



“To eat a well buttered parsnip in season is to know the lust of a thousand mistresses!”
- Uncle Dennis

News from the Farm

Welcome to Week 20! It's our final week and it's the heaviest box I've ever packed even though it features some gorgeous hoop house arugula on top. We had a frost! Just in time for some sweeter Brussel sprouts, parsnips and cabbage. **Special Thanks to Jenna Raether**, my right hand, who will be with me into November. I hired Jenna because during our working interview she never stopped working and she never stopped working the entire summer. She was dutiful, anticipatory, fast to learn, and very very hard working. Though these are innate qualities that she possesses as the world's best girl scout (She's a lifetime member) it was her commitment to horticulture and career in agriculture that drove her to express these qualities with amazing focus. Her punctuality, hard work and commitment to Stoney Acres early on gave me confidence that the season would be good. She is looking to start her own orchard based operation with CSA as a component near Sheboygan in the near future. It will be a great farm! Thank you Jenna!!!

I've uploaded a new **CSA signup form for 2018** on the website or you can use the Week 14 newsletter. If you signup before January take 25\$ off as a returning member. Though this is our last week of CSA many of you have signed up for a market style holiday share. I will be contacting you with a phone call reminder to load your three bushels at market or the farm. Visit me at pizza night In addition to this week there is two more weeks. October 27th is a costume contest with prizes for "Farmiest" Costume, Best overall costume, and worst attempt at a costume. November 3rd is our last night featuring free beer with your purchase of a pizza until the taps run dry. There will also be a special announcement... Stay tuned! **Have a delicious week!- Tony, Riley, Ted and Maple**

In Your

Box

Turnips
Rutabaga- the key ingredient in beef stew
Kale
Carrots
Tomatoes (Fulls)
Parsnip
Garlic
Sweet Potatoes
Arugula
Winter Radishes
Brussel Sprouts
Cabbage

Pizza specials of the week – Bluegreen

Veggie – onions, blue cheese, kale, peppers, basil pesto, **Marghie the Pig** – Basil Pesto, Bacon, Heirloom tomatoes, Fresh Mozz, **Fall Feast:** Squash Sauce, Canadian bacon, blue cheese

Farm to Table Recipes Gleaned By Your Farmer

Roasted Parsnips with Rosemary. Martha Stewart.com

1 ½ lbs of parsnips peeled and cut into fries. 2 tbs olive oil, 2 teaspoons of rosemary, salt and pepper

Preheat oven to 450 degrees. On a rimmed baking sheet, toss parsnips with oil and rosemary, then season with salt and pepper. Roast until tender and golden, about 20 minutes, stirring halfway through.

Beef Stew with Potatoes and Parsnips, Spiced Parsnip Cupcakes, Shaved Parsnip Salad, Roasted Parsnip and Apple

Parsnip Soup with Toasted Almonds

2 tbs butter, three small onions chopped, 1 lbs parsnips peeled and coarsely chopped, a couple small white potatoes peeled and coarsely chopped, 3 ½ cups water, salt and pepper, ¼ heavy cream, two tbs raw almonds toasted.

Heat butter in a medium saucepan over medium heat. Cook shallots, parsnips, and potato, stirring occasionally, until almost tender, about 10 minutes. Season with 2 teaspoons salt. Add water, and simmer, partially covered, until vegetables are tender, 13 to 15 minutes. Puree mixture in a blender with cream until smooth. (For safety, remove cap from hole in lid, and cover with a dish towel to prevent splattering.) Divide soup among 4 bowls; sprinkle with almonds. Season with pepper.

What I Learned and What I (We) Plan

This is an annual reflection that helps me think about some specific ideas and the overall direction of the farm. I thought, overall, the season was solid. In many ways it was not the production year that was last year because of the gorgeous degree days and timely rain of 2016, but many crops were much better: celery, sweet corn, parsnips, heirloom tomatoes, swiss chard blueberries, basil. When it comes to creating and packing your boxes I have weekly goals to have 7-10 items of delicious produce in a full box. That was largely the case as Wednesday afternoons were almost always satisfying to me. That being said; when people would ask me about the season, basically until those glorious first three weeks in September, I would respond by saying: "Cold, Wet, and Late." Most crops were slow to grow in May and June. I had to shift the season back a week, and did lean on storage beets a bit. I don't want to have to do this again so I am planning on fixing the second week of June as a more permanent start date. (Though next year that wouldn't be till the 14th so I am planning on the 7th.) I am also shifting hoophouse production somewhat away from summer crops, which aren't ready until the middle of July toward early CSA production. So a house of fresh beets and not planting melons in the hoophouse space until mid-June.

I learned again that so much of the success of a diversified vegetable farm has to do with Timing and Prioritization. For instance, last year we had a record yield of sweet potatoes. 238 bushels! I planted at the end of the first week in June, cultivated, cultivated and cultivated and completed timely weeding next to the plant. This year we had an awful crop of sweet potatoes. I got my slips the last week in May and planted them immediately. The day after they were in, though it didn't frost, we had three days of nasty gusting winds. Probably about 40% of the slips died. Demoralized, I cultivated less thoroughly and procrastinated way too long on near plant weeding. I got 30 bushels. Another comparative seasonal crop story: Last year we had an awful crop of parsnips. There was some standing water along the beds and the first weeding was a little late. We ended up with 12 weak bushels and didn't even put them in the box. This year they were in a better spot and the weeding was right on time. 75 beautiful bushels, a record yield even with the slow late spring that hurt germination! The moral of the story for me is: though sometimes the weather is beyond your control I think it is a safe bet that the majority of you would rather eat a sweet potato than a parsnip so this is where my priority of my anxious farmer timing should be; pending climatic setbacks.

The Perennial Struggle Continues. Perennials are something I want more of at Stoney Acres, but are difficult for me to discipline my care of. My problem is I want to think of them as an annual which mean weeding one or one and a half times during the season. But because of their long season into the next they really need to be weeded 4 times. This is attention I just don't want to give. 4 times!?!?! Come on! I weeded you! You're a perennial! Take care of yourself! My new strategy for perennial success is two fold: Mowing, and treating strawberries like annuals. My best perennials are the ones that I mow; formerly raspberries and now blueberries. In working to reestablish raspberries and rhubarb I'm setting them up to be mowed. It keeps the area under control and I have to do it every time I mow my lawn so I'll just take a swing through the rhubarb. My other shift involves strawberries. Every two years I would buy 3000 strawberry plants and expect a three year crop, but because of my perennial struggle of weeding something four times the third year strawberry patch was a thistle, quack grass and some weaker strawberries. My new plan is to buy 2000 strawberry plants every year. Though there is limited production in the first year the berries come on a little later so I extend the season with amazing king berries from the new plants. I am putting down a fresh bed that I will weed thoroughly at the end of its season mid to late July. In year two I weed it once thoroughly as it begins to set fruit and that takes it through the season. Out of hope I'll probably let it hang around for year three but if it looks like the jungle in June I will have my new 2000 and no remorse tilling it in.

On an emotional note, (as if strawberries weren't emotional) I learned that 2017 was the best of seasons and it was the worst of seasons. I was scared going into the season being entirely responsible for the farm when I had always done it with a powerful partner that inspired much confidence. Kat helped establish the crops and took a portion of them for her wholesale business. Farming next to her for a couple hours a week was the agonizing. This was a dramatically painful emotional transition that I never intended to make and I'm glad this season is over. She is starting her own venture. She is organized responsible, hard-working, creative and incredibly intelligent. She is an excellent farmer and will do well. It was the best of times because I succeeded. Not alone but as my own person my own farmer responsible for my farm.

I learned that this is my farm and it is successful. I was born and raised here. I grew up milking cows and baling hay I have many fond identity forming memories from it, and the space is the anchor of my family going back to the forties. I am its steward. It's legacy is real and important to me so I was scared to death when I thought it could end... which I did for a couple of desperate weeks in December and January. But I realized that the world doesn't stop turning and I received far too much satisfaction, pride and joy not only from the challenge and work of farming but more so being received by a community that considers me "their farmer". I love community supported agriculture because it has not only given space for family farms and a more sustainable model of agriculture but it has sustained me personally in my time of crisis. You were there for me to support me as a farmer and many of you were there as some of my closest friends. I am so grateful for that. Long live the Family Farm and Long Live Community Supported Agriculture!