What’s New On The Farm

We’ve got water! It was pretty funny when we finally got the irrigation system up and running Saturday evening of the holiday weekend, and the sky opened up. But we’re all really glad to have it ready for all those babies after a baking hot day! We’ve got the warm weather crops in, including squashes, tomatoes, tomatillos, eggplant and peppers, and melons will be planted tomorrow. We’re lovingly encouraging the tail end of the cool crops to make some food already - you may have noticed your bokchoi is delicious, and so did some cabbage family loving beetles, who are also getting interested in the rest of the brassicas...

No seriously, it’s hot out there

So we mentioned last week that the season really is short. We were surprised by the sudden intensity of summer-like weather, but it’s probably a new normal; last year, June saw a few days with highs in the 90s. A bit more about that - have you noticed your greens are slightly bitter? Bitter isn’t going to hurt anyone, but it probably isn’t as tasty as we or you would like. You can dunk your lettuce or other greens in cold water as soon as you get them home and leave them like that for 24 hours; that will dilute the bitter-flavored stuff the plant produces as it preps to go to seed before the sun kills it. The flavor of the kale, chard, tatsoi and bokchoi seem to be intensified and somewhat improved by the heat, so we’ll see how it goes!

Field Notes

Ruth (is on an international study abroad trip for a few weeks) The first few days at the farm have been fun and full of growth - personal as well as for the produce. So far, I’ve learned how to seed (look at the germination rate!), how to make soil, how to properly plant (it took a few tries) and what harvesting is like. A challenge that has presented for me is getting used to the mental and physical requirements of working at the farm - the process of learning what my body needs in order to be able to work energetically outside (sunscreen, water, diet, sleeping schedule). A pleasant surprise has been to be able to work with amazing ladies who care about the environment, sustainability, food nutrition, food security, and are committed to the success of the farm.

MISS U ALL!!
This past week has been another great week at the farm. We got the plastic off the hoop houses last week and yesterday we took advantage of the cloud cover for a heavy planting day, getting the pumpkin, squash, and eggplant in the ground along with other plants! Last week we planted tomatoes, tomatillos, and peppers. We also spied a deer eyeing our crops yesterday morning, so we might need to begin scheming ways to protect the plants from deer soon. Harvest days are definitely a highlight. It is so fun to see our work culminate in a beautiful box of food for our members. I am looking forward to being able to harvest plants that we planted as seeds; my involvement in the farm began this summer, so the plants we harvest now were planted by prior farm volunteers. It is fascinating to look around and imagine the work that others have put in to get the farm to where it is now, and to think about how our work will impact the farm looking to the future.

This week we are featuring, Paul, our fellow USU student and dedicated volunteer. Paul is studying Civil Engineering, is intrigued by sustainability, and has been loads of help already this season. In the following interview, we ask him a few questions on what he thinks about the farm.

Why are you interested in Organic Farming?
I've always seen labels on food, and you can do research about them, but you never exactly understand the meaning fully until you get definitive hands on experience.

What has been your favorite thing that you've done so far on the farm?
Working on the irrigation system. It's interesting seeing all the separate parts come together into a system that would see while driving by a farm.

Do you do any gardening on your own?
Yeah, I did some back at home before I came to college, and I also helped work on a campus community garden. I think working on a farm would help my gardening skills because I can see it on a large scale.

What is something interesting that you've learned on the farm while volunteering?
I learned about how necessary it is to get the sprinkler angles right due to variables like low pressure. That was one of the coolest things to learn about.

Who would you recommend volunteering at the farm to?
“Anyone who wants to learn how to grow their own food. Seeing it on a large scale operation really helps you appreciate the processes behind something on an individual scale.”
What’s In The Basket

A new Asian Cabbage to melt for a side dish, fry up with other veggies, or munch as part of a salad. Also, tangy chard and a return of basil!

Greens while they last!

Bokchoi - The bugs have excellent taste, if we do say so ourselves. A brassica that cooks up tender and flavorful

Green Lettuce (Black Seeded Simpson) - the heat is encouraging these guys to taste bitter. Dunk in a bowl of cold water for 25 hours to remove some of that flavor, or you can actually melt down lettuce like spinach and that will also remove the bitterness.

Mizuna - Back! We hope you like it, because it sure grows happily in these conditions!

Basil - They’re back! We have quite a few of these plants; as we harvest from them, they will grow exponentially- so get ready for pesto making this summer!

Spinach - Maybe our last harvest! They’re getting a little stressed in the heat, but harvesting by the leaf helps prevent bolting, so hopefully we’ll save them for a few more harvests.

In-RECIPE FOR

**Un-RECIPE FOR**

**Mizuna and Tatsoi Stir-fry**

An Un-Recipe offers guidelines to create delicious dishes based on the way ingredients, kitchen tools and cooks interact in the kitchen. Email us with questions!

**INGREDIENTS:**

- Ingredients:
  - Sauce: (Basil Lemon sauce)
  - 1/4 cup soy sauce
  - Juice from 1/2 lemon
  - Bok choy, chard, spinach, mizuna
  - 1 large onion
  - 1 sprig of basil
  - 2 large cloves garlic
  - 1 tsp vegetable oil
  - 2 tbsp vegetable oil
  - (For veg stir fry)

**DIRECTIONS:**

Instructions: 1. Prep sauce: Put sauce ingredients in a small bowl, and whisk to combine.

2. Prep vegetables: Trim and peel the onion, and cut into 1/2” thick strips. Dice garlic. Trim the root end of greens, clean in a salad spinner if dirty. Pick the basil leaves from their stems, stack them, roll into a cigar shape, and slice thinly crosswise.

3. Prep garlic: Mince garlic, and mix in small bowl with 1 tsp vegetable oil.

4. Cook the onions

5. Cook the garlic: Make a hole in the center of the pan, and add a garlic-oil mixture. Let sit for 30 seconds, or until you start to smell the garlic cooking. Stir the garlic into the onions.

6. Steam/Sautee the greens

7. Stir in the sauce