The Weekly Note

One Step at a Time Gardens

Jan Libbey & Tim, Andrew, & Jess Landgraf

Week of June 9, 2008 – Box #2

In This week's Box: Green onions, Lettuce, Spinach

Did you remember to return your box? In advance – Thanks!

I'm changing the order of news this week as what's been going on at the farm is the top story.

Farmers' Footnote

Our interns arrived amidst repeated severe weather alerts this past Saturday. The most severe skirted our immediate area to the north and south, leaving us jumping every time the weather radio sounded an alert. Saturday night I listened to it rain and rain and rain. After finally deciding my staying awake really wasn't going to help matters, I drifted off. When I awoke on Sunday morning, my first thought was having a whole new take on the term "vegetable soup". With over 6.5 inches of rain in the past week…that's after recording over 8 inches in the month of May…, this vegetable farm was turning into soup!

Water seeped into our basement. While seeping water is annoying, we know it is nothing like others were experiencing with inches and feet of water to deal with. We had one tree down. The chickens on the field have done amazingly well. I expected to see them with life jackets strapped on and flippers, but no they were just wet and muddy. We've taken to tossing some slabs of hay in their pens for loafing mounds. We've only lost two to the weather. That's pretty good.

Weedy fields we were beginning to tackle turned mucky. These are our next supply of greens. Another field has some significant wash in it. Here's a good lesson that we need to look into waterway development. There was some crop wash, but it may be salvageable.

This situation is not dire by itself, but it's heaped on top of a cool, persistently wet spring that has been impacting consistent and timely crop development. We will be assessing crop progress over this next weekend and may be seeing some inconsistency in our deliveries in the coming weeks. We have been treated to some beautiful weather between storms and have able to use those days effectively. We are hopeful that this weather pattern will break and return us to some semblance of normalcy for the balance of this season. That's what's going on the farm. We have been receiving messages about other farms also struggling with this season. There will be more insights to unfold from the experience that is rather widespread across the state. We also know some of our members are likewise struggling with water problems and are sending you drying out thoughts. We appreciate your patience and understanding.

One member remarked in mid-May as we talked about this challenging spring that some seasons are perfect and some simply are not. I'm made more aware this season that farming is not a field to be in if you are a committed perfectionist. Farming really involves a blend of the technicalities of horticulture, soils, and planning…but it also involves some art - a little like molding clay – a project in our hands that we have some opportunity to mold along the way.

Veggie Notes

Where are the radishes? We are not anticipating a stellar crop of radishes at present. They have been slow to mature and one significant planting has repeatedly been flooded. We hope you will receive some in a week or two. The snow peas are blooming. Generally two plus weeks from bloom to first pea pods so we are looking forward to that treat coming along.

Connections

Please remember to send us your member profile. We've been getting some in the mail and hope to receive more. If you need another copy, email us, we'll be happy to send you an electronic copy.

From the Ground Up

Anne Munaretto, of Illinois and Ariane Lotti, of New York have joined us on the farm for the summer. Brave souls they are starting in the midst of all this weather. We'll have more of their story in the next couple of weeks.

Our Contact: Phone: 641/495-6367 or libland@frontiernet.net,
Cell: 515/571-3383, Web site: www.ostgardens.com