

The Broadcaster

News from the Farm

It has been a busy and warm week. All the plants and animals are doing well. We have had many 14-hour days this week as we get the spring weeds undercontrol. We have also been keeping busy making hay for the cows and goats for the winter and planting warm weather crops like watermelons and winter squash.

We will be at the Midwest Renewable Energy Fair this weekend in Custer WI (Friday-Sunday) doing a market stand and looking for a solar panel. This is one of our areas best events in our opinion and filled with amazing ideas about how to lessen our impact on the earth.

As you may expect the variety of vegetables will be increasing dramatically throughout the next two months. Next week we will have this season's first carrots and my favorite spring vegetable the baby turnip (it is at least 100 times better than it sounds, I promise).

We love the season thus far and having a lot of fun amongst the hard work. Have a great week, and Happy Fathers Day to all the CSA dads.

Kat and Tony

In Your Box

Small beets with greens – ‘Chiogga’ (candy stripped) &/or ‘Red Ace’ (dark red)

Chives

Salad mix – five varieties of lettuce

Radishes with greens: large red globe

Peas: A snap variety called ‘sugar ann’

Arugula: green leaves

Spinach: An out of this world variety called ‘space’

Ugly Vegetable Disclaimer: The arugula has some noticeable holes on the leaves. These were created by flea beetles, who despite our efforts got under our row cover and had a feast. Flea beetles love all plant in the brassica family - these include radishes, arugula, turnips, broccoli, and cabbage to name a few. The holes do not affect taste!

Kat's Kitchen

Sautéed radishes with radish greens or arugula

¼ cup butter, 1lbs radishes quartered, 4 cups radish greens and/or arugula, 2 Tbs. lemon juice, salt, fresh ground black pepper.

Melt butter in large skillet over medium heat, add radishes, cook, stirring constantly until tender but still crisp (about 5 minutes) transfer to bowl to cool. Return Skillet to stove add damp greens or arugula. Cook over medium heat just until wilting 2-3 minutes. Turn off heat add lemon juice and radishes to skillet season with salt and pepper to taste.

Basic Cooking Ideas for this week's veggies

Beet and radish greens are tasty. You can add radish greens to a salad or a stir fry, and beet greens can be used like swiss chard or kale and are very high in vitamin C, Calcium, and Iron.

The small beets are wonderful roasted or broiled. Boil them for 10 minutes, remove the skin by dipping them

The Environmentalism of a CSA by Tony Schultz

In recognition of the 18th Annual Midwest Renewable Energy Fair this weekend in Custer, WI we are dedicating this section of The Broadcaster to the Environmental benefits of a CSA.

Food Miles – While industrial agriculture is often cited for its “efficiency” local food uses less fossil fuels. Only about 10% of the fossil fuel energy used in the world’s food system is used for producing food; the other 90% goes into packaging, transporting, and marketing. Locally produced food is more energy efficient with the majority of energy use going toward food production. According to the Leopold Center for Sustainable Agriculture “food miles” are the distance food travels from where it is grown to where it is ultimately purchased or consumed by the end user. As you can imagine CSA’s have dramatically fewer food miles than conventionally grown produce purchased in a grocery store. According to the Leopold Center’s recent comparison of conventionally and locally grown produce in Iowa the average bunch of conventionally grown carrots traveled 1,838 miles as opposed to locally grown carrots, which traveled 27 miles. Local broccoli came from on average 20 miles whereas conventional broccoli traveled 1,846 miles.

Biodiversity – As biological diversity is threatened by modern industrial systems and sprawl, so, too the diversity of domesticated plants and animals is threatened by the modern industrial-agricultural system. Since the turn of the 20th century, 97 percent of fruit and vegetables varieties have become unavailable commercially, replaced by only a few uniform varieties. The conventional agriculture system relies on only 20 major crops for 90 % of the food grown and marketed. As the number of species used for food crops declines, genetic diversity and future options for the development of plant and animal strains are reduced. Potatoes provide an illustrative example. There are more than 5,000 varieties of potatoes known worldwide, of which Andean farmers alone cultivate more than 3,000 varieties. In contrast, only four varieties of potatoes account for over 75% of the crop grown in the U.S. The top ranking potato is the Russet Burbank, which is favored by Macdonald’s for its french fries. Potatoes, especially the Russet, are vulnerable to potato beetle and blight, but Macdonald’s demands consistency and replicability in its fry, as a result farmer’s must apply more and stronger fungicide to ward off late blight rather than switch to cultivars that have higher resistance. CSA farms are extremely diverse growing 30 to 50 different types of crops and hundreds of different varieties.

Pesticide, Herbicide, and Fertilizer Runoff –Every year the Mississippi river - which drains 41% of the United States - dumps 1.6 million tons of nitrogen in the Gulf of Mexico, three times as much as 40 years ago. This fertilizer run off, flowing down rivers to the sea has created a dead zone covering 7,000 square miles roughly the size of New Jersey. Most of this runoff comes from the highly productive corn belt. The nutrients feed blooms of algae and phytoplankton. The algae drain oxygen from the water, as do the decomposing bodies of the plankton, when they fall to the seabed and die. It hits a fishery that provides one-fifth of the country's entire harvest from the sea. As a result, catches of brown shrimp, the gulf's most important species, have dropped since 1990. Pesticides runoff in a similar manner and have been connected to fish kills, mutations in amphibians, and increased hormone levels in drinking water. Most CSA’s use organic compost and cover crop rotations to build the soil thus avoiding much of the nutrient runoff. On our farm cover crops break down over a long period of time. We do not use pesticide or herbicide.

Pancake Breakfast Coming up on Saturday June 23rd!

The pancake breakfast is just around the corner. Tony is getting warmed up flipping pancakes and Kat is taking care of the snap peas that you will be able to pick and take home. Pancakes will be served with our maple syrup, homemade applesauce, and there will also be homegrown pork sausage.

The event will run from 9am-1pm. There will be plenty of time to pick peas, walk around the farm and play with