The Weekly Note

One Step at a Time Gardens

Jan Libbey & Tim, Andrew, & Jess Landgraf

Week of June 30, 2008 – Box #5

In This week's Box: Snow Peas, Sugar Snap Peas, Green onions, Broccoli, Lettuce, Garlic Scapes

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The tale of this week's fruit shares. Normal pattern - We meet Dean Henry of Berry Patch just off the Ames'13th St. exit for a quick exchange in route to DM on Tuesday. Without that DM trip this week, we made use of some pretty neat tag teamwork: Tim had a meeting in Ames on Monday and thanks to the hard work of the folks at the Berry Patch, Nevada, he could pick up the week's fruit Monday afternoon. Those quarts headed for DM were returned to my sister-in-law, Jen, in Ames who took them on Tuesday with her to DM where she works. Thanks to Teresa Tomka, at Kitchen Collage, Jen was able to drop the fruit off at the store before it opened so she could get to work on time. From there Liz Brennan, our WDM site host, was able to come get the balance of WDM shares and make those available at our usual WDM site. Our local food system infrastructure is still pretty young and sometimes it requires unique transportation arrangements to get the food where it needs to go!

Veggie Notes - Your box contains all you need for a delicious and nutritious salad or stir-fry. Here's a tasty sauce we've used with stir-fries that have become a main lunch menu at the farm: Spicy Szechuan –
¼ C. Soy Sauce, ½ C. Sesame oil, 1 C. Peanut butter, 3 T. Rice vinegar, 2 T. minced Garlic, 2 T. Gingerroot, 1.5 t. Asian chili sauce or 1 t. dried red pepper flakes, 1 T. Hoisin sauce, 2 T. Lime juice, ¾ C. water. Mix all together in blender. This goes nicely over any stir-fry, topping Asian noodles or spaghetti.

Connections - Kathy Ingram, of Garner, an enthusiastic member for the past three years is serving as our Garner site host for the first time this year. Kathy and her husband, Randy, moved back to Iowa in 2006 bringing with her a passion for community connection and great food. *I'm a strong believer that local and fresh ingredients are my best source of inspiration in the kitchen. After living many places (including 4 years overseas), we discovered that an appreciation for delicious food went hand in hand with a commitment to knowing where your food comes from and how it is produced.* Considering herself a "peasant" cook, Kathy concludes saying she *loves simple meals prepared from the freshest ingredients that celebrate the seasons.*

From the Ground Up - The impact of this Spring and early Summer's weather has dominated much of our Weekly Notes, but I want also to address our efforts to build this farm's efficiency and performance. This past winter we were just in the right place to pick up lots of good ideas from our own planning and conferences we attended. The improvements range from as small an item as trying pelleted carrot seed for more consistent germination to the investment in several new pieces of equipment. One of our new implements is a bed lifter. We are anxious to give this new tool a try at garlic harvest, which is fast approaching. The idea is that this bar, mounted on a three-point hitch on our tractor can slice the ground just under the garlic heads, loosening the soil and making harvest much easier and faster. More on this and other new developments to come.

Farmers' Footnote - Recently, a report came out connecting global climate change to more global unrest. Inconsistent weather patterns and disrupted food supplies, the report said, may lead to unrest through governmental destabilization. This is serious stuff. While we are keenly focused on walking together through this season, the report reminds us that this experience may not be limited to one season and certainly not to our region. However, emerging small farms may well prove among the more adaptable. The diversity of crops and agility of this production system does allow us to adjust quickly and may well prove effective as we face changing growing conditions….Not making Tuesday deliveries this week allowed us to focus on weeding and planting ahead. This spring we planted more than 1,600 ft. of sugar snap peas in four different plantings. Inconsistent germination and wet fields have yielded several beds with too few pea plants and too many weeds. We are planning on mowing these beds off, tilling them up and planting again with hopes for a better fall sugar snap pea crop. Broccoli too has shown impact. A significant number of broccoli plants seem to have had trouble developing vibrant root systems due to soggy soils. We are seeing much smaller heads than usual and members are receiving approximately half of what we had planned. Broccoli planted this week may yield a better fall broccoli.
Do have a Happy & Safe July 4th!!

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