



Jeremy Smith and Trish Jenkins
287 Evans Lane, Spearfish, SD 57783
605-559-FARM (3276)
cyclefarmer@gmail.com
www.cyclefarm.wordpress.com

Cycle Farm CSA Newsletter

Week 14- September 20, 2012

This week's share

- 5 lbs potatoes (Sangre, Yellow finn, and All blue)
- 4 heads garlic (Korean purple)
- 1 cucumber (lemon)
- 3/4 lb tomatillos (Plaza latina)
- 1 bunch green onions
- 5 eggplant (3 Ai qua and 2 Ping tung)
- 2 jalapeño (1 Craig's grande and 1 Czech black)
- 3 frying peppers (Jimmy Nardello)
- 2 bell peppers (Purple beauty, green bell)
- 3 lb tomatoes (1 lb mixed cherry and pear; 2 lb slicers: Aurora, Uralskiy Ranniy, Tigerella, Moongold, Paul Robeson, Wapisinicon peach, Katja, Pink Caspian)
- 2 CYCLE FARM STICKERS!



Sweet Italian frying pepper, Jimmy Nardello

Hello CSA Members,

Potatoes, Jimmy Nardellos, and stickers! Hooray!

We put out more transplants this week, which will hopefully be ready in time for the last few weeks of our CSA season. Jeremy got to spend some time with a flock of Red Crossbills in the insectary row the other day. They have been really enjoying the sunflower seeds. The hop harvest is finished, if you want to get a batch of beer going with LOCAL HOPS, let us know. We have several varieties. We started harvesting winter squash and setting them up to cure. And we're working on collecting and husking the black walnuts that have been raining down around the house this past week. The six foot trench for the water line in all filled in, ninja-style, like it was never there. And more progress has been made on the trench around the greenhouse. Uncle Eric and Aunt Marlene were here on Monday and dug away at it all afternoon - thank you! We promised to get the hammocks up by their next visit.

The thought of frost is becoming a bit more pressing. We are not entirely prepared for all that is involved with this. We certainly need to break out the row covers soon. Production has noticeably slowed down. Tomatoes are ripening slower, cucumbers are waning.

The Market in the Park is going well - if you are out on Saturday morning, we'd love to see you. We've been hauling pickling cucumbers down there; we have lots. Anybody need to put up some pickles? Please?

Also, this Saturday, September 22nd is the PRESERVATION CELEBRATION workshop at the Black Hills Milk red barn market, from 2:00-4:30PM. Come and learn the basics of food preservation. There will be local food artisans explaining how-to's on jams and jellies, waterbath pickling, drying, ferments, and sausage making. It's free and open to the public. If you have any questions about the event - ask Jeremy.

A few words about the share this week: Our yield on the potatoes was much less than we had expected. There are a lot of reasons for this. One reason is the weed pressure and impact of grass roots on the potatoes. We tried to remove the potatoes that were significantly pierced by quack grass roots. But you will undoubtedly find grass in your potatoes. Just be aware, the potatoes should be fine to eat, but probably will not store very well. Also the wonderful bright red peppers in the share this week may look a little intimidating and spicy. But rest assured, these are a sweet Italian frying pepper. So eat up.

And finally, there are these wicked cool Cycle Farm stickers. James Canfield of Binky Studios printed these out for us - hot off the press, yesterday! We hope you like them. And if you'd like more, we have lots we're trying to sell. You can collect them all. Share them with friends. Stick them on everything!

A bit about cover crops...

Cover crops are an essential part of our plan for no-till farming. In general, cover crops are used to protect the soil over winter or during periods when the ground is not planted with a market crop. Usually, these cover crops are tilled in before planting and are sometimes grown specifically for the nutrients/organic matter they add to the soil as a green manure. However, here at Cycle Farm, we are trying to develop a no-till system where we employ the cover crops not only for their nutrients and organics, but also as a mulch layer grown in place.

As beds get cleared this fall we will seed in various cover crops depending on what will be planted in the bed next year. For example, we are mid harvesting potatoes right now. Once the potatoes are out, we'll plant winter rye into these beds, which should survive the winter, continue growing in the spring and have reached a good height for making a strong mulch by the time we put squash seed/transplants into the same bed in the late spring. Here's another example: we are going to try a winter-kill with buckwheat for beds we want to plant early in the spring, like cabbage, broccoli, etc. Buckwheat is killed by cold winter temperatures and will lay down in place as a loose mulch layer. Buckwheat is a phosphorous scavenger and the brassicas are a heavy phosphorus feeders, so having this nutrient in a readily available, plant soluble form should make for happy cabbages next year.

Before planting vegetable crops next year, the cover crops will be knocked down in place to form a tight mulch layer over the bed. Transplants will be plugged into the beds. This mulch will aid in both weed suppression and moisture retention. As the cover crop mulch breaks down and decomposes over the season it will add nutrients and organic matter to the soil - which will then be available for our vegetable crops.

Especially right now, while we are in the peak of our production, it is important to remember where all this comes from. As farmers, our most important job is to build and maintain the soil so that the food it produces is nutrient-rich and delicious.

Happy eating!
Your farmers,
Trish and Jeremy



Buttercup squash curing



Red Crossbill in the insectary



Trench diggers



Rinsing potatoes