



## Awakening from the Dark time ...

### A Connection through the Seasons

**W**hen Dec. 22, 2011 arrives (The 2011 Winter Solstice), we will have made it; we will have broken that arch of the dark sky and the pendulum will begin ever so slowly to move us back toward longer days, back toward the high season of long summer days. At Winter Solstice there returns the hope that pulls us through the next, still dark months.

Winter Solstice is a long revered passage in our annual journey through the seasons. This astronomical event that has been celebrated in cultures the world over for thousands of years reminds us of the power seasonal rhythms have to touch our lives.

Food and place provide another powerful connection to seasonal rhythms. A quick trip through our activities at and around the farm samples the pulse of natural rhythms that wind through the farm and through the seasons (starting after our Summer Shares end):

**O**ctober- fall field clean up, 3 weeks of Fall Greens Share to N. IA members

**N**ovember – Thanksgiving Share, lots of storage handling

**D**ecember – Indoor record processing and the start of planning budget, crew, share size, field size and seed order, napping, reading, resting

**J**anuary – More planning, beginning to recruit members, winter conferencing takes off. When there's snow, we get out to cross country ski, time with family too!

**F**ebruary – Lining up supplies, member recruiting, still skiing if there's snow. Biggest organic farming conference in the US in LaCrosse WI. Any time to get away before starting plants? Better go soon! Maybe the conference will have to count again ...First seeds get started by end of the month. The owls are hooting – early nesters, eggs tucked under downy feathers.

**M**arch- Lots of time at the starts table, we're mixing soil, potting up flats, celebrating first sprouts! Who will hear the first frog chorus? Have we all our members yet?



food



**A**pril – Inside seed starting has slowed, now it’s managing greenhouse space. We’re watching the slow and unpredictable release of winter ...as Spring pushes forth. Start transplanting cold hardy plants in the field, greens in the hoophouse. Onions plants arrive and we look for the perfect window to set them in the field. Tomatoes go into hoophouse this month also.



**M**ay- Planting full steam ahead – any good weather...we’ll take it!

**J**une – This is the month all activity breaks forth – deliveries start, we’re still planting, we’re tending all crops – early to late season crops, weeds demand attention, fencing needs to be put up, irrigation must be handled if our drought continues, mulching laid down, etc. etc.

But the flavor of fresh, green vegetables after the long winter’s absence is worth the wait!



**Summer Solstice** arrives! Really ? We can’t possibly be turning the corner toward shorter days already, can we?



**J**uly – Garlic is to dig right around July 4...the raspberries are coming ripe! Warm season crops take center stage by mid month. We notice the angle of the light changing while we work in the field. The heat is likely to find us. Great blue herons and other birds begin to mob up – nesting is over now the first hints of a move toward migration.

**A**ugust – Green was great in June, but can you beat a vine-ripe tomato as one of the best treats of the whole year? We’ve weathered the riskiest weather, weed pressure is slowing down, beginning to anticipate cover crop planting on fields that are finished. We feel the pressure ease a bit as we are in the home stretch of the summer’s production, but the list is still long; no lemonade and bon bons in the shade quite yet!



**S**eptember – The farm’s bounty continues all month, but nearing the end of summer weekly deliveries. First frost can come anytime now, signaling the final beginning of the end.

We’re back to where we began. These annual rhythms mark our connection – farm, food, and community. We lift up this special time of year, extending greetings and wishes for your celebrations and anticipating our continuing connection!

Sincerely,  
One Step at a Time Gardens – committed to “raising healthy food, raising hope”



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