



# The Weekly Note

Week of May 31, 2010

**In this week's box – Lettuce, Spinach, Green Onions, Leeks**

*The Weekly Note accompanies each week's delivery. Electronic copies will be sent out over email by Tuesday night. A supply of hard copies will be provided in the front flap of the member check-off book at your respective pick up site. Each week's note will also be posted on our website under "Member News".*

**F**resh for your kitchen ... Ah, with the onset of our deliveries, you'll receive a box of vegetables regularly and experience the pattern of having the ingredients of your meals perhaps before you've even decided what to do with those ingredients. This brings both the challenge and opportunity for ...kitchen time! Many of these vegetables will be familiar, but you are likely to discover some new items and develop some new favorites. Along with providing the vegetables, we'll share notes about these vegetables and try to include a good recipe or website link.

This week we start you off with some great greens. "Eat your greens!" is often the cry. But why? Leafy greens are full of vitamins, minerals, and disease-fighting phytochemicals. Leafy greens provide a good dose of fiber, water for hydration, potassium which protects against osteoporosis, Vitamin C that helps keep your skin healthy, beta-carotene which helps with repair of the body's tissues, folate which contributes to production of serotonin, a mood booster, and more. So with this first delivery, we salute good greens for your health!!

We start off our greens' season with loose leaf lettuce and spinach. As the lettuce keeps coming, look for reds, ruffles, and greens in the leaves, buttercrunch heads, and more. Spinach should be on for a couple of weeks and later we anticipate including kale.



You also have green onions – great diced into so many dishes...or eaten raw for the hardy souls in the bunch! And leeks in June? The leeks are carry-overs from last fall. We just harvested them. We had them cooked with potatoes for our Monday lunch and they were delicious. Try roasting the leeks with some potatoes or dicing into your salad. Should you discover a rather tough central stalk, discard that and use the balance of the leeks. Give them a try!

Clean enough? We've rinsed all the vegetables right after harvest, but you might want to give them one more rinse and double check that it's ready for your table. Once rinsed and spun dry, try tossing the greens with

### **Olive Oil Vinaigrette Dressing:**

2 T. white or red wine vinegar or fresh lemon juice

1 t. Dijon mustard

Salt and freshly milled pepper

6 T. extra virgin olive oil

*This set of basic ingredients can simply be whisked together, used immediately, or stored in the refrigerator. Dip in a lettuce leaf and taste, then adjust the oil, vinegar or mustard if needed. If you have fresh herbs available, dice them and whisk with other ingredients. Be daring. There are many versions on this theme.*

**D**irect from the farm... We've had lots of productive days this spring. Just lately it's been taken up another notch yet. May 22 we welcomed our two summer interns, Genesis and Eli who

live on the farm in a small, second house and will be here through early October. On May 25, we held our crew orientation meeting and this week we began our full summer crew schedule bringing a great mix of dedicated folks to the task of raising, harvesting, and preparing the vegetables that show up in your box all season. I'll be introducing the various crew members over the next month or so.

Last week we got our field tomatoes (with their rather involved fencing systems), eggplant, and peppers transplanted. There was drip tape to lie down and ground cloth to pin down. There are still some peppers to get in the ground. Tilling for the next planting areas got interrupted when the power take off housing on our main tractor broke late last week. Thanks to our resourceful neighbors and the Mason City NAPA store, the tractor is back in the shed ready to go as of this Tuesday!

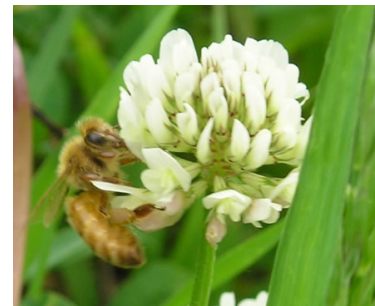
Tuesday afternoon we weeded six beds of peas (note: we have flowers! That means the first supply of snow peas should be ready in a couple of weeks). We fenced four of the pea beds and got one more bed of onions weeded (that's three of our four long onion beds weeded. One more bed to weed, two to mulch!)

On an exciting new marketing note - We are proud to announce a new venture with Charlie Brown Day Care of Mason City. Last September I had a brief conversation with the Daycare's Director, Liz Austin. Liz was seeking a source of fresh vegetables for their meals. While there is no organized growers coop such as she was imagining, several conversations over this past winter have resulted in a plan for One Step at a Time Gardens to supply vegetables weekly to this daycare. We are thrilled to be taking this partnership step with a service that provides daily meals for such a large group of children. (Charlie Brown serves over 350 children at three sites – two in Mason City and one in Clear Lake). And we are so pleased for Liz and her kitchen staff's commitment to serving fresh, locally grown food as a significant piece of their menu. This is one more demonstration of the growing local food system in North Iowa. This past

Tuesday was our first delivery and Tim reported that Kathy Brierly, Food Service Director, was excitedly sharing what we brought with other kitchen staff.

*Still more available from the farm...* Enclosed in this week's box you will find our **new farm brochure** and a **chicken order postcard**. We do still have shares available and invite you to share this information with a friend or colleague. Our first batch of chickens will be ready for delivery the week of June 22. After that we'll have chicken available through December.

*The farm/member partnership matters ...* That you have made a commitment to One Step at a Time Gardens matters a lot. We are committed to sustainability in many ways – from the way we farm to the important role diverse farms play in our communities to the political (with a little “p”) potential of a more connected food system. Your membership makes it possible for us to do our work. We hope our work makes it possible for you to both deepen your enjoyment of eating and discover just how farm and farm members can help shape a more sustainable food system. As I explore this general concept from a number of angles this season, I will visit the theme of *creativity*



frequently. And toward food production and creativity...If it wasn't for the creative activity of bees, we'd all be a whole lot more hungry. More on the importance of pollinators and creativity in the coming weeks.

**Contact us** at 641/495-6367 or [libland@peconet.net](mailto:libland@peconet.net) or [www.ostgardens.com](http://www.ostgardens.com)