The Weekly Note

One Step at a Time Gardens

Jan Libbey & Tim, Andrew, & Jess Landgraf

Week of June 16, 2008 – Box #3

THIS WEEK'S BOX: Lettuce, Spinach, Green Onion, Broccoli, Garlic scape sample

---

VEGGIE NOTES – **Broccoli** - nutrition powerhouse, packed with vitamin C, A, calcium, potassium and iron. It is also touted as an "anti-cancer" vegetable due to a special enzyme called sulforaphane. And it's delicious to boot! We recommend you soak the heads upside down in cold, salted water to float any hidden caterpillars we may have missed. The Garden Salad recipe -Pg.11 in our Recipe Collection (find a copy on our website) - is wonderful!

Garlic scapes (round, thread-like item in you box.) This is the flower stalk from the garlic plant. These are just starting to emerge and you have just a few stalks this week. To deter energy put into development of a flower, we pull and snap scapes – the bonus? We can use the scape in cooking just like garlic. Use all except the end near the flower bud.

NEWS - **Communication** through email and our website have been invaluable as we've tried to keep our members up to date with delivery changes. If you feel you have not been able to follow the changes, please contact us. We've wrestled with static on our phone line and that at times makes internet connection inconsistent and delays timely messages going out. Thanks to everyone for patience and understanding.

Scrumptious strawberries are here this week for Fruit share deliveries.

Connections - Becky Ahrendsen, of Clarion, has been one of our strongest supporters since we began offering memberships in 1996.

At first, Becky's prime role was helping with Clarion deliveries. While she has continued in that role, she has also become one of our central part-time crew members. Becky's experience growing up in the Philippines with missionary parents influenced her approach to community that can be seen in her generosity with others and her commitment to numerous community efforts.

Becky works at the Clarion library part-time as well, but also can be found reviewing Senior Life Projects for Clarion-Goldfield Senior High students, helping with the Iowa River Players Community Theatre, volunteering at the Wright Medical Center, coordinating a local food buying club, and creating a safe and welcoming space in her home for her kids and their friends. Becky is a tremendous asset to our communities and models community support in many areas in addition to agriculture.

From the Ground Up

Our experience of this severe weather has caught the attention of some media – including Jerry Perkins of the Des Moines Register. When we talk about community-based agriculture, to date the prime support has come from individuals such as yourself. But when disaster strikes, as it has on so many farms this spring, it's evident there is minimal safety net for farms working to build up our local food infrastructure. This is the main issue these writers are exploring. While we're making good progress on local food through membership program growth such as our farm, through farmers market growth, through the numerous projects coordinated by the Leopold Center for Sustainable Ag in Ames, we have significant policy work ahead of us. Ariane, one of our interns, worked closely with the Farm Bill development this winter and acknowledges that many legislators still consider folks like ourselves as "hobby farmers". We need to continue to work at defining what community support looks like for a community –based food system.

Farmers' Footnote

Crop loss update – One of the beauties of our diverse crop line-up has been if one crop comes in short, there are ample others to fill the void. But this year's wet, persistently cool spring, topped off by two weeks of intense storms has presented us with a new challenge. Monday evening I began to take a closer look to assess crop loss. We see impact on all of our next round of greens, our broccoli, our garlic, our green beans, must I go on? While I don't want to scare you about the season of food you've committed to, we want to try to paint an accurate picture. We simply expect this won't be a stellar year on a broad range of crops. However, the garden has never failed to amaze me with its products when I have doubted it. Some of the yield results will not be evident for a number of weeks. We ask you to hang with us as we continue to journey through this season. We'll continue to explain what the impacts are and what we're doing to manage around a difficult growing experience.

Weeding out community support –Your persistence to journey through this season with us amidst some of the quantity questions we are anticipating is a demonstration of community support. We'll offer one more opportunity – weeding. We'll be here all weekend and face a number of weeding needs.

It is beautiful on the farm and this would be a great (working) time to visit the farm ☺ Let us know if you want to come so we can help with directions.

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