



Newsletter, August 31-September 3, 2010

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Farm News

While clipping garlic last week, we discussed greenhouse gas emissions – and although none of us are experts in this matter, we came to the conclusion that the farm operation's carbon footprint is quite small. For example, the delivery truck uses on average

12 gallons of diesel per week to bring the veggies to our sites in Delmar, Albany and Schenectady – far less than what it usually takes to bring food to our tables from across the country. The two cultivator tractors use close to 10 gallons of gas each *per growing season*, and all other tractors on the farm *combined* use around 150 gallons of diesel *per year* – which includes winter snow removal. In addition to this, we run a water pump for irrigation (about 5 gallons of fuel per rain-free growing week), and turn on the generator to supplement the off-grid solar and wind electric system when sun and wind are absent. We hope to eliminate the need for the generator when we purchase an additional solar array in the future.

Tillage of the soil also contributes to greenhouse gas emissions – the action of plowing increases the rate of decomposition of organic matter (a process which releases carbon dioxide into the atmosphere). We believe however that the rate of decomposition of organic matter on our farm is offset by the rate of organic matter creation and addition – in our annual soil tests; the 'percentage of organic matter' either stays the same or is on the increase. All things considered, we think that we are doing a reasonable good job of keeping greenhouse gas emissions on our farm at bay – bringing you organically grown fresh food with a less hefty impact on our planet's systems. And we are trying to further reduce: for example, our new flail mower, in combination with the Perfecta field cultivator we acquired this spring, make it possible to get a field ready to plant cover crops in two passes with the tractor instead of the six passes with different implements required previously.

In this week's share you'll find mesclun, garlic, squash, cilantro, fresh onions and tomatoes. We are rotating corn, green beans, and bell, sweet and hot peppers. The heirlooms are slowing down while the Red Slicers are still going strong with some plants easily reaching over 8 feet tall. As September arrives and cooler nights bring the end of some crops and the beginning of others, our greenhouses help extend the season of these heat loving plants.

The U-Pick is still overflowing with cherry tomatoes. A new planting of cilantro and dill are ready this week, along with the other herbs and cutting celery. There are still flowers including sunflowers, celosia, aster, rudebeckia and bright zinnias.

For next week we expect to harvest: potatoes, garlic, onions, tomatoes and squash. We'll rotate corn, dill, parsley, beans, all the peppers, Savoy cabbage and Swiss chard.

Your farmers,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Raymond & Sara".



Top: Buckwheat cover crop in one of our new fields improving soil quality for our 2012 plantings.
Above: on sunny days, our solar array provides all electricity needed for the farm

Cream of Grilled Tomato Soup

Melissa DelCano sent us this recipe to share for a great tomato soup – it originates from *The Best American Recipes 2003-2004*.

5 lb tomatoes
1 T French Sea Salt
1 T coarse ground black pepper
Your favorite hot sauce
1 c heavy cream (or more to taste)

Put tomatoes on a grill rack, not touching each other, and grill (or broil), turning with tongs, until skins start to turn black. Take the cores out of the tomatoes as best you can, and put the tomatoes in a soup pot, breaking them up. Add some of the salt and pepper and hot sauce and cook the tomatoes over medium heat for 20 minutes, stirring frequently. Puree the tomatoes and add the rest of the salt, pepper, and hot sauce to taste. Stir in the cream and simmer until heated through, taste to adjust the seasoning, and serve.

Corn and Bean Salad

Another recipe from Karin, one of our farm helpers – brings together what is local and in season!

4-6 ears of corn, cooked (grilled or boiled) cut off the cob
2 cups cooked beans...(fresh baby limas are the best, but any fresh shell bean or dried, cooked black beans are good too)
2 chopped tomatoes
½ red onion, chopped 2 cloves garlic, minced
¼ cup red wine vinegar ½ tsp. Dijon mustard
1 tsp sugar ½ tsp curry powder
½ cup olive oil salt and pepper to taste
¼ cup chopped fresh cilantro

Mix all the veggies in a large bowl. Combine garlic, vinegar, mustard, sugar and curry powder. Whisk in olive oil and pour over veggies. Add salt and pepper to taste. Refrigerate until cold. Toss in cilantro just before serving.



Clipping garlic (left) and graded garlic (right) – pictures by Peter Geiger

FARM VISITS – Feel free to come and visit the farm. The farm and U-pick is open to visit anytime, but on harvest days (Tuesdays and Fridays) our time is very limited – on other days we'll gladly show you around a bit. It's a great opportunity to see how we produce your vegetables, and to enjoy the scenic farm site. Bring some kitchen leftovers to feed the chickens and pigs! All the fencing on the farm is electric – please be careful.

DIRECTIONS TO THE FARM: From Altamont: Follow Rte. 146 towards Gallupville. Approximately 10 miles out of Altamont, make a right on "Larry Hill". (*) Go up for ¼ mile (there is a blue sided house on your left). Just past the blue house, you'll find Fox Creek Farm Road on your left going in the woods. Follow this road to the end. From Rt. 443: Turn on 146 in Gallupville for approximately 2 miles. Make a left on "Larry Hill". Follow directions as above (starting at (*)). (For GPS: coordinates are 42.680309,-74.225364).

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