The Weekly Note

One Step at a Time Gardens

Jan Libbey & Tim, Andrew, & Jess Landgraf

Week of July 7, 2008 – Box #6

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

---

We will return to normal delivery schedule next week and plan to stay on our regular delivery throughout the rest of this season.

Weed & Eat Party this Saturday at the farm - Seeing is believing and extra hands make light work. We appreciate everyone's support during the very unusual delivery disruption. We have accomplished a lot over the last week, but weeds remain a challenge. This party is a great way for members to visit the farm plus it gives you a chance to see what we're dealing with. Preview crops to come and we may even try our new bed lifter (see From the Ground up column). Plenty to explore and then...great food! We'll prepare a lunch for all who come along. If you are able to join us, plan to be at the farm ready to work at 9 a.m. Lunch will be served at noon. Dress appropriately; bring gloves, work shoes, water bottles. Check our website or call for directions. Please let us know if you plan to come.

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 a combination of our own planning and great ideas from several workshops we attended generated a long list of improvements. 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….Interrupting deliveries recently 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 have mowed these beds off, tilled them up, and planted again with hopes for a better fall sugar snap pea crop. Broccoli too has shown impact. The first planting yielded a small crop as the plants reacted to soggy soils and developed head prematurely. This week's broccoli is from our 2nd planting and the head size is much better. We have a 3rd planting that looks good, and have started a round of broccoli for a fall crop. This week's lettuce was cut out of a very weedy bed. That bed set to be mowed off. The next round of summer lettuce is looking good in the hoophouse, but not liking these hot temps too much. We are starting more lettuce with hopes for a fall supply within the last week or two of deliveries.

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