeds, or get many of the weeds in the row, so after we cultivate, we have to go through and "clean up" a field by pulling the leftover weeds ("bigs") by hand (that's the "weeder crew" which we'll tell you about another day). It's much faster work after the tractors have been through a couple of times (unless it rains every day).

Another way we keep weeding to a minimum is to try to lower our weed population before we plant. After we prepare the soil beds for planting we let them sit for a week. Then we cultivate the beds with a shallow tool akin to a big rake (a Lely Tine Weeder) which kills the tiny weeds but doesn't bring more weed seeds to the surface. We try to do this three times before sowing seeds. When we plant the weed pressure is significantly lowered and we have what we call a "stale bed." This is one way we deal with crops which are difficult to weed with machines like carrots.

We use mechanical techniques to replace chemical techniques (herbicides) to control weeds. Our methods take a bit more management and time, but avoid possible side effects of agricultural chemicals and keep the soil healthy to grow vibrant food.

SPECIAL OFFER

Certified organic low-bush blueberries

The Benson Place in Heath, MA will be distributing pre-ordered certified organic low-bush blueberries here at the farm during the CSA pickup on Thursday, July 26th between 5 and 6 pm (rain date Thursday, August 9th between 5:00 and 6 pm). These are perfect for fresh use or for freezing in bulk for the winter. To pre-order 5, 10 or 20 pound boxes, please visit the reserve berries page of their website on or after July 3rd, <http://bensonplace.org/ReserveBerries.cfm> and schedule your order for July 26th. Remember to choose Amherst- Brookfield Farm for your pickup location during the reservation process. All questions regarding berries and pickup should be addressed directly to the Benson Place at info@bensonplace.org or (413) 337-5340. If you'd like berries, be sure to sign up soon as orders will fill quickly.



GARLIC HARVEST - SATURDAY, JULY 14, 10AM - 1PM

Help us bring in the bulk of our garlic crop! This work is suitable for all ages.

There will be refreshments to cool you down (and crafts for little ones who would rather be in the shade)

