



BROOKFIELD FARM SHOPTALK

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June 6, 2020
Distribution Week #1

WHAT'S NEW THIS WEEK

(Mostly) Everything Green

Cutting Lettuce: A fresh-cut mix of red leaf, green leaf, and butterhead adolescent lettuce leaves. *Storage tip - immediately remove cutting lettuce from the plastic bag, put through the salad spinner, and place in your crisper drawer with a small piece of paper towel.*



"French Breakfast" Radish: Red radishes with delicate white tips. Try them for breakfast (like the French), or cut up in a salad.

Komatsuna & Red Kale: Every week we plan on having a big cooking green (or two) available for your share. This week, we'll start out with Komatsuna - a large-leaf bok-choy type which is great for stir-frys and "Red Russian Kale" - which is also delectable chopped for a fresh salad.

Spinach: Spring spinach is very finicky and we usually lose the battle every year. Not this time!! We expect to have a good crop for this week and maybe next.

Arugula: By far the ugliest arugula we've ever grown. Wash it, cut it up, close your eyes and you will enjoy the zing in your salad. We have 15 more successions - hopefully better looking!

Popcorn: Last season's bounty. Now dry. Remove from the cob. Pop like you pop. Season like you season. Yay last year!!

WHAT'S ON THE WAY

HEAD LETTUCE
GARLIC SCAPES
HAKUREI TURNIP
SWISS CHARD
BOK CHOY
COLLARD GREENS

BULK PRODUCE

COMING SOON

WHAT'S HAPPENING ON THE FARM

Where Are We?

Way back in the winter, let's say January, we were gathering the strands of the coming season together. We had hired a new crew, had some returning folks coming back. We were coming off the heels of a memorable season - mostly due to the complete weirdness of just how easy it was. The growing season had been wet when we needed and dry when we needed that. Full of abundance all the way around. No irrigation. No floods. No big crop losses. We looked forward to a season where we confronted the usual issues of a long-standing community organization - how to add some spice to the old patterns. How to keep the mission of our organization fresh in the face of 25 years of the same management. How to stay engaged, novel, inspired.

We ordered our seeds. We hired our weeder crew. We inventoried our tools. We tried to think of some new ideas. We peddled our CSA shares. We tended our winter share. It didn't really snow, but otherwise, we were just ticking along.

And then, well.....you know. Since Mid-March, we have faced (like everyone else) an entirely different reality. Nearly every week. It took me a little while to really get it - not so much Karen. As an RN, she could see the writing on the wall and she pointed us towards some real planning. That's when our first "protocol" was written. For the coming apprentices. How to

get them settled in without all of us getting sick. I still thought maybe we would get through this easy - it would all be "blown over" by the time we start distribution. Not so much. Karen kept us focused on reality; we needed to make some new plans. So we did. We know a lot about "protocols" now.

In the midst of this, we kept farming. It was a cold spring for a very long time. While it wasn't too wet or dry (allowing us to get our fields prepped

Summer Salad With Herbed Dressing

1/2 lb of cutting lettuce
Thinly sliced radish
1 tablespoon white wine vinegar
1/4 teaspoon salt
2 tablespoons minced fresh dill
1/2 tablespoon Dijon mustard
1/2 teaspoon minced garlic
1/4 cup extra-virgin olive oil

Whisk vinegar and salt til salt dissolves. Add dill, mustard and garlic scape and whisk to combine. Slowly drizzle in olive oil, whisking slowly, 'til emulsified. Shred lettuce and add other vegetables. Pour dressing over salad and toss til coated.

This dressing comes from Kitchn.com - it's delicious and also inspiring as an example because there are lots of dressing recipes out there, and a new dressing flavor can change your salad game completely.

Each week we hope to give you a recipe which will highlight something that's very fresh on the farm right now. We also love to get new recipes - so please share and we'll print them here - happy cooking!

FRIENDS AND NEIGHBORS

Our Farm Community

We love Brookfield!!!! Dreaming every day for summer and coming for our weekly pickups. Optimism helps yes?

I love what you do so so so so much. Thank you.

You guys are doing amazing work and we love the farm! Looking forward to awesome, fresh, sustainable veggies all summer long! Hope everyone is staying happy and healthy!

Dear Farmers, Thank you for your hard work to keep farming at this time. Stay well

Thanks, and I look forward to participating. Let me know if I can be of help

Thank YOU for providing such a vital resource. Having safe access to fresh, locally grown vegetables and fruit has always been important, but at the moment, it feels downright critical. At the risk of sounding dramatic, Brookfield Farm feels a bit like a lifeline right about now.

This is what it's been like to open our mail nearly every day - a non-stop festival of thanks and gratitude. It has not only warmed our hearts, but also lifted our spirits, and helped us stay focused on the work at hand.

And every time we have reached out to ask for help - the response has been more than we could hope - lawn signs, plastic tables, volunteer greeters & weeders, bicycles for the weeders, and on and on.

Also, a special mention to our friend and neighbor and guardian angel, Chris Zobel who, with his son Noah, took it upon himself to replace all of the rotten supports for our back porch. And then they installed 3 hand-washing sinks, a new no-touch water fountain, and a hand sanitizer dispenser. To top it all off they put up a 20x30' tent to replace our back porch (which is no longer a place to hang-out as it is now an entry way to the re-configured farm shop).

At this point, there is nothing for us to do but say thank you to all of you and just feel lucky all over again to be able to do this work in your midst.



PIC OF THE WEEK

This farm crew thrives doing all kinds of new things!

and ready for planting), it was really cold. And very windy. For weeks. There was a very late snow storm. And more wind and lots of down trees. Our seeds took a long time to germinate. We stopped planting when the frosts in early May were severe.

Meanwhile we put our plan in motion to re-vamp our on-farm distribution in light of the current public health crisis. We sourced supplies. We created an online store (see below). We tried to think it all through. And then it warmed up. Quickly. And the crops grew. But then the rain stopped. Completely. So, we started irrigating. And kept planting. And weeding. By the end of May we really were in a different place; We are still growing vegetables and raising cows in South Amherst. But the weeder crew can't get to the field in the van (too close!!), so they are now riding their bicycles all around our square 2 miles. The demand for CSA shares went nuts, so we sold out in early April and have a waiting list with 300 people on it. And we just finished making the exit the entrance to our farmshop. So, I guess, in terms of feeling engaged, repurposed or feeling like we are in uncharted territory, we are really getting all of that just over and over, every single day now.

Despite not knowing exactly where we are, we are thankful to have some food being harvested from our fields. And no matter how it will feel to see everyone from behind a mask, it is more than comforting to have the community that surrounds and sustains this farm return here and let us feed you. We are charting a new course, so as usual, are we are deeply grateful, to be able to take this journey with other people. Where are we? Where are we going? What will happen? Will there be a good winter squash harvest? One thing we know, right now, the spinach somehow is here and is delicious. And the farmshop is open. What else? We just don't know yet. Stay tuned.

We hope you enjoy the harvest,

Your Farmer,

Dan

(for Karen, Abbe, Ben, Jake, Joseph, Marlee, Serena, and Anna)



Chris & Noah put the finishing touches on the tent. Wow!