

Week 1



ONE STEP at a TIME
GARDENS

The Weekly Note

One Step at a Time Gardens

Jan Libbey & Tim, Andrew, & Jess Landgraf

Week of June 2, 2008 – Box #1

Welcome - This first box is the exciting launch of the delivery season. After months of preparation, we finally begin harvest. From here on our primary communication to you, our members, will be these Weekly Notes. Each box is packed with one copy of the Weekly Note. If you share your box with a friend, check at the delivery site for additional copies. We try to pack several along with us each week. If you lose your Weekly Note, check out our website, they will be posted there. This is a bit one-sided so please do feel free to contact us with any questions or comments. Our contact information is provided at the end of each note. I have so much on my "to include" list that I know I'll run out of space in this first note. Good thing we have 18 weeks ☺. This week I'll focus on a number of specifics of getting the rhythm of deliveries down.

THIS WEEK'S BOX: Green Garlic, Lettuce, Spinach

VEGGIE NOTES

Lettuce – we start off the season with full heads of leaf lettuce – greens, reds and a mix of green and red. *These were started indoors in March and transplanted into our hoop house in April.*

Spinach – Minimal cooking helps you get the best value of spinach's vitamin A and C. Toss with olive oil, lemon juice, diced garlic, a pinch of salt and pepper. Also great in sandwiches, burritos or tacos.

Green Garlic – provides some early season supply of this all important seasoning agent. This will be the only delivery. The heads are tender like a green onion. Simply dice up small into dishes for some wonderful garlic seasoning. In 2-4 weeks, we'll be snapping garlic scapes and providing those.

What's a scape? Stay tuned!

*All have been rinsed, but you may want to rinse them once again
Greens will continue. Look for green onion and radishes soon.*

NEWS

Rhubarb bread at delivery sites – We are providing some delicious rhubarb bread at our delivery sites this week to say thank you for your membership. As our weekly delivery routine gets underway, if you have any questions, just give us a call or send an email.

There's more than vegetables in this week's box...

Box Care 101 – is a quick review of the best way to unfold and flatten your box so it remains in good condition. We reuse these boxes and need your help. Please either return it empty at next pick up or bring a sack to unload your box and leave it at the site at pick up Please help return and use carefully.

Member Profile – is self-explanatory. Please take time to complete and return to us. Check out the below "Connections" column and start to get to know who makes up our membership and how those *connections* may be helpful to you.

Other news – Fruit shares are expected third week of June, Go Gourmet shares are expected in three weeks or so.

EOW Calendars are provided at each delivery site.

CONNECTIONS

Liz & Scott Brennan – Liz has served as our WDM site host since we began DM deliveries in 2003. Liz and Scott have two children, Lexi, 12 and Joe, 10. Liz teaches preschool at Montessori Children's House in WDM. Scott is a lawyer at the Davis, Brown Law Firm and currently serves as the Chair of the Iowa Democratic Party. You can imagine some of the interesting discussions at the Brennan household these days!

Liz admits her discovery about local foods continues to evolve with numerous experiences. A family trip to Sweden introduced her to cucumber and cheese toast for breakfast which now is one of her favorite seasonal treats. Liz's winter read of Michael Pollan's "Omnivore's Dilemma" once again reaffirmed her support of local food as the book emphasizes how eating local supports the local economy as well as our Earth.

FROM THE GROUND UP

This column will feature various commentary and updates on local food news.

FARMER'S FOOTNOTE

Please visit our website – www.ostgardens.com – for a newly updated series of photos from the farm. The photos capture some of the images illustrating the reality of this cool, wet and slow, but also beautiful spring. As I write this we are just heading back into the field after last week's rains, but facing a forecast of yet more rain. We anticipate arrival of our two interns by Saturday.

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Week 2



ONE STEP at a TIME
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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.

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Week 3



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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 your 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.

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Week 4



ONE STEP at a TIME
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The Weekly Note - Week of June 23, 2008 – Box #4

One Step at a Time Gardens

Jan Libbey & Tim, Andrew, & Jess Landgraf

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

First, thank you so much for all of your support and words of encouragement. It was good to get back to full deliveries last week. You may have seen us in the DM Register last Saturday. I had mixed feelings about getting attention around disappointing crops, but the bigger issue really is that small farms are getting noticed in the broader discussion of Iowa agriculture and economy and that says something about the growing awareness of Iowa's local food movement.

This is a long note today - In our "From the Ground Up" and "Farmer Footnote" we have **our crop assessment and our report that we feel we need to interrupt deliveries for one (maybe two) weeks.** We have two main delivery days – Tuesdays and Thursdays. If we can, we may just have to trim delivery down to one area instead of dropping everyone out during this pause. We are doing what we can and working hard to assure this season straightens out. We ask you to read on and hang in there with us. We do have some good crop coming. Please contact us with any questions.

As another CSA grower wrote to his members – *"For those of you who are long-term members, you have the perspective of a long time horizon and may have some comfort in the average share of produce you have received since supporting the farm. For new members, it is more of harsh experience, akin to investing your savings in the stock market just before a downturn. Fortunately, for both the farm and the market, over time there has historically been a reasonable return."*

News

Summer Solstice – Last week I ran out of room to mention, but was fully aware of, our crossing over the Summer Solstice line. We reveled in the beautiful moon shining ...over our flooded lower pasture and road. Marking the Solstice acknowledges that we are beginning our gradual journey toward the dark, short days of winter. Just when it feels like we've finally hit summer, the reality is the season is shifting once again. The impact is that gradually decreasing daylight levels do begin to make a difference in maturation of late summer crops...This after a late start on some crops.

Early season learning curve – There's a lot of detail involved as this membership program gets underway and we've developed several pieces of information to help everyone over our early season learning and relearning curve. We've just updated our website with the following member resources – EOW calendars, member profile form, chart of vegetable selection, and The Recipe Collection. Every week we post our Weekly Note and The 2nd Step Member Handbook has been on the website for a couple of weeks. If you are missing any of these pieces, please check our website at www.ostgardens.com. If you don't have internet access, please contact us for any of these resources.

Member Profiles and Boxes – A little friendly "neighborhood" competition can be good. So...heads up DM members. Downtown members are ahead in the return of member profiles, but West Des Moines is far ahead with box returns. Your challenge is to even up the score!

Veggie Notes

Spinach doesn't like "wet feet" and the beautiful planting we had coming got just that...wet! The plants shriveled up and turned yellow. We're sorry, but this is one of the rain casualties. We had planned for two more deliveries of spinach, but not available now. Spinach doesn't like hot weather either so no replanting until we hit a cooler spell. We have been transplanting lettuce in hoop house and will be doing some field transplanting soon. Our hoop house supply should be late July/early August.

Scapes – more of what you received last week – enjoy great seasoning of your food!

Edible Pod Peas – **Snow and sugar snap peas** are one true seasonal eating experience. These are absolutely delicious treats right out of hand, but also great stir-fried. Check out page 15 in our [Recipe Collection](#) for tips on which pea is which – and how the *SNAP & ZIP* technique for eating them works. Cool wet conditions early have impacted supply. We plan to try replanting sugar snaps for a fall crop.

Connections

Laura and David Bernemann, of Mason City, have hosted our Thursday Mason City pick up site for the past three seasons. David, who teaches Engineering and Math at North Iowa Area Community College, can be found regularly helping at the delivery site. He usually arrives at our North Iowa Farmers Market stand on Fridays, arms full of returned boxes – helping to unload their front porch and help our box supply for the next week. Laura, who is an Occupational Therapist at Mercy Medical Center, shares the cooking chores with David and enjoys some flower gardening in their yard. Together, they have three

children who also help at the delivery site. David, like many, has become more concerned and interested in where his family's food comes from now that there are regular food contamination issues in the news. And he is also interested in supporting *agriculture*, as opposed to industrial food production.

From the Ground Up

Iowa Public Television's Market to Market is one of our regular Friday night shows. We encourage you to take a look at the online show from this past Friday, June 20 (www.ipt.org). Mark Pearson, show host, did an excellent job addressing the impact of this spring's weather and the floods. While he was referring to commodity crops, he described three categories that are equally applicable to vegetable crops: **Existing crop (what's left)** – has been impacted, and will likely result in low yield; **Replanted crops** – will have reduced yield due to late start (decreasing daylight hours, potentially high summer temps, etc.); **Lost crop** – no recovery. He makes several references to this spring's cool, wet that was further complicated by the flood event. Pearson's assessment is simply that it's very likely that no single crop will match last year's production. This is a fair analysis of our own crop experience this season.

Farmers' Footnote

When you signed the statement at the end of the membership form that said you understand there is some risk in farming, little did you know you might assume quite so much risk with us this season. After two weeks of moving from what has felt like a crisis mode to some decent weather days for catching up, we've now had a chance to more fully assess our own crop status and want to bring you up to date. This crop overview will help you picture how this season is going to unfold.

The greatest impact is on our early season crops, but similar to Market to Market's assessment, we expect to see impact across the board. We have several categories of condition:

Some crops will not produce as we had anticipated – their supply is reduced (excess wet) and they have been slow to mature (in relation to cool, wet spring) – green onions, broccoli, fall onions, peas, first two plantings of green beans - so our harvest on some items to date has dug into the supply a bit deeper than original plan- contributing to lower supply in the next week or so. Some crops or portion of crops simply failed due to impact of excessively wet soils - radishes, spinach, lettuce, Asian greens, sweet potatoes, some herbs, some broccoli, cauliflower, and cabbage. Today's tiny bunch of radish is it for this part of the season. At our average production rate, we should have harvested over 600 lbs. over several weeks.

Some crops are coming along nicely, but are delayed - Our tomatoes, peppers, and eggplant look good, but are behind and weedy, our squashes have just sprouted and look good, but will be pushing the season, kohlrabi looks great, garlic is looking fair, the potato field looks fair, but in need of weeding, herbs have been slow to develop, but are coming along, the new planting of lettuce in the hoophouse is coming along.

Some crops are yet to be planted or replanted and will allow us to fill in, but later this season. Today we are mowing off most of one of our greens plot – weeds have overtaken and we're better to just start over. We will replant with more lettuce, cabbage and direct seed beets, carrots. We also will be trying a midsummer replant of sugar snap peas.

The upshot is that as we position the farm to fill in some of the gaps we 1) are low on crop and 2) simply need production focus time. Therefore, **We believe it's in everyone's interest for us to interrupt deliveries for the next one and possibly two weeks.** As I said above, we may be able to cover one delivery area/week instead of both per week as normal. We'll keep members posted with email and our website. This is not a decision we take lightly. The time will allow us to put full attention on weeding, and replanting. We expect our late summer crops will come along nicely and replanting now will allow us to bump up crop availability later this season to compensate for what you are not receiving now. As we strive to recover and replant, weed and "get back to normal", it does feel like we'll experience the impact of this early weather all season. We'll do our best to push our production, but we'll have some short falls.

We've never – in all our 12 previous seasons – experienced this widespread of a crop impact.

So how much risk do our members assume? We don't feel we should answer this question ourselves nor do we think we can address the question this early in the season. We will be asking some of our members to think these questions through with us. We are asking at least one member from each delivery site to work with us to evaluate the season and any reconciliation. We will invite participation, but would welcome additional interest. We will be asking this group to review the situation with us in early September by which time we should be able to know how far we are from our plan.

What should you expect in the meantime? AS the nature of the delivery interruption isn't completely determined, please watch for email update. We'll also have news posted on our website and we will post a Weekly Note next week regardless of what happens with delivery. When we do resume deliveries, you will receive our high quality produce and we'll hope for reasonable quantities. Thank you for your patience. Keep in touch.

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Week 5



ONE STEP at a TIME
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The Weekly Note

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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

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!!

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Week 6



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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.

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"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.

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Week 7



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Week of July 14, 2008 – Box #7

In This week's Box: Green onions, Lettuce, Broccoli or Cauliflower, Snow &/or Snap Peas, Green &/or Yellow Wax Beans

News – No show for our Weed & Eat Party last Saturday. But remember, you are always welcome to come visit the farm and experience the work too ☺. Our list of "To Do's" is longer than our days. This week garlic harvest has been added to the list of harvest and weeding.

Veggie Notes – Cauliflower – Keep refrigerated in plastic bag, but don't wait too long. It's best eaten while it's fresh as its flavor grows stronger with storage. Cauliflower is a good source of vegetable protein, vitamin A, B-complex, C & E.

A tour around the farm reveals a number of items yet to come:

Continuing: Green onions, broccoli/cauliflower, Green/Yellow Beans

New in several weeks: Cabbage, Carrots & Sweet corn.

Longer, but coming - Squashes are coming along, loving the heat even if we aren't. No blossoms yet, but gaining good leaf cover.

Leaving the scene: Peas are winding down as the heat is ratcheting up tomato crop is green, but looking great in the hoop house.

Connections – Anne Munaretto arrived on our farm with the flooding at the beginning of June. Born and raised in a suburb of Chicago, she had no gardening experience prior to her arrival, but has been an avid learner since. She has worked to expand her gardening knowledge as well as her cooking repertoire and has managed to fill the interns' house with smoke from her culinary experiments twice during her past month on the farm. In the Fall, she will return to the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign to begin her Junior year as an Accounting Major with minors in French and Environmental Studies. She applies her number skills well by answering spontaneous mental math questions in order to calculate the number of broccoli heads left to harvest, etc. She loves the outdoor work the farm offers, Lion the dog, Sass the horse, the silly hens, and Iowa sunsets.

From the Ground Up: The Farm Bill, Part I of IV

(We've asked one of our interns, Ariane, to share a series on the Farm Bill from her experience with the Sustainable Ag Coalition in Washington, D.C.). This past May, Congress reauthorized the little-known piece of legislation called the Farm Bill and updated the laws that govern the production and consumption of food. The majority (about 73%) of the spending in the farm bill supports the food stamp program. About 16-17% pays for government subsidies to farmers, and the remainder covers the costs of everything from conservation programs to rural development. Under the guise of providing cheap and abundant food, the farm bill supports an out-dated farming system that encourages over-production, degrades natural resources, and provides us with unhealthy food. Farmers are paid to grow only a handful of crops (corn and soybeans among them). The more a farmer produces, the more s/he receives in government payments. Producing high-yielding crops requires the use of many inputs, including fertilizers, pesticides, and fossil fuels, all of which pollute our ecosystems and waterways. All of the crops that are produced are either fed to livestock or are turned into a variety of mysterious substances (e.g., high fructose corn syrup) that top the list of ingredients in processed foods and that contribute significantly to diseases such as diabetes.

Farmers' Footnote

This past weekend we began testing the new bed lifter (see photo on website) for the anticipated garlic harvest. After several trials and adjustments, Monday we got a system to work. Previously potato forks were the tool of choice. It was a slow, labor-intensive process and occasionally yielded damaged garlic heads. The bed lifter offers to both reduce labor and improve quality of the heads harvested. The lifter consists of a blade, mounted to follow directly behind the tractor. The blade is lowered, and slices through the soil just below the garlic root level, lifting the garlic for easy pull and removal from the bed. Tim could "lift" a bed in 2 min. and our crew could remove, brush clean, and stack the heads in 20 min.s. This is at least a three to four fold improvement in time and wear on our bodies. A quick note of appreciation: We have received so many notes of support over the past weeks as we focused on responding to the June weather. You may not realize how much these comments mean. Thank you, thank you! Having farm member support has been very helpful.

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Week 8



ONE STEP at a TIME
GARDENS

The Weekly Note

One Step at a Time Gardens

Jan Libbey & Tim, Andrew, & Jess Landgraf

Week of July 21, 2008 – Box #8

In This week's Box: Broccoli or Cauliflower, Snap Peas, Green &/or Yellow Beans, Lettuce, Garlic

Veggie Notes

Storms making tossed salad – Strong winds from the side tossed our lettuce around a bit last week. Two strong storms – Thursday and again Saturday – wind whipped the lettuce that had been looking so great. The result cut into our supply available due to culling out damaged leaves. Enjoy this last supply for this part of the season. We just started a good supply of lettuce for a fall supply. Another last supply is this week's snap peas.

We are watching the first blossoms on our zucchini and expect you will see zucchini in your box in a couple of weeks. We contract with a friend for our first supply of carrots. Gary Guthrie, of Growing Harmony Farm near Nevada, is known as "the carrot guy" in our farming circles. We will be picking up carrots from Gary this week and packing them in the boxes next week. Our own fall carrots have been started in the field.

We have a break in onions this week and anticipate including some Walla walla onions in next week's box.

Connections – Meet Ariane, the second of our two summer interns.

Ariane Lotti is a born and raised New York City girl. She became interested in agricultural issues in high school when she worked on a sustainable crop and livestock farm in Maine. During college, she focused her coursework and research on environmental science and agriculture, and worked for a farm-to-school project that ran a one-acre garden and organized many educational events. She has a master's degree from the Yale School of Forestry & Environmental Studies, where she conducted research on alternative agriculture systems in the Basque Country of Spain. After working on the farm bill for a stint with the Sustainable Agriculture Coalition in Washington, DC, she came out to Iowa to learn more about conventional commodity crop production and the alternatives to it. Although she's really liking the Midwest, she can't quite get over the use of the word "pop" (it's

soda!), the occurrence of tornadoes and flood-producing rains, and salads made of Jello.

From the Ground Up: The Farm Bill, Part II of IV

Despite my greater dissatisfaction with the farm bill and its lack of support for a sustainable agricultural system, there are some smaller programs contained within the bill that support an alternative, more environmentally and socially friendly agriculture. There is, for example, an entire section of the bill dedicated to conservation programs. Programs such as the Conservation Stewardship Program and the Environmental Quality Incentives Program reward farmers for incorporating conservation practices into production practices. Other programs, such as the Wetlands Reserve Program and the Conservation Reserve Program, are land retirement programs in which lands are removed from production. Although these programs receive a small percentage of the bill's funding, they and other programs (stay tuned for next week!) are the important building blocks from which to create an agricultural policy that does not put conservation and production at odds. After all, good stewardship of land and resources ensures the long-term viability of agricultural production.

Farmers' Footnote- Garlic harvest done

Thursday afternoon we received a heavy downpour and loud thunder. Friday and Saturday more rain, bringing our three-day total to 3 inches. Be careful what you ask for! We needed some rain, but perhaps not quite so much. We needed to finish garlic harvest. The garlic bed lifter was not an option, but the garlic pulled easily. By the afternoon Tim and Andrew has accumulated many piles of garlic. The rest of us, finishing up the day's harvest, came to help gather, organize, and hang the garlic heads. This week we are providing some of this great garlic in your box. You may note that it feels a bit damp. This is **fresh** garlic – just harvested and still holding moisture in the "papers" holding the cloves together. The prime storage for garlic is a cool, dry place – preferably not in the refrigerator, which tends to dehydrate the garlic. But I'd encourage you to **use** it – it's just so good. I recommend a garlic press among your kitchen tools. I love pressing fresh garlic. It seems to snap right through. Garlic is a great addition to so many dishes – from stir-fries to roasts, garlic bread to creamy garlic dressing. For a little more information on garlic, check out page 5 of our Recipe Collection – posted on our website. We'll have more garlic throughout the rest of the season

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Week 9



ONE STEP at a TIME
GARDENS

The Weekly Note

One Step at a Time Gardens

Jan Libbey & Tim, Andrew, & Jess Landgraf

Week of July 28, 2008 – Box #9

In This week's Box: Broccoli/ Cauliflower/Cabbage or Kohlrabi; Carrots; Onions, Green &/or Yellow Beans, Tomato or Zucchini

Veggie Notes – Mixed options provide a great variety for members to try. New on the scene this week are tomatoes, zucchini, cabbage and kohlrabi. More of each to come in weeks ahead. **Kohlrabi** – These large, roundish vegetables require peeling off the outer layer. In side you will find a sweet, crisp, crunchy vegetables. Delicious raw, but equally good steamed with butter, in stir fries or stews. Serve as you would any other member of the cauliflower/broccoli family. **Tomatoes** – of many colors. You may get a red, pink, orange or purplish tomato. The flavor of home raised can't be beat! This week's **carrots** are from our friend Gary Guthrie of Growing Harmony Farm near Nevada. Renowned as "the carrot guy", Gary grows our first round of carrots and we grow winter squash for his members. We grow our own late season carrots with nine beds looking good.

We are expecting the first of two sweet corn deliveries next week.

Connections – Michael & Sasha Mudlaff are WDM members since 2003 & have served as site host subs. Sasha works as a grief counselor for youth. With Michael's pastor's perspective, we occasionally find ourselves amidst theological discussions at the pick-up site. As we began to experience a tough season in June, Michael offered us this reflection. *You two (and your family and staff) have been so faithful over the years. Our family appreciates the care you give to us through your produce, and also to the land. We were fortunate to not suffer any consequences of the recent rains and flooding - at home or at church. So our role has been to serve others. It is a pleasure to suffer alongside you - you are the ones that are working so hard and lost much of the precious fruit of your labor. We recognize the risk we all assume in investing in you and the farm each year.*

From the Ground Up: Farm Bill Part III

Calling the bill that Congress reauthorizes every 5-7 years the "farm bill" is somewhat of a misnomer because it impacts more than farmers. While the bill successfully furthers the cause of the corn- and soybean-based

conventional agricultural system that we have today, it significantly shapes our nation's food system as well. The bill determines most of what we eat by supporting the production of certain crops over others (corn and soybeans vs. a much greater diversity of foods) and using those crops to make many of the processed foods and meats in the supermarket today. With a recent understanding of the connection between the farm bill and the food we eat, it was in this farm-bill round of negotiations and politicking that the public health community became more involved. With the sharp increase in prevalence of obesity and diabetes in the United States, public health experts have started to ask how the food environment (where cheap, processed foods are readily available) enabled by policies such as the farm bill affects the rate of chronic, often times diet-based diseases. While the connections between health and farm policy are not obvious at first, people who care about health have started to realize that the type of agriculture system we have greatly affects our diets and health.

Farmers' Footnote – So how does this farm work? Over the next weeks I'll share this season on the farm, an overview of our weekly harvest and post harvest routine, a review of improvements implemented this year, and improvements under consideration for 2009.

In 2008 we are growing on approximately 6 acres, serving 118 members, estimated to involve 140+ individuals. We grow more than 35 different vegetable varieties. We also raise more than 900 broilers over the season. Managing this much area and diversity is enough to keep us busy on a good year. The demands of the 2008 growing year have required many extra hours and some additional help. What would normally be a fair split between harvest and weeding through the summer has become recovery from some lost beds, harvest among weedy beds and scramble to replant as well as stay on top of scheduled planting and harvest. The hoophouse, our most controllable site has been great – was the location for original greens and this first supply of tomatoes. The field tomatoes – all 8 beds - have been weeded and mulched. They still need some pruning. At this point we've made great progress with maintenance, but have some stickler sites on priority focus this week. Last week we direct seeded one last round. In our basement are numerous flats of broccoli, cauliflower, Chinese cabbage and lettuce that will be transplanted. The pressure to get "over the weeding hump" is on as some crew will be heading back o school soon.

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Week 10



ONE STEP at a TIME
GARDENS

The Weekly Note

One Step at a Time Gardens

Jan Libbey & Tim, Andrew, & Jess Landgraf

Week of August 4, 2008 – Box #10

In This week's Box: Sweet corn, Tomatoes, Green and Yellow Beans, Zucchini, Garlic, Broccoli

News – This week we say good-bye to two of our crew - Anne Munaretto who returns home before heading into her Junior year at University of Illinois. We've thoroughly enjoyed Anne's playful nature and wonderful laugh. We wish her well as she returns to classes and heading up a project on biodiesel. We also say goodbye to Kay Trampel who is returning to school demands, but closer to home. Kay winds down her 7th season at the farm as she heads back to teaching Elementary PE and helping with the XC team at Belmont-Klemme.

Cookbooks – We are wrapping up cookbook delivery. If you haven't received yours or have decided you'd like a copy, please let us know.

Veggie Notes - Sweet corn is here! This is the first of two deliveries of sweet corn. We harvest corn at our neighbors on the morning of delivery. Why don't we grow the corn ourselves? It's better use of our time and resources and a great way for our business to support our neighbors. As the veggies keep coming, do **check in on our Recipe Collection**, posted on our website - lots of delicious recipes provided! Just a heads up - Monday we received heavy rain (1.3"), wind, and hail. We've tried to cull out damage to **green beans**.

Cucumbers are coming – look for some in the coming weeks.

Connections - Sylvia & Curt, Julia & Joshua Fett, of WDM, are first year members. They come each week with great enthusiasm for this new experience of food fresh from the farm. They are taking the experience seriously, each week sharing some new insights they have gained from resources they've been researching. If you too want to take a bigger bit into community based agriculture, they'd be more than happy to share their resources with you.

From the Ground Up: Farm Bill Part IV

In the previous three paragraphs in this four-part series, I talked a bit about how the farm bill influences the food we eat, the management of our natural

resources, and the health of communities and individuals. Most of the effects are negative; while we have readily available cheap food, our health, communities, and environment are paying a hefty price. But an agricultural system that has so many negative effects is not inevitable. It is in large part a result of the decisions that our representatives in Congress and at the state and local levels make. We (and the politicians who represent us) can choose a food and farming system that sustains communities, health, and the environment instead of degrading them. As members of a CSA, you have already taken an important step in supporting a healthy alternative food system. But if we are to make larger system change, then it is also important to contact policy-makers and ask them to support a better agricultural system. Becoming involved in local and national efforts led by non-profit organizations is another way to effect change (we will highlight a number of the organizations involved in this important work over the next weeks and invite you to consider that, as a farm member, you have an important voice to lend to this national discussion).

Farmers' Footnote - This week we'll take a quick look at our weekly harvest and post harvest routine. On warm days, we start early to get harvest in before the sun warms the plants (and the harvesters) too much. Prompt cooling of vegetables from the field is an important step toward retaining the highest possible nutrition. Toward that end, we harvest in the cooler temp.s, set harvested crop in the shade until ready to return to the wash station or spray down with water for immediate hydration. Once we come in, we weigh all harvest. We have kept years of harvest records, which become our yield record, which then helps us with our projections for planting for the next season. Once weighed, those items to be rinsed are placed in our large sinks for cooling and final cleaning and a final quality check. Next is some time on draining racks before bunching or just storing in tubs prior to pack out. We have two coolers allowing varied storage temperatures to accommodate differing needs of the vegetables. At pack out, tubs with prepared vegetables are lined up on our packout counter. Boxes are placed on a slightly lower ledge and moved along as vegetables are placed in the box – assembly line fashion. After all the hard work from planting to weeding to harvest, pack out is a highlight for the crew. Next week we'll begin looking at improvements implemented this year and improvements under consideration for 2009.

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Week 11



ONE STEP at a TIME
GARDENS

The Weekly Note

One Step at a Time Gardens

Jan Libbey & Tim, Andrew, & Jess Landgraf

Week of August 11, 2008 – Box #11

In This week's Box: Sweet corn, Tomatoes, Cauliflower/ Broccoli / small Cabbage, Green & Yellow Beans, Zucchini, Cucumber, Onion

Veggie Notes – We talk about eating last week's weather. What heat, rain, or other conditions took place last week course its way through the plants and into the crop you eat this week. Last week's heat pushed the supply of corn along for this Tuesday. This is our final delivery of **sweet corn**. This week's cooler temps will slow crops down a bit. ♪ This week's onions are **Walla Walla** – one of the sweetest onions. These Walla Wallas have a fairly short storage life at one month. There are more onions to come as we gather in that harvest. ♪ We are finally coming toward the end of our **cauliflower and broccoli** supply and beginning to harvest the cabbage. There will be more cabbage next week. Toward the end of this season, we expect to deliver some of our purple cauliflower – really gorgeous and delicious. ♪ Our first two plantings of **beans** are winding down. We have some Cannellini beans coming (harvested at a very plump, beany stage) – probably a one time delivery. Our next round of snap beans, in beautiful, full bloom now, include French green beans for all shares and some Dragon Tongue beans for the Go Gourmet shares. We have a final, fourth planting of green and yellow snap beans to wrap up the season. We are watching a beautiful patch of **watermelon** maturing. We grow a very delicious, juicy yellow watermelon and this year's patch is probably the best we've ever had. We expect they will be coming ready in a month or so.

Connections - This week we are spotlighting new members from Mason City, Paul & Claudia Collier. New to Mason City from Mankato, MN last summer, the Colliers sought out the farm and farmers market to cover their organic produce demands. Both Paul and Claudia enjoy cooking and specifically like broccoli, yellow squash, and tomatoes. Paul is pastor of the First Presbyterian Church in Mason City and Claudia is Program Assistant with Wright on the Park. They say they like knowing where their food comes

from as their own gardening space and time is limited. We're glad to have them as new members and welcome them to Mason City.

From the Ground Up - We begin a brief introduction to a number of farming organizations you should be aware of, starting with the Practical Farmers of Iowa (PFI). Their webpage summarizes their mission as *fostering profitable, ecologically sound, and community-enhancing approaches to agriculture*. Begun in 1985 with a focus on sustainable practices for corn and soybean farmers as well as livestock farmers, today PFI membership is near 700, including direct market producers of fruit and vegetables as well as non-farmers. Several of our farm members are already PFI members and we encourage others to join to support their tremendous work. PFI is recognized for its remarkable farmer led research, which we are both proud to have participated in and continually benefit from. PFI has been one of our main support networks here in Iowa; we connect with a wonderful network of farming colleagues who generously share information and wrestle with big picture issues as well as technical production strategies. Some excellent support for fruit and vegetable growers has emerged in just the past year. Tim currently serves on their Executive Board, representing our area and serving as Secretary. He says he's "impressed with the continuing grants that have been secured and the innovative approaches to bring the organization's goals close to its members." You can visit their website at www.practicalfarmers.org.

Farmers' Footnote - This past Sunday we treated ourselves to some time away from the farm. After weeks of working deep into the weekend, an afternoon biking on the Root River Trail in SE Minnesota on such a beautiful day was a well-deserved break. We headed into this week in good spirits with plans for another play Sunday next weekend. While our crew is starting to take a slight downturn, Becky showed up Monday with her two daughters and Kay decided she could come one more week before wrapping up the summer. Monday was crazy busy around here. Work in our neighbor's field to the east brought the REC in, shutting our power down for a bit. It was a cool morning and with no power, we opted to start with fieldwork clipping the field tomatoes' long branches, making it easier to get among them. We had some dirt work begun on a new wetland site we're having constructed on the farm and ended the day with an impressive harvest of tomatoes from the hoophouse.

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Week 12



ONE STEP at a TIME
GARDENS

The Weekly Note

One Step at a Time Gardens

Jan Libbey & Tim, Andrew, & Jess Landgraf

Week of August 18, 2008 – Box #12

In This week's Box: Cabbage, Red Norland Potatoes, Zucchini, Cucumber, Tomato, Garlic, Radishes (Clarion and Thur. Delivery), Cauliflower, & Sweet Corn (Thur. Delivery)

Veggie Notes

Cabbage, cousin to broccoli and cauliflower, is a versatile vegetable with long storage. Stored properly in the refrigerator, cabbage can be expected to keep 3 weeks or more. But why wait?! There are so many great ways to enjoy cabbage – fresh in slaw, crunchy on sandwiches, steamed as a side dish, in a soup. Cabbage also packs a low cal, nutritious punch – at 15 calories per 1 C. and a great source of vitamin A & C, calcium, potassium and magnesium. One more perk: cabbage is recognized as a beneficial digestive and intestinal cleanser.

Potatoes – Red Norlands are great boiled or baked. Conventional potatoes are subject to multiple sprays for fungus and insects. At One Step at a Time Gardens, you can count on us to plant them, cultivate them, and harvest them. You enjoy them! It's as simple and delicious as that! ♪ **Tomato** supply dips a little this week as we await the field plants coming on line within the next couple of weeks. We are still harvesting primarily from our hoophouse. ♪ **Bean break** – No beans this week. The next round of beans still in full, beautiful flower have tiny beans too small to pick. They should be on hand in next week's box. ♪ Here is a tasty appetizer that uses many of the vegetables in recent week's box: **Vegetable Pizza**

2 Pkg. Crescent rolls, spread on jellyroll pan for crust, *bake and let cool*
2 Pkg.s Cream cheese ♪ ½ Pkg. Vegetable Soup ♪ ½ C. Mayonnaise –
Cream three ingredients, spread on baked crust ♪ Fresh Vegetables –
Chop a selection - cauliflower, broccoli, cabbage, zucchini, cucumber,
tomato, etc. and sprinkle. Chill

Additions that came in after Tuesday's delivery. **Radishes** – making up for the early crop we lost to flooding. These are beautiful and delicious. **Sweet corn** – we were able to connect with another local grower for this final delivery of this summer treat to our Thursday members. Enjoy!! We do still have some cauliflower and broccoli pass along this bounty.

Go Gourmet – Joining the Sungold Cherry tomatoes this week are Patty Pan Summer Squash – great for the grill or stuffing – and Eggplant - a typical black or beautiful lavender fruit or a long, narrow, Asian variety.

Connections – The Hansons – This family from Kanawha, just five miles west of the farm, does a work/share swap, making the farm a family affair. In the spring, "The Christas" come out. Christa, the mom, brings help – one of the other four family members. Young Christa holds her own. As we move into delivery season, young Christa continues on, helping into the fall and keeping our conversation lively. The Hansons are great support and have begun putting some of the lessons from the farm to work in their own home garden. This year there has been reports of success in several crops, which means they've found a way to keep the town rabbits and weeds at bay. Christa, the mom, says *I like to have my kids work on the farm so they can appreciate all the work that goes into their food; they feel more a part of the process.*

From the Ground Up - Iowa is home to a great group of sustainable agriculture networks and advocates. **The Leopold Center for Sustainable Agriculture**, based in Ames at Iowa State University, is one of the key organizations. The Center works in three primary areas: marketing and food systems, ecology, and policy. Established under the Groundwater Protection Act of 1987, The Center conducts research into the negative impacts of agricultural practices, assists in developing alternative practices; and works with ISU Extension to inform the public of Leopold Center findings. The Regional Food System Working Group has been particularly instrumental in bringing a rich diversity of perspectives into the local food development. Findings over the years have been compiled and posted on the Center's website – www.leopold.iastate.edu. Check it out – Food facts and research results are referenced right on the homepage - You'll find lots of fascinating information there.

Farmers' Footnote – Full moon, cool nights, changing crops. Last week we pulled all our onions and they are now drying down in the crib. One of this year's most celebrated improvements is the addition of two handcarts. As we push into harvest of heavy crops like onions, this week's cabbage, zucchini, and cucumbers, these carts have paid for themselves many times over making hauling the load so much easier.

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Week 13



ONE STEP at a TIME
GARDENS

The Weekly Note

One Step at a Time Gardens

Jan Libbey & Tim, Andrew, & Jess Landgraf

Week of August 25, 2008 – Box #13

In This week's Box: Cabbage/Cauliflower or Broccoli, Zucchini, Cucumber, Tomato, Radishes, French Green Beans, Yellow Watermelon (for WDM shares)

News

We have this expanded version of last week's very brief note. Time was just too short to write much in time for delivery.

Veggie Notes

Watermelon is starting to come in gradually so we can fulfill one site at a time. We will cover WDM and Clarion this week. We expect to cover Kitchen Collage next Tuesday and all Thursday sites next or the following week Thursday.

And...it's **yellow!** The color may surprise you, the flavor will delight you!

Here is a great recipe featuring chicken, zucchini, tomato and pesto –

Grilled Pesto Chicken

1 Chicken from One Step at a Time Gardens

8 small tomatoes, cut into quarters

4 small zucchini, cut into ½ in. slices

½ C. Pesto - Prepare *in four separate foil packets and grill roast altogether in oven. Check chicken with meat thermometer for doneness.* DELICIOUS!

Connections – The bees. We have been fortunate over the years to have a number of beehives placed on the farm. This summer, the hives are owned by Curt Bromingen, an apiarist from Perry, but managed by our friend Pat Ennis, of Goodell. Just last week Pat and Curt came to pull the honey – Oh, it was sweet! They have left the bees with some honey for a couple of weeks. We continue to find the bees buzzing among the plants all over the farm. This winter, Curt will transport his bees to California where they will work in the orchards, providing valuable pollination and cash flow. Next Spring we will look forward to their return.

From the Ground Up – The Center for Rural Affairs, located in Lyons, NE - is *committed to establishing strong rural communities, social and economic justice, environmental stewardship, and genuine opportunity for all while engaging people in decisions that affect the quality of their lives and the future of their communities.* Their website FAQ describes that they believe it is in the interest of rural America and all of America to have a strong family farm system of agriculture. Specific characteristics of this agriculture include: genuine opportunity for those who work on farms and ranches to own the fruits of their labor and productive assets, opportunity for new people to enter the business even if they aren't rich, fair compensation for those who produce food and provides a meaningful share of food system profit to agricultural producers, a substantial number of farms and ranches, sufficient to support healthy communities.

We have known the Center for their dogged determination to champion this vision of rural communities and family farms. Most recently, they are playing a key role in the Iowa Farm Disaster Relief Coalition – 14 farm, faith, and rural organizations collecting donations and disbursing emergency funds to direct marketing farmers in Iowa like ourselves. For a thorough overview of this important partner, visit their website at www.cfra.org

Farmers' Footnote – Deep digging...that's what took place at the farm last Saturday. This past winter we had a friend build us a new implement – part bed lifter, used for garlic harvest (remember how excited I was about the time and labor saving of this device?!)/ part sub-soiler. Over years of tilling, farm fields develop a hardpan under the till depth that blocks access to deep soil nutrients. Sub-soiling involves drawing a "knife" deep through the soil, through this compacted layer, leaving a deep channel through the beds. Fall is an ideal time for sub-soiling as the late rains and snow and ice can work their way deep into the soil. Through winter's freeze and thaw patterns, the soil will naturally be broken up, readying the availability of a fresh flush of nutrients for the spring.

We also planted some cover crops – called a "green manure" to help turn nutrients back into the soil. Cover crops will be allowed to die back after frost, providing soil protection over winter.

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Week 14



ONE STEP at a TIME
GARDENS

The Weekly Note

One Step at a Time Gardens

Jan Libbey & Tim, Andrew, & Jess Landgraf

Week of September 1, 2008 – Box #14

In This week's Box: Zucchini, Cucumber, Tomato, Radishes, French Green Beans, Carrot, Garlic, Green Pepper, Yellow Watermelon - for Kitchen Collage members on Tuesday

News

How many more deliveries?? We're beginning to hear this question. Our season runs through the last week of September, putting final DM delivery on Tuesday, Sept. 29 and final North IA delivery on Wed, Sept. 30 (Clarion) and Thur., Oct. 1 (all other No. IA sites)

Add-on orders – a number of you ordered from our Add-on options. We will be in touch in the next couple of weeks to update you on those items.

Web update – have you visited our website lately? Andrew has recently posted a new loop of photos from this season at the farm. Check it out.

Last week's Note – The expanded version of last week's Weekly Note is now posted on our website, complete with a delicious recipe for chicken, a profile of the Center for Rural Affairs and a description of our sub-soiling and fall fieldwork. A photo of sub-soiling in action is in our new website photos.

Veggie Notes

Tomatoes of many colors – For five weeks now you've been receiving tomatoes and have discovered they are not always red. We grow a variety of tomatoes - heirloom as well as common red slicing tomatoes. You may receive red (Big Beef, Celebrity, Early Girl), pink (Brandywine, German Johnson), yellow with a bright red/orange blush on the bottom (Pineapple), fuzzy and yellow (Peach tomato- new this week) orange (Goldie), green with stripes (Green Zebra), green with pinkish blush on bottom (Aunt Ruby's German Green), dark red to purplish (Cherokee Purple or Black Krim). Sizes may vary from more than a pound to golf ball size. If you can pick your way through this list of names and descriptions, try to identify the tomatoes in your box this and in the coming weeks. We expect the tomato supply to increase a bit in coming weeks and continue through our remaining deliveries (as long as it doesn't frost).

Connections – In place of a specific introduction this week, I want to talk about the power of our farm membership overall. Our membership is an amazing body of people who care intensely about the environment, social justice, their community, responsible personal choices, education, and health. Within the membership of this farm is a powerful collection of people. Through the topic of food and agriculture, we have a powerful convergence of many of today's most important issues. I am inviting you all to take this farm and food experience one more step. As the name of the farm suggests, your membership not only delivers you food fresh from the farm; your membership also delivers you a new perspective on and connection to agriculture itself. one step at a time. As the farming community demographics change, the collective voices to speak to agriculture must also change. As we envision what a more locally based food system can do for our families, our communities and our region, food advocates such as farm members must speak up along with farmers. This fall presents us with a unique opportunity to try out this new voice. Whether it be a local or national election, the issue of appropriate food and agriculture policy has a place in the discussions. Your voice matters whether you care about carbon footprint, water quality, nutritious foods, or local economic development – all of these and more have a connection with policy makers and realizing a vision for a sustainable agriculture and future. With Ariane's help, we will be providing you with some local food policy talking points and resources that can help you take a step into this part of the food experience. Think what weight your voice could carry at a candidate meeting when you say "I've invested in Iowa's local food system and think we should see more of this as a state priority."

From the Ground Up – Watch next week for an introduction to The Iowa Network for Community

Farmers' Footnote – A laboring Labor Day here at the farm. Thanks to Becky Ahrendsen, we assembled a great crew for morning harvest, took a break to enjoy the Kanawha Labor Day Parade – featuring one of our regular crewmembers, Christa Hanson...this time on unicycle with her talented family. After a great lunch feast, during which Clarion farm members Fayne and Leon Szabo joined us, some took our kayaks out to the lake and the rest resumed...laboring. This helped get a good jump on the week so Tuesday won't be quite so crazy.

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Week 15



ONE STEP at a TIME
GARDENS

The Weekly Note

One Step at a Time Gardens

Jan Libbey & Tim, Andrew, & Jess Landgraf

Week of September 8, 2008 – Box #15

In This week's Box:

Potatoes – *All Red or Purple Viking*, Tomatoes, Zucchini,
Cucumber, Leeks, Beets – *Red or Chioggia*, Kohlrabi

News

Final Fruit Shares begin this week. An email went out to all fruit share members with specific details about which delivery site would receive the fruit on what date. If you have any questions, please contact Jan or Tim at the farm.

The September issue of the National Geographic focuses on food – if you haven't had a chance to review it, here's just one fascinating fact reported: The areas with the most organic production around the world include Europe, Australia, Canada, a little bit of Central America, and western and southern South America. The United States is listed at 0 – 0.50 percent of total ag. land in organic production.

Veggie Notes

The **leeks** have done really well this year and with delivery of potatoes and cool weather, it's feeling like Leek Potato Soup! Check out our Recipe Collection on our website for more ideas on how to prepare and enjoy leeks (page 10).

Kohlrabi, related to broccoli and cauliflower, is an unusual vegetable. It is actually a swollen stem and harvested above ground. The variety we grow is called Gigante and will fill your hand and more when you go to pick it up, but is solid all the way through. To eat Kohlrabi, peel the outer layer off and enjoy the inner, crispy vegetable raw, in salads, grate into slaw or sandwiches, steam and serve as a side vegetable or in soups, stews or stir fries. ∪ **All Red potatoes** are a beautiful blush of pink inside. Purple Viking has a purple skin and is white inside. What kind did you get? Both are great baked, boiled or roasted. ∪ **Beets** pack a great supply of vitamins A & C, calcium, iron, and carotenes. Find a traditional red or pinkish (striped inside, no staining juices) beet in your box and try some new ways to enjoy beets. See page 3 & 4 in our Recipe Collection. There's a double bonus in the beet tops! Nutritious addition to salads, sandwiches.

Connections

If you didn't catch last week's Connections column, please check it out on our website. A quick follow up here. We're gathering resources that you can consider using to speak out in favor of local food and sustainable ag. We'll be including a

copy in the next two week's boxes. A little encounter today impressed me that even before swaying policy makers with this information, it's important that we speak out to peers and our community via editorials, conversation over coffee, at church, the grocery store, school, etc.. Raise the decibel level of support for a more appropriate agriculture with folks we know. It's important to let other likeminded folk that there is, indeed, a growing swell of support for food you can taste, trust, and take home.

From the Ground Up – The Iowa Network for Community Agriculture – INCA- (www.growinca.org) organized in 1996 to *cultivate connections among Iowans creating healthy, just and sustainable local food systems*. INCA has a pioneered not only the local food focus, but also a very grassroots approach to cultivating connections. Over the years, INCA's rotating annual local food conference has come to help spotlight and catalyze local efforts. North Iowa is fortunate to be hosting the 2009 INCA Local Food Conference and I'm very excited about the "bounce" expected out of this experience. If any of our North Iowa members want to be involved, please contact Jan. We strongly encourage our DM members to attend. More details coming.

Farmers' Footnote – oh my gosh! There's just so much to talk about. It's been a very full week at the farm. We've dedicated parts of the past two weekends to canning tomatoes, peaches, freezing corn, beans, etc. What can't be preserved needs to be used up now and there are just so many good ideas, my head spins. I want to try them all, and begin to dream of having a chef come stay at our house for a week so we could at least enjoy them all! We've also gone from tragedy to wonder at the farm this past week. Last Wednesday and again Thursday we had a predator get in a kill chickens from our second to last batch. Only four chickens of this batch of 130 survived from these attacks. We have worked with a couple of local trappers and over the weekend interrupted further attacks. Monday we found a young badger caught. The traps are reset for vigilance, but the main threat has past. It's a very sad and disturbing experience on the farm when chickens are attacked (not often, but once last year and once this year is too often for us). Our complete focus on the chickens' safety for several days impacts the overall mood of the vegetable work that also must continue.

Saturday morning, in the middle of this stress, was a foggy, gray morning. But as the air began to dry out, we had an absolutely delightful discovery of hundreds of Monarch butterflies who had roosted along our shrub/tree line between two sets of gardens. As the sun came out they fluttered around, jockeying for the best spot to dry off and take wing. What a treat amidst a couple of tough days on the farm!

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Week 16



ONE STEP at a TIME
GARDENS

The Weekly Note

One Step at a Time Gardens

Jan Libbey & Tim, Andrew, & Jess Landgraf

Week of September 15, 2008 – Box #16

In This week's Box: Acorn or Buttercup Winter squash, Zucchini, Tomato, Onion, Garlic, Green or Red Pepper, Yellow Watermelon (Kitchen Collage on Tuesday and Mason City on Thursday)

News ∪ **Paper work** – This week you'll find our Member Evaluation, a Deposit form for 2009, along with a self addressed envelope, and a talking point document about Iowa's local food systems in with your vegetables.

There's explanation on each throughout the Weekly Note.

Member Evaluation – We've done a lot of "talking" this season through the Weekly Note. We want to give you a chance to give us some feedback on this season. We've included a copy of our member evaluation with today's box and have posted a copy on our website. Please fill out and return to us. We appreciate your comments.

2009 Deposit - We are already looking ahead to 2009 and invite you to make a deposit to hold you a spot for next season. A self-addressed envelope is included for you to use to return the evaluation. Feel free to bring it to next week's delivery or simply mail it to us. You can also download a copy from our website.

Veggie Notes ∪ **Winter squash** signals fall and the "comfort" foods of the season! Check out our Recipe Collection (pg. 17) for a favorite squash gratin recipe. ∪ **Zucchini** - Think you can't eat another? We just tried a ratatouille recipe that was quite tasty. Here's a quick description: Sauté onion, garlic and roasted peppers, add to a tomato sauce and cover bottom of 9x13 casserole dish. Top with alternating layers of thinly sliced – zucchini, eggplant, and potato. Bake 425 degrees for 45 min.s Yummy!

Green Peppers – while we haven't had a stellar crop this season, those that you do receive provide a whopping supply of vitamin C – 107% of RDA in ½ C. raw - as well as a good source of vitamins A and E and iron and

potassium. ∪ **Yellow Watermelon...again!** We're having a tremendous melon crop! We have enough for a second round. Between this and next week everyone will get a second melon. Enjoy!

Connections – Barbara Kingsolver's book Animal, Vegetable, Miracle, has awakened a new layer of consciousness about food system issues. **Jessica Bottenfield-Biehn**, one of our West Des Moines members, described how closely Kingsolver's choices fit her family's efforts to live as sustainable and naturally as possible - a sentiment echoed by many of our members. Jessica's family of five not only gets a weekly box, they also put in their own large garden with the goal of canning for the winter. When not working with her children or the garden, Jessica uses her skills as a guitarist/music instructor, doula and RN, and textile artist. From interest in discussing issues raised in Kingsolver's book to a summer of vegetables to a commitment to make daily choices that make a difference... this is once again the power within our membership.

From the Ground Up – Two weeks ago, I wrote encouraging our members to recognize that farm member voices are needed in the political debate about the food system serving health, social and economic needs in this state and country. This fall provides rich opportunities to speak out and your membership experience gives you more credibility to speak about agriculture than you might at first realize. To help with your conversations, should you take this challenge, we're providing a couple of good talking point resources. We are including a copy of the Iowa Policy Project's white paper on Iowa's Local Food System. Additionally, "Visions of Good Food for Iowa: Cultivating Community-based Food Systems for Healthy Iowans and Communities", dated August 2008, is available by Angie Tagtow. Angie's document provides both a thorough background on issues ranging from agriculture to health and infrastructure issues. I'm working on posting both Laura's and Angie's documents on our website – they have great information that can arm you for a strong argument for setting community-based food systems as a policy priority. We'll include these resources once more next week as our Every Other Week Members change between this and next week.

Farmers' Footnote – There were numerous times this summer we couldn't wait to reach the end. The rains, the wind, the weeds, the hail were enough to discourage many....and then finally the fall crops began to emerge. The next blow, we knew could be early frost. But this week is treating us to just what we need – warmth and no frost. We still have some great crop to provide over these next two weeks - more carrots, leeks, tomatoes, just starting a new crop of green and yellow beans, and we'll be checking on our sweet potato crop. ∪ **Our Contact:** Phone:

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Week 17



ONE STEP at a TIME
GARDENS

The Weekly Note

One Step at a Time Gardens

Jan Libbey & Tim, Andrew, & Jess Landgraf

Week of September 22, 2008 – Box #17

In This week's Box: Zucchini or cucumber, Tomato, Green & Yellow Beans, Carrots, Leeks, Buttercup or Acorn Squash, Green Pepper, Watermelon (for WDM shares - Tues., Belmond, Farm, Garner & Clear Lake – Thurs.)

News - **Second to last delivery** – We can hardly believe this journey, which started back in that tumultuous month of June, is almost over...and going out so gently. ∪ **The Great Box Round Up** - Check out closets, garages, car trunks and back seats and return your used boxes. Thanks for all your good box returns through the season. ∪ **Second round of paperwork** We are again providing several paper resources in the boxes (WDM and several north Iowa sites to capture this week's EOW members) because we feel it's important that no one miss out. The information includes Member evaluations, self-addressed envelope, and a copy of the Iowa Policy Project paper on Iowa's Local Food Systems. ∪ **2009 Member Deposit included this week** – Oops. I omitted our 2009 Member Deposit form last Tuesday, but got it this week. ∪ **What about late season deliveries?** Thanksgiving and Winter Shares that have been ordered are scheduled respectively – week of Nov. 10 and Dec. 8. Full schedule information will be out by late October. We are currently sold out of these late season shares. ∪ **Celebrate Fall Equinox** - With the change in light levels and temperatures come fabulous color displays and a shift in pace as well as different foods. Let your taste buds lead you in developing a seasonal palette and sensitivity.

Veggie Notes The bounty of fall impresses us each year. Last week alone we harvested more than 2,540 pounds of vegetables – We really are harvesting “tons” of vegetables. We've already got a good start on this week's heavy weight. Monday's total harvest weighed in at 737 lbs. I keep singing the praises of our handy carts – they have saved us a lot of back breaking hauling! ∪ **Changing and bountiful crops** - Both cucumber and zucchini plants are winding down and this is our last supply of both Tomatoes are again in full strength. Watermelon made a wonderful rally for a second round, but we are on the down side here too. ∪ **Beets?** We are nursing a small supply of beets. North Iowa still has not received any. We are struggling with deer who are nibbling on the tops and roots as though they were candy.

∪ **Green & Yellow beans** – a fresh picking from our newest crop of beans is one of the newest items. With mild temperatures, the beans will continue to produce over the next weeks. ∪ **Whopping large carrots** – these are serious roots providing a great supply of carotene! ∪ **Go Gourmet** – This is our last week of Go Gourmet deliveries.

Connections – Dori James and Steve Musson, of Mason City, both enjoy cooking, but Dori tips her hat to Steve who operated “Marjorie's Teahouse” for 9 years, using local products when possible. Steve now spends much of his time managing the Mason City AAA office. Dori can be found among the dogs at “A Cut Above”, dog-grooming business in Clear Lake. Both savor food with flavor! Sometimes we go long times without seeing some of our members, but Dori actually sought me out early this season to introduce herself. She found me at the North Iowa Farmers Market, where I sell in Mason City. She just wanted to put that face with the name so this really can be “food with the farmers face.”

From the Ground Up – To encourage our members to begin to speak out in support of community-based food systems in the political arena, we've been offering some new resources. Last week we included a report by the Iowa Policy Project on Iowa's Local Food System. This week we have two final resources for you. One, a public health bulletin developed by Angie Tagtow, is titled [A Vision of “Good Food” for Iowa, Cultivating Community-based Food Systems for Healthy Iowans and Communities.](#) The report is posted under Angie Tagtow's link at the Food & Society Fellows Program website at www.foodandsocietyfellows.org. The second resource is a list of Food Facts, a collection of key research findings from Leopold Center projects, can be found at www.leopold.iastate.edu. Links to all resources will be posted on our website soon – check out the “Member News” tab.

Farmers' Footnote – We begin to wrap up deliveries to our Every Other Week members in WDM, Clarion, Belmond, Garner, and Clear Lake this week. Many thanks for your great support. This season has challenged us as no other season has before – cold, wet, hail, wind, more rain, weeds with no end, and even a bad badger. But through it all we have had a wonderful work crew and very supportive members and are ending on a high note of bountiful harvests. Truly this kind of agriculture fosters a culture of support that defines sustainability! We say eat well this winter and we look forward to seeing you all again next season! ∪ **Our Contact:** Phone: 641/495-6367 or libland@frontiernet.net, Cell: 515/571-3383, Web site: www.ostgardens.com

Week 18



ONE STEP at a TIME
GARDENS

The Weekly Note

One Step at a Time Gardens

Jan Libbey & Tim, Andrew, & Jess Landgraf

Week of September 29, 2008 – Box #18

In This week's Box: Potatoes (Yukon Gold, Purple Viking, or All Red), Tomatoes, Green & Yellow Beans, Onion, Garlic, Kohlrabi or Purple Cauliflower, Yellow Watermelon, Butternut Squash (Wed. & Thur. Deliveries only – coming next Tues to DM)

News ♦ **Last Deliveries differ North to South** – Early this season the weather interrupted deliveries to DM twice, once to Clarion and not at all to the rest of our North Iowa members. This week's delivery, as originally scheduled, is our final delivery to Belmond, Garner, Clear Lake and Mason City members. To compensate Clarion members a bit, we bumped up supplies in this week's final delivery, and we will add one extra delivery to our DM area members next week. ♦ We thank all our members for your generous support and encouragement through this season. June's weather dealt us some difficult conditions that influenced production all season. Thankfully, the conditions straightened out and we've enjoyed some really wonderful boxes as we've wrapped up the season. ♦ **Member Evaluations, 2009 Deposits** – are all available from our website. If you need help getting any of these materials, please let us know. Your feedback as well as your 2009 membership is important to us!

Post season Weekly Notes – To keep our members up to date with farm developments, I plan to provide a short post season Weekly Note until December. I will email these out and post them on our website. So stay tuned and stay in touch. ♦ **Late box returns** – If you find a box lingering after deliveries are all done, please drop them off at your delivery site host. We will be seeing site hosts this fall and can pick any late box returns up there. Thank you for diligent box returns this season.

Veggie Notes ♦ **Yellow watermelon...again.** Yes, friends the watermelon patch continues to be generous – enjoy this last surprise supply. ♦ **Kohlrabi or Purple Cauliflower** – You'll get one of these two. Should you find a head of purple cauliflower in your box, treat it just like any other cauliflower. Eat raw or cook in stir-fries, steamed, in salads, etc. Will hold purple color when cooked. Tastes just like white cauliflower, just much more beautiful! ♦ **Potatoes** – you may get one of a mix of the three kinds. All

are great baked, boiled. Yukon golds are probably the best candidates for roasting, but all are delicious.

Connections – After picking out just the right watermelon for his family, Micah, 5 looked at me with a sly eye and asked if I wanted to hear a good joke. "Sure," I replied and so our joke swapping began. "Why did six run away from seven?" I thought and thought, but had to ask Micah for the answer. But it didn't stop there, he asked for a joke back, nay...demanded. After much consultation with the farm crew, I'm coming this week, armed with three (by our accounting) pretty good jokes. We are thrilled to watch and hear the various stories of how our youngest members explore fresh food from the farm and begin to think of us as "their farmer". ♦ If you know the answer to Micah's joke, send us an email. If not, stay tuned for the answer in our first post-season Weekly Note, to be emailed out week of Oct. 13. This joke, by the way has been repeated numerous times here at the farm and keeps us giggling.

From the Ground Up – I sometimes use the word "glacial" to describe the progress of local food system work in our local area. But there are such things as "surge glaciers" and we had two such events last week. A wildly successful photo contest sponsored by a Belmond Area Farmers Market/Belmond Area Art Council partnership and an equally successful customer survey at the North Iowa Farmers Market in Mason City were enough to inspire new expectations (one of my downfalls). While the work that moves the local food agenda forward must come from the commitment of people on the ground, there are also critical partners in the various organizations I've described in this column this summer. The Iowa Network for Community Agriculture (featured in our Weekly Note # 15) is one such critical partner, and we are proud to announce that they will be holding their 2009 Annual Local food system Conference in Mason City. We anticipate the process will yield both a successful conference and a more energized local food conversation across North Iowa.

Farmers' Footnote – On the other side of our delivery season plenty of work awaits us, but at a different pace. We still have lots of storage crops to manage, crops in the field awaiting Thanksgiving and Winter Delivery, garlic to be planted in late October (feel free to plan to come help!), and lots of records to work with and planning for next season to address. There will be conferences to attend ...and this year one to help plan... and more time for family and...rest! Stay tuned for our Postseason Weekly Notes to keep you up to date with farm happenings. ♦ **Our Contact:** Phone: 641/495-6367 or libland@frontiernet.net, Cell: 515/571-3383, Web site: www.ostgardens.com

Week 19



ONE STEP at a TIME
GARDENS

The Weekly Note

One Step at a Time Gardens

Jan Libbey & Tim, Andrew, & Jess Landgraf

MAKE UP DELIVERY TO DES MOINES MEMBERS

Week of October 6, 2008 – Box #19

In This week's Box:

Tomatoes, Green & Yellow Beans, Carrots, Butternut Squash

News ∪ **Fall bounty makes up where early summer fell short** – On Tuesday, June 10 we had a cooler full of vegetables ready for delivery, but no way off the farm. Our farm sits on land adjacent to the East Twin Lake wetland. Our ¼ mile lane leads up from the low marsh area. With May rains followed by heavy early June rains, the marsh and adjacent river had backed water up over the road and up our lane enough to halt travel. We were stuck. Our interns had just arrived amidst a terrible series of severe storms and the summer was off to a very rocky start. Now, in early October, we find the late summer and fall have granted us an extended harvest opportunity. Where you, as our members, rode the impact of a tough season's start, you also benefit from this year's late fall. We are pleased to be able to bring you this extra delivery for our final delivery.

∪ **Final reminder for Member Evaluations, 2009 Deposits** – all are available from our website. If you need help getting any of these materials, please let us know. Your feedback as well as your 2009 membership is important to us!

∪ **Late box returns** – If you find a box lingering after deliveries are all done, please drop them off at your delivery site host. We will be seeing site hosts this fall and can pick any late box returns up there. Thank you for diligent box returns this season. ∪ **Post season Weekly Notes** – To keep our members up to date with farm developments, I plan to provide a short post season Weekly Note next week until December. I will email these out and post them on our website. So stay tuned and stay in touch.

Veggie Notes ∪ **Butternut squash** – We just harvested the squash on Monday. To cure the squash, keep it in a well-ventilated area at room temperature for 10 days. Then move to cooler storage where temps. range between 50 and 55 degrees F. The curing helps to harden the skin for long storage. If you plan to cook it soon, no special curing is necessary. Winter squash boasts 10 times the vitamin A of their summer squash relations, and is an excellent source of potassium, fiber, and complex carbohydrates. Versatile

and delicious, winter squash is great in soups, casseroles, muffins, waffles, stuffed and more! Check pg. 17 of our Recipe Collection for a tasty dish.

Connections – I began to write about our young members with just 2 or 3 stories in mind and only enough room for one last week. And then at both DM delivery sites children were everywhere! At Kitchen Collage, I got to hold a 1 year old while her grandfather picked up his veggies – sweet! Pretty soon Aria, 5, arrived with her mom and immediately asked if she could help unload boxes from the van (I said "Yes" and "Thank you!"). At the WDM site, Quinn – 10, Milo-4 and Jonas – 21 mo. came charging over to pick out their box and almost left me a rhinoceros beetle toy. Soon Kaitlyn, 3 ½, arrived with her brother Calvin, 1 ½, after stopping at the playground. Kaitlyn proudly helped carry her family's vegetables back to their van. Then late last week we received a wonderful letter in the mail from one of our member families about "overeating on Tuesdays", signed by all members of the family, including the boys. And if Tim were writing, he'd tell about a young member on his route that greets him enthusiastically each Thursday, hollering her Hellos from across the street when she's at a friend's. We delight in seeing these young people excited about making connections with their food...and their farmers. Our farm motto is "raising healthy food...raising hope". We count our selves fortunate to have so many young members and thank their parents for helping instill such enthusiasm. You've all certainly raised our hope.

From the Ground Up – Within the Upper Midwest, the Land Stewardship Project, based in Minnesota (LSP) is one of the premier sustainable ag organizations. LSP is well known for a rich blend of local organizing and national policy advocacy. They are organized with three regional offices, allowing staff to be in contact with issues specific to their members' area. LSP's Farm Beginnings program has helped to put new farmers on the land at a time when commodity agriculture is losing farmers. Their work models effective community organizing and passionate commitment to rural vitality. To learn more about LSP, visit their website at www.landstewardshipproject.org

Farmers' Footnote – It's time for more field preparation and Tim's had our new subsoiler (see pic.s of it on our website homepage) out again. One set of beds deep dug in August has now just been final tilled in preparation for garlic planting later this month. Tim was impressed with how nicely that ground tilled up in comparison to where he had not deep dug...and this was just over 4 weeks this fall. Over this past weekend, Tim deep dug a number of additional beds. We have great hopes that this deep digging treatment will open the ground up to deep penetration of water through the winter and wonderful freeze/thaw effects. Spring soil is wonderful to work with and we're excited to see the extra effect of

this deep digging. **Our Contact:** Phone: 641/495-6367 or
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