

Cycle Farm

2017 Farm Stand Family Newsletter

for August 17 and 19, 2017

Greetings Farm Friends,



Hunting bean beetles and larvae; transplanting fall brassicas; celery seed spread out and drying down.

I brought the laptop outside to the picnic table to type up this week's newsletter as we just spotted another hummingbird! The picnic table affords me a good view of the salvia and feeders, and bumblebees on the anise mint and swallowtails on the zinnias. On second thought maybe this isn't such a great place to try and get work done...

Celery seed is out of the field and spread to dry on a huge tarp in the back yard. The scattered rain we've been getting is great for the garden, but has us rushing to cover and uncover the drying seed. Several flats of brassicas have been planted in the field, also carrots, basil and arugula. Together with Madeleine, we've been clearing beds for additional fall crops. This means broadforking a bed, and following that by hand weeding out weeds and digging through to fish out as much of the brome rhizomes as we can. Field cucumbers are trellised and fruiting. These are good pickling cukes. If you are a pickler, let us know, we'd be happy to set these aside for you. Jeremy biked in a special delivery of basil and garlic to Dough Trader Pizza Co. on Wednesday. If you get the chance, take your sweetie or yourself out for a pizza pie and let Dough Trader know you appreciate them for supporting local agriculture. And we noticed one of our rhubarb plants is under siege by an aphid infestation. This plant is also hosting over 20 lady bugs, including several amorous couples. Speaking of which, our routine summer sunset datenights, wandering the bean rows, squishing bean beetle larvae have begun.

We've been struggling with some unexpected issues in the greenhouse this season and this week has been a hard learning opportunity. Our planting of eggplant in the greenhouse got all funky up with some type of mite (spider mite?), the flowers were not setting fruit and the whole bed just looked bad. Jeremy finally went in and yanked out everything and we're currently trying to scheme up a planting to replace them. The especially sore part of this is that these were all our Long Purple eggplant, a variety we really like, a variety our friend, Greg, hunted down seed for on a trip to New Mexico just for us. Next year, we'll make sure to have these planted in a couple different beds in the greenhouse and outside, to hedge our risk. It's tough only having one opportunity a year to get it right.



A candy striped leaf hopper; best crab apple year yet; 3 sisters are doing well together.

We picked up a trailer load of straw bales from a farmer in Sturgis last night. We're grateful to have found untreated oat straw to use in our no-till beds as mulch. We could use 3x as many bales as he had, but I think we may have sweet-talked him into keeping more of his pasture un-sprayed in future plantings, since he knows he has a ready market for the clean straw bales. Spotted on the farm this week: gold finches, a little hummingbird(!), a candy striped leaf hopper, a Monarch butterfly and a praying mantis, countless earthworms, bean beetle larvae (spotted and squished), a few ripening tomatoes and a crab spider eating a native bee. The Taos blue corn is beginning to flower and we've set up a fence around the three sisters to deter the deer. By Jeremy's tally, we are up to 82 species of birds identified on the farm this year (plus another 12 he's not sure on). All that, and we had a very merry birthday celebration on the farm earlier this week, including crab apple harvest and a fancy pants tortrilla soup feast with friends.

At the farmstand this week we'll have lettuce, chard, a few bunches of beets, scallions, cucumbers, summer squash, eggplant, cabbages, ground cherries, fresh herbs and garlic, and salsa verde baskets (we tried these out last week and they were a BIG HIT!)

With big smiles, big thanks, but no long purple eggplant,
 Your farmers
 Trish and Jeremy

Best Baba Ganoush This recipe has been modified(simplified) from Seriouseat.com, we suggest using slices or spears of cucumbers to dip into this along with your wedges of pita bread.

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| 3 medium Italian eggplants (about 2 pounds total) | 1/3 cup extra-virgin olive oil, plus more for serving |
| 3 medium cloves of garlic, minced | 1/4 cup chopped fresh parsley leaves |
| 2 tablespoons juice from 1 lemon, plus more as desired | Kosher salt |
| 3 tablespoons tahini | |

Preheat a grill to medium heat and place eggplants directly over heat source. Cook, turning occasionally with tongs, until completely tender and well charred on all sides, 20-30 minutes. Wrap with foil and let rest 15 minutes. Open foil package. Working one eggplant at a time, use a sharp paring knife to slit it open lengthwise. Carefully scoop out soft flesh with a large spoon and transfer to a strainer set in a large bowl. Add garlic and lemon juice to eggplant and stir vigorously with a fork until eggplant breaks down into a rough paste. Stirring constantly and vigorously, add the tahini followed by the olive oil in a thin, steady stream. The mixture should become pale and creamy. Stir in parsley and season to taste with salt and more lemon juice if desired. Transfer to a serving bowl, drizzle with olive oil, and serve with warm pita bread or vegetables (cucumbers!) for dipping. Baba ganoush can be stored in an airtight container in the refrigerator for up to four days. Let baba ganoush warm to room temperature before serving.