

Dear Farm Friends,

A collection of letters to Cycle Farm Share Members
and a record of a season on the farm
from April to November, 2021



April 20

Spring greetings Farm Friends,

And happy snowy day - we are so grateful for this moisture, even if it's delivered as marshmallow fluff on the fields. Already this spring, there are a number of crops seeded out in the field, our irrigation ditch (the Evans-Tonn) doesn't start flowing until early May, so this should help those peas, carrots, radishes and garlic get off to a good start. We have four rows of greens under a plastic tunnel in the field that are a few weeks away from harvest. And we have been keeping an eye on the greenhouse beds, trying to decide when there are enough greens to open up the farm stand for the season. As long as the weather this evening doesn't get a whole lot colder than expected, we are planning to open up the farm stand this upcoming Saturday, April 24th from 9-noon.

And, naturally, this decision creates quite an exciting flurry of activity on the farm: cleaning up the pack shed, cleaning harvest totes, airing out the farm stand, finding all the baskets and labels and scales, and switching our Saturday mornings from coffee with the ducklings to slightly hectic. Here we go!

It has felt like a bit of a mixed-up spring around here and the greenhouse is growing in a pattern that matches. We have two adjoining beds of kale and two beds of lettuce that even though they were planted on the very same day in late February are behaving/growing very differently. We aren't sure yet what this is going to mean for the earliest farm stands, there may be some weeks where there are not very many greens or we may just close for a week if the crops aren't at the right point to harvest. We appreciate your flexibility and, of course, we'll be keeping you posted. An early spring farm update has just (yesterday!) been posted to our blog, check it out [here](#).

At the farm stand on Saturday we plan to have; spinach, arugula, kale, scallions, radishes, eggs, garlic powder, and tea blends and hopefully bouquets of daffodils. As always our first harvests are limited, and depending on the actual amount of harvest, we may limit quantities available per share member. There should be plenty of food coming as the days get warmer, thank you for your patience and understanding.

And lastly, we are still finalizing how we will set up the farm stand this season in response to COVID. We've been tuned in to updates and guidelines from the CDC and watching state and county case numbers. It's clear that coronavirus risks are still very present and real and we are taking this to heart, prioritizing the health of our community in our decision making in continuing to follow COVID-safe protocol at the farm stand. Please remember to wear a mask and practice physical distancing.

We are looking forward to seeing all of our returning farm share members again and getting to know those of you who are new to the farm. As always please feel free to ask any questions about the farm or the farm share program, or any concerns you might have.

with gratitude and snow angels,
with gratitude for snow angels,
your farmers,
Jeremy and Trish

April 29

Greetings Farm Friends,

It's been a week of long days in the field, sunshine and much appreciated rain, weeding and preparing beds, seeding and transplanting, mostly and generally trying to stay caught up with our planting calendar. Our big

accomplishment this past week has been getting our new asparagus beds all planted(!): 150 1-year-old crowns of purple asparagus have been planted, each with a scoop of compost and mulched in with wood chips and good wishes, up in the front field by the daffodils and tulips. Assuming everything grows well and we haven't just opened an amazing all you can eat buffet for all our neighborhood voles, we will start to harvest these in three years. Get ready, spring of 2024 should be wonderful. We also transplanted out cabbage, broccolini, kale, chard, cilantro, and beets. And on Wednesday, in the greenhouse, we seeded the last of our summery rainbow of flowers - lots of zinnias, asters, cosmos, but also milk thistle, chamomile, hyssop and monarda. The full list has 26 different varieties of flowers - most of these are intended for our insect friends, for cut flowers, and also simply for farmer joy.

Animal update - The laying hens are doing well, we pulled off the walls of their mobile coop, so they are now enjoying their summer set-up with an improved view and good coop ventilation. The ducklings, now a month old, have been day ranging in a tractor near the house. They are great foragers and have been depositing the most stunningly beautiful bright emerald poop (nutrients and carbon on the soil is always exciting, but make it sparkly kelly green and it's just over the top). The adult ducks, our "really good layers" are... more aggressively amorous than we are used to and together they are producing about a dozen (delicious) eggs every three weeks. And our worms have been shuttled from the basement out to their summer lodgings in the vermicompost castle behind the garage.

We welcomed a USD student intern this week, helping us out on the farm. He is a classically trained French chef (real deal: Jacques Pépin taught him how to make an omelette) who is currently helping us pull brome rhizomes out of our field in preparation for seeding parsnips and more radishes. And we're very grateful. Maybe he can teach us how to pluck and roast a duck? or two?

Yellow-rumped warblers and vesper sparrows have just started to show up, spring migration seems to be just starting in earnest, and Jeremy is never more than a few feet from the binoculars at any given time.

This week at the farm stand we plan on having; lettuce, spinach, arugula, a few bunches of radishes, scallions, pea shoots, eggs, garlic powder, farm-grown herbal teas, and daffodil bouquets.

We look forward to seeing you on Saturday.

Cheers from the farm, big smiles,
Trish and Jeremy

May 6

Greetings Farm Friends,

This week our spring frenzy of activity has accelerated putting us right smackdab in our most comfortable feeling of being overwhelmingly behind on our to-do list and equally enthusiastic about the farm and how we get to spend our days. On Tuesday we planted out more than half of our seed potatoes (8 rows planned, though we seem to have extra seed, so it may turn into nine or ten). This may be the earliest we have ever planted this crop. And we're certainly waaay ahead of a mid-July planting we had to do a couple years ago, we'll try not to let this get to our heads. The rest of the seed potatoes should get in the ground in the next week or so. We have also been weeding some of the early greens we have started in the tunnel in preparation for harvest. In the greenhouse: the big flower bonanza we planted last week have already mostly germinated and we have seeded another lettuce succession for transplanting in late May; eggplant and ashwaganda have been potted up to await transplanting out once the danger of frost has passed. And we're on keen frost watch now - in 2020 our last frost was May 2nd, much earlier than the May 25th(ish) date we typically plan on, there was frost this morning and it looks like more is on the way next week.

The wild plums and early pear are in full bloom, and the Dolgo Crab up by the farm stand should be in full splendor this weekend. Worryingly, we aren't seeing much for pollinator activity on these blossoms. Friday is supposed to be bright and warm, hopefully this brings out abundant bees and other invertebrates, but right

now we are heartbroken to be missing our buzzing spring accompaniment. Are you all seeing little critters buzzing around blossoms where you are?

On another note, that is adjusting the dial from buzzing to honk/quack/squeek-squak, our new quacking spring accompaniment is delightful. The ducklings are fully out of the brooder and are moving/mowing between the front grape rows. We would suggest planning some extra time when you are picking up vegetables this week to walk back along the driveway to see and feed them some dandelion greens. Our first batch of chicks (Freedom Rangers, meat birds) for the summer are scheduled to arrive at the end of next week and Jeremy just finished cleaning out the slop of bedding from the ducks, so we're one step closer to being ready for these little ones. Other bird news: spring migration has Jeremy doing all the farm chores with a pair of binoculars around his neck or within arms reach.

We are preparing for a farm tour this weekend with the Wotakuye Mutual Aid Society and Dakota Rural Action. We're also looking forward to hosting our usual (YEA!) spring farm tour for share members in early June, we will keep you posted as we work out details.

This week at the farm stand we'll have: lettuce, radishes, kale, spinach, ARUGULA(!), pea shoots, scallions, a stir-fry greens mix(!!), eggs, garlic powder, tea, and fresh cut flower bouquets. The farmstand is open on Saturday mornings from 9am to noon.

Wishing you all a wonderful weekend and wishing special love to all the mothers. Happy Day, we love you, Moms. We hope to see you Saturday.

Seedlings and sunblock,
and raincoats,
your farmers,
Jeremy and Trish

May 13

Hello Farm Friends,

We have been enjoying the weather this week, it seems to mirror our to-do list: a little bit of this task and a bit of the next, then oh dear, quick, do this thing, but the sky never stays put long enough to sustain any given project for too long. We've been continuing to pull brome rhizomes and prepare beds for planting, and we have just one last variety of potato to plant. This year we are growing Yukon Gold, Huckleberry Gold (these are the low glycemic variety), French Fingerling, Russian Bananas, Dark Red Norlands, and Purple Vikings. Parsnips have also been seeded - usually we plant rows of quick-growing radishes (2-3 days) alongside the parsnips to act as row markers for the long-to-germinate parsnip (2-3ish weeks) seeds, however this year we are already seeing a number of flea beetles, which love to put little holes in our spicy greens (ie mustards and arugula) as well as eat just-germinated radishes. During spells of rain, Trish has been potting up seedlings, so many seedlings, in the greenhouse and listening in on fascinating conversations, <https://emergencemagazine.org/interview/finding-the-mother-tree/>. We are shuttling starts outside to harden off before transplanting (and to make way for new seed flats in their stead). And we are just about to clear out some of the spring greens greenhouse beds to make room for some summer crops, including ginger(!) which is starting to get fiesty about still being in seed flats of coir. You can help us in this effort by picking up a bunch of scallions or two this weekend at the farmstand. (;

The young ducks are now day-ranging in a fenced area around the grapes, they are tucked into the tractor at night. We also upgraded their little mermaid paddling pool to more of a luxury resort-style spa set up. We haven't gone so far as to provide hot rock therapy, fresh towels, or eucalyptus oil diffusers, but there are plenty of slugs and so far there have been no complaints to management. The hens are doing well; with some

supportive coaching from two trusted bird biologist friends, we just learned how to clip a chicken wing to prevent her from flying over the six-foot fence to get into the vegetable beds.. And if we can get our act together, find the right time, and harness all available gumption, the three RGLs (really good layers) will be culled down to two - with two drakes, the ladybird is getting harassed beyond comfort.

Saturday's farm tour was such a fun chance to connect with other local growers and beginning gardeners, it was a treat and wholly inspiring to get to be included on the tour and a part of the dreaming and scheming of new community food resiliency and garden projects in the hills area. And it was also a gentle and generous group to be with as we re-acquaint ourselves with how to engage with real life people again, post vaccination. Bird highlights around the farm this week include flycatchers, yellow warblers, a Harris' sparrow, a catbird, the first Ferruginous Hawk we've seen on the farm yet!, a pine siskin, cowbirds, and chickadeedeedees.

Our harvest list for tomorrow - for the farm stand on Saturday morning - includes spinach, arugula, lettuce, radishes, rhubarb, bok choy, scallions, a spicy spring greens/stir-fry mix and spring turnips. We'll also have heaps of eggs, tulip bouquets, herbal teas (these blends are made with all farm-grown herbs), and garlic powder.

All the best,
your farmers,
Trish and Jeremy

May 20

Hello Farm Friends,

The spring rush of activity has us feeling mighty productive but also mighty tired at the end of the day. Last weekend we replaced a few of our greenhouse polycarbonate panels that had been damaged by the large hail last summer. Once these were fixed we were able to roll out shade cloth on the roof just in time for the 80 degree weather. Jeremy made a down and back quick trip to the Scottsbluff, Nebraska area to pick up a ton of chicken feed in preparation for a batch of fifty chicks that should arrive Friday morning. The brooder is already all set up and ready for them.

Part of our productive feeling is having the extra hands of Taylor (our student work study), and as of today our good friend Tom who has helped out on the farm the last few years. With these extra hands we have weeded a number of fields for transplants/seeding. A lettuce succession finally made it out into the field this morning, the potatoes have all been planted and this evening we seeded 12 of 16 varieties of winter squash for the year, And we transplanted out a variety of squash that we experimented with last year, a Styrian Hulless-seeded Pumpkin. Imagine a lovely Jack-o-lantern type pumpkin full of pepitas.

The ducklings in the front yard are starting to wake up with hungry quacking at a little before 5AM, which undoubtedly has our neighbors overjoyed. They may have to be moved back to the orchard, or, they are at the first opportune window of molt to have a somewhat easy time plucking them, if we don't slaughter this weekend we will have to wait 7 more weeks for their next molt cycle. This wait is pretty likely because there is still a lot of mowing and fertilizing we want them to do.

In other bird news, spring migration has slowed down from last week's peak of activity (42 species on farm), but we did have a male Mourning Warbler foraging in the spruce trees this morning. Opposite of the birds, bees and other pollinators are on flowers and flying around in greater abundance than last week, but still in a much diminished quantity from previous years, We are perhaps missing these important farm workers more acutely today, World Bee Day.

At the farm stand this week we plan on having; lettuce, spinach, arugula, stir-fry mix, bok choy, kale, radishes, spring turnips, scallions, rhubarb, eggs, tea blends, garlic powder, pea shoots and a few bouquets.

With large smiles and greens in our teeth,
Your farmers,
Jeremy and Trish

May 27

Hello Farm Friends,

Bindweed and false buckwheat! But Johnny Jump Ups too! We've been in all directions, go go go, and don't know where the week has gone. How is it Thursday again already? Time for another late night love note from the farm.

This week we have been celebrating having our regular farm helper, Tom, back on the farm with us in the mornings. He's just completed his first year at university, studying philosophy and religion, et al, and, as such, he has our full attention. We'll both be trying to glean as much higher learning, reading suggestions, and new ideas from him while he is here this summer. Jeremy's Latin vocabulary has already tripled.

The greenhouse is continuing it's transition from spring greens to summer fruits, the generous rain storms this week have given us plenty of opportunity to spend time working under cover, potting up, weeding, flipping beds. Next to get ready are beds for peppers and cucumbers with almond agaricus mushrooms as an understory. The hold-up on the mushroom beds is sourcing material to construct the raised beds, we're currently mid careful deliberation considering the price of lumber these days.

Weeding and bed prep has continued out in the fields: celery, celeriac, fennel, and onions were transplanted out. We had been mentally considering on the night of the 25th as being our potential last frost, we haven't put out many of our tender summer crops yet, so we're not too-too concerned about tonight's threatening low temperatures.

We butchered the meat ducks on Tuesday. It was a good and thoughtful morning, at an extraspecially relaxed pace that was encouraged by the fact that the ducks were much trickier/time consuming to pluck than chickens. Usually we don't have folding chairs set up as a part of butcher days, but we needed three of them this time. We still do have four ducks to help keep things in the back run hydrated.. and fertilized.

The baby chicks we picked up last Friday are doing well, eating and drinking and running in short little bursts across the brooder. Then back again. With ever so much and increasingly more peeping.

Bird report: on Monday we were invited by good friends to join them for a quick picnic dinner near Beulah, WY. The weather was fine, dinner was delicious, companionship tops, but the *real reason* we were able to justify a May evening away from the farm was *a rookery full of baby herons(!)* and a late enough spring that the trees weren't leafed out yet - so all the activity way up in the nests was still very visible - including the part when the racoon climbed up there (!!) Thank you, friends!

And, lastly, a quick Covid precautions/practices update. We are now both now fully vaccinated. While we have been joyfully reconnecting with vaccinated friends and family in small groups, because the farm stand serves a wider segment of the community, we are planning on still wearing masks on Saturday mornings. A number of our share members have expressed similar sentiments for themselves and their families and we are more than happy to mask up in support and for the health of our community. If you are vaccinated or otherwise comfortable with gathering at the farm stand, please come however you are most comfortable. We have hand sanitizer available for customers as well as a hand washing station. And please continue to give us feedback regarding how to make the farmstand a safe yet still welcoming space.

This week we plan on harvesting lettuce, arugula, spinach, kale, bok choy, stir-fry mix, radishes, spring turnips, pea shoots, green garlic, and scallions. We'll also have eggs, herbal teas (blends made with all farm-grown ingredients), garlic powder, flower bouquets, and fresh herbs too (the herbs may depend on how scattered and running behind we are on Saturday morning, but if there is something you're curious about, please just ask and hopefully we can pull it together for you).

Thank you!
All the best,
Trish and Jeremy

P.S. If you are unfamiliar with green garlic - it's tender, young garlic that is edible top to bottom. You can use it in any recipe as you would garlic cloves or scallions, it tends to be a bit more mild than typical clove garlic. Some ideas for green garlic in your kitchen: omelettes or savory pancakes, stir fry or miso soup, pasta sauce (sautéed grn grlc + evoo + pasta + parm = reallyreallygood), roasted or grilled green garlic, puréed with herbs or greens into a pesto or chimichurri, or dried into green garlic powder and put up for later use.

June 4

Hello farm friends,
Whew.

In no particular order, and certainly not exhaustive, but still exhausting, what we've been up to this week: prepping new beds and many, many wheelbarrow-loads of compost and straw bales out to beds, we got the frames up for the new greenhouse beds (recycled lumber!), a big push of seeding and transplanting out to the field, we started hauling out tomatoes, peppers and eggplant (ratatouille, get ready), and we started some new successions in soil blocks in the greenhouse. We're flipping beds from spring greens over to summer fruity crops, which means there will be a lull in greens to harvest for the farm stand here shortly. The pea trellises are (mostly) up, the sparrows have been dining heartily on our pea plants, hopefully these new obstructions to their easy flight paths will slow down the grazing. These hot days have us fussing with and fixing irrigation, tending to hot animals, and panicking over a broken greenhouse fan – ok, in truth, I'm panicking. Jeremy's father is seeing if he can fix it (if anyone can, he can). Jeremy is headed out to buy a new one.

The garlic looks SO GOOD. The new asparagus planting is sending up wispy, tender, slender purple paint brushes. The grackles are seemingly taking great joy in depositing fecal sacs from their nests onto the roof of the greenhouse – not a problem, but a really strange thing, we have no explanations, but many speculations, if you have insights on grackle housekeeping/parenting habits, we'd love to hear them. Meantime we should consider harvesting grackle guano, it looks like the rocky bluffs of the Chincha Islands up there. Baby bunbuns are out and about en masse and everywhere. Flea beetles are too, you'll see the arugula is starting to get munched. While he's washing eggs, Jeremy has taken to streaming a Guatemalan radio station that has an especially skilled DJ who mixes long forgotten hits from the 80's and 90's. This led to an impromptu and altogether too brief dance party to the Backstreet Boys' Everybody; may have been the highlight of the week. No eggs were harmed in the washing/dance party. The littlest birds, now just over two weeks old, are getting their wing feathers in. The ducks' community pool now has a splash pad (a sprinkler). We're working on names for the two white ducks - something colorful, but appropriate enough to share with our young farm friends. And, in the evenings, we've been seeing bats.

At the farm stand tomorrow we'll have lettuce, spinach, arugula, a fun mix of stir fry greens, mustard greens, kale, spring turnips, pea shoots, eggs, rhubarb, green onions (just like scallions), and fresh herbs (salad burnet – tastes like cucumber, chives, mint, oregano, and parsley).

From the shade,
with duck sprinklers,
Your farmers,
Trish and Jeremy

June 11

Hello farm friends,

What a welcome respite today from the heat these last couple weeks; after working through 97 degrees, 75 feels *so dang comfortable*. We've been making the most of our early mornings and late evenings for weeding and transplanting. Some evening work is done by headlamp with the company of June bugs bzzing into the light that's perched just between and over our eyeballs, this is a real treat, as you can imagine. (Jeremy says, "'a real treat'? It's a real delight.")

Peas are climbing and beginning to flower, potatoes are up, winter squash cotyledons are spreading open, no scapes on the garlic just yet, but the Music (our favorite variety of garlic) is beginning to show signs of scaping. The rainbow chard are just starting to get big enough to harvest. Taylor helped us cut and haul out a bunch of yellow dock from our old chicken run which is now a weedy mess and Tom planted three beds of Shintokiwa cucumbers in the greenhouse, two of those beds have also been inoculated with Almond Agaricus mushroom spawn. We took a bike-load of spinach to Dough Trader Pizza and we're looking forward to seeing what sort of magic they make with it. And, related, word is: rhubarb ice cream is on the flavor board at Leones' Creamery. We put up a quick farm update [on the website](#). Much of this is a repeat from last week's newsletter, but we've included photos(!), so check it out when you have just a minute. The catmint, peonies, and irises are in full bloom and it seems all around the farm the nestlings are all now fledglings.

As much of a challenge the heat has been for us, there are many others around here who are totally digging this: the garter snakes are happy, tomatoes and eggplant are stoked, and the peppers are practically coruscating.

At the farm stand tomorrow, we'll have spinach and kale, bunches of spicy mustard greens and bags of komatsuna (very similar to bok choy), lettuce (limited), spring turnips, pea shoots and rhubarb, eggs, and a variety of fresh herbs (including tarragon, mint, oregano, chives, parsley).

If you're not quite sure what to do with mustard greens, here's an idea: a pretty routine lunch for us these days has been mustard greens and komatsuna chopped finely, tossed with sesame oil and/or miso over a bed of cold soba noodles, and dressed with scallions, pea shoots, cilantro, chives, red pepper flakes, whatever else happens to be crowding the counter or fridge. And here are [a few more ideas](#),

With rainbows and lightning,
Your farmers,
Trish and Jeremy

June 18

Hello Farm Friends,

Here we are! Here we go!

Earlier this week, we moved the little birds out to a small tractor – not yet fully out to the orchard, just a little closer where we can keep an eye on them. As it turns out, their brooder space is easier to heat on cold days than it is to keep cool on hot days, and they are now far more comfortable in the shade of the apples and spruce trees on grass. Greenhouse cucumber trellising is up – this is especially exciting as we're trying out a new style of trellising this year, they are homemade using a considerable amount, but not all, of our massive collection of old straw bale twine (hooray!). They are a little bit drift net and a little bit weird 1960's macrame wall hanging.

In the field, we got a number of additional beds planted: more tomatoes out, basil (which almost immediately started getting munched on – grasshoppers? slugs?), also tomatillos, ground cherries, more cucumbers, onions, and lots more flowers. We are spending some good, quality time with bindweed and by the look of our peppers, we have no end in sight to this. Tom has been an enormous help with this untangling process – if we have cabbage this season, it will be in large part due to Tom's attentions.

And – most fun of all – we had a chance to host a couple of tours this week. One was with the beginning farmer interns at the Sicangu CDC Food Sovereignty Initiative's Three Sisters Garden in Mission and the South Dakota Farm Beginnings participants. It felt like such a seasonally out-of-sync treat to get to catch up with FSI farmer friends, hear how the garden is going and their market, and to meet and learn about the interests of the Farm Beginnings crew – all in the middle of June, a bunch of farmers *hanging out* in **June!**? Whaaat?! The second tour this week was with a day care group, a class of 5 wee, young people who were wildly interested in, curious about absolutely everything. Having a chance to see the farm through someone else's eyes - especially when said someone is about 3 feet tall – it's all just SO WONDEROUS. Duck feet. Bee pollen. Solar panels. A chicken plucker. Climbing fences. Spiders and roly polys. A skin shed from a snake – and there are scales where her eyeballs were. Pulling the seed heads off of grass stems. Flowers you can EAT.

Ohmagoodness. (Tom assures us that it's pretty wonderful from 6' too).

At the farm stand tomorrow we'll have spinach, komatsuna (similar to bok choy), mustard greens, kale, fresh herbs (mint, parsley, oregano, chives, cilantro, dill), the very first of the garlic scapes (YES!!!), rainbow chard, rhubarb, and beets (w. really great greens) and eggs.

Here's a bit of background on garlic scapes along with some good ideas, <https://cyclefarmkitchen.wordpress.com/2015/04/08/garlic-scapes/>. And if you're looking for a way to use up beet greens/chard, let me tell you about lunch this afternoon: Jeremy made a pot of linguini and topped it with a whole heaping bunch of julienned (sliced thinly) beet greens and swiss chard tossed with olive oil and lemon juice and salt, and we decorated it with parsley and nutritional yeast (it's a handy substitute when you -gasp!- don't have Parm in the house). The greens cooked down only just the perfect amount with the hot pasta noodles, still plenty of great crunch. So dang easy. And so dang good. This would also be good with grilled fish or rice, if you're not into pasta. Here are just a few more ideas, <https://cyclefarmkitchen.wordpress.com/2015/04/09/chard/>.

After the farm stand tomorrow we are looking forward to celebrating the first Juneteenth Federal Holiday by trellising pole beans and checking out "We Are Each Other's Harvest" by [Natalie Baszile](#) which just arrived in the mail. And next weekend MakeSPACE is coordinating a Pride Ride, check out more information [here](#)

With ladybug larvae and lacewing eggs,

Your farmers,

Trish and Jeremy

June 25

Hello farm friends,

Huzzah for rain, for sugar snap peas and Long Purple eggplant flowers! (ok, ok. One eggplant with one flower, but STILL - it's a sign of what's to come and it's such a stunning flower AND these are grown from our own saved seed!). Early this week Tom helped us in the tunnel rescue a bed of peppers from bind weed. What a mess. It seems bind weed is not in one itty bit set back by the hot and dry we've been experiencing of late. Lots of weeding, still clearing out spring greens beds, trellising peppers and tomatoes in the greenhouse, the catalpa tree has been in full and glorious bloom, the snap dragons are just beginning to bud. The young birds have been moved out to the orchard where they are tending to our grasshoppers and fertilizing. Also on the farm this week: Tom spotted a rather grizzled and weathered monarch butterfly visiting a milkweed flower,

we found about 400 thousand blister beetles in the tunnel spinach bed, and pert near that many ladybugs in the komatsuna bed next door. And many, many lacewing eggs, perhaps the most magical of all the most magical faerie sparkle dust we get to spend our days with: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0zECnVZyYDI>. Oh yes! And a new batch of baby Freedom Ranger chicks arrived yesterday, they are poofy as can be and doing well.

At the farm stand tomorrow we'll have kale, rainbow chard, garlic scapes, rhubarb, fresh cut herbs, beets, snow peas and snap peas (!!), pea shoots, and eggs. Our plan right now is to start our Thursday evening markets, 4-6PM next week, on Thursday, 7/1. Just as a reminder, we are now over two months, or 1/3 of the way through our planned season. We'll send out balance notices at some point here, but in the meantime, if you have any questions about your credit balance at the farmstand, just ask.

Thanks all, we look forward to seeing you at the farmstand.

Your farmers, staying hydrated,

Trish and Jeremy

June 30

Greetings farm friends!

Ok, it's been a short week since our last farm update email on Friday, here are the highlights: the pastured chickens are moving about through the orchard and are growing so well. We're needing to do some construction/reconstruction on the other two tractors we have in order to make room to split the flock. Struggles with rabbits and, now, deer are ongoing. Onset of peas means we're now harvesting every other day. Weeding continues, only now we are accompanied by monarchs, red admirals, a viceroy too. We did get another succession of scallions out to the field, along with leeks, and another round of beets. The ducks are still, always a delight and provide ample distraction with splishy-splashy entertainment. The chickens are molting and look bedraggled, but they're still laying well and we're grateful for the impact they are having on the smooth brome, they seem to be setting it back so that we can hopefully establish a more diverse pasture. Also, last night Jeremy presented at a talk hosted by the McGuigan family on their old dairy turned The McGuigan Farm Experience, it was a thoughtful conversation with other producers about local food systems. If you are looking for a good place to take young ones who are interested in farm animals, check out The McGuigan Farm Experience. Their next campfire talk (in late July) will be about the history of the irrigation ditch network here in the valley.

And a farm stand COVID update: we've been watching the case rates in Lawrence County and it looks like the numbers are low (YEAH!), in light of this and vaccinations, with gratitude and glee, we are dropping our masks. Having said that, if you would prefer that we wear a mask: no problem! We will have our masks on hand at the farm stand, so if we see you approaching with a mask on, we will happily slip ours on. As always, if you have any concerns regarding this – or anything else, please let us know.

This week we plan to harvest: garlic scapes, kale, rainbow chard, beets, snow peas (the flat ones), snap peas (round, eat the whole thing) and shelling peas (remove the pod, oh my how delicious), pea shoots, rhubarb, herbs, and eggs

Hope this note finds you well.

All the best from the farm,

Trish and Jeremy

PS. We heard from a number of people who really enjoyed last week's video clip about Lacewing eggs. I am refraining from sending you a clip of the insect du jour (du semaine?) the three lined potato beetle larvae.

Ugh. As celestial and mystical and sparkly magic the lacewings are – well, these larvae, please imagine the absolute opposite. Thick, lumpy, and covered in their own feces (really, truly. Poop for camouflage). And they defoliate tomatillo plants. If you let them. So I've been out squishing larvae (and eggs and adults) and it's SO GROSS. So gross, I'll spare you and your Youtube algorithms, and not send along a video.

July 7

Hello Farm Friends,

.75" of rain! What a precious gift for a summer evening. Hopefully you all also had a nice soaking. We went out right after this evening storm and couldn't find any spots with standing water, hooray for good soil health infiltrating all of that moisture. The only downside to the storm we have seen so far is that a few of our sunflowers blew over and the most beautiful planting of snapdragons you ever did see is now a bit mused up. We had trellised our tomatoes a few days ago so they are all still looking good and upright, and there are even some fruits forming on some of them. We have been pulling out some of the sharp-spined weeds this week before they go to seed, sow thistle and prickly lettuce. We haven't quite made it around to pulling out the Canada thistle, the extra bit of soil moisture should make that an easier and more effective job.

The Hameau de les Canards (aka Duck Hut) was put up onto short blocks this week to better improve ventilation on these hot days, almost immediately the ducks were figuring out how to get underneath, which meant making a mesh skirting to keep them out so that we don't have to look for eggs under there each evening. Both batches of chicks are doing well and our laying flock is working its way through molting. With the molt and the heat we have been pleasantly surprised by the number of eggs we are getting each day. Pea harvest is now the most time consuming of tasks on the farm, three hours of picking three days a week. It looks like they will be tapering off before the zucchini and pole beans start clambering for more attention. The arugula seed crop is almost ready for cutting and curing, we plan on seeding in some fall carrots as soon as it is out of the way.

We added an extra layer to a section of fence where we thought a deer was getting in. And even though we haven't trapped any yet the rabbit pressure is decreasing, we may get a harvest of lettuce this summer after all.

The last two years we have been keeping a list of flowering plants on the farm and when they start blooming, this year's list is up to 125 species and we know we have missed at least two dozen plants so far. There have been a number of surprising new plants on the farm this year, things we haven't seen before and don't really have an explanation for how they ended up in our field. The most outlandish of these is a lone [strawberry spinach](#) plant in our tunnel.

This week we plan on harvesting; rainbow chard, kale, purslane (a fun delicious "weed") beets, snow peas, snap peas, shelling peas, pea shoots, garlic scapes, herbs, eggs, and if the we get everything else picked before it is too hot we will have some [quelites](#) or wild spinach.

With gratitude dripping from our hat brims,
your farmers,
Jeremy and Trish

July 14

Greetings farm friends,

Last week we were feeling mighty grateful for three quarters of an inch of rain, as you might imagine the almost two inches we received last night has us positively effervescent. Big sighs of relief for the grasses and shrubs that are out of reach of our irrigation drip tape, emitters, and hoses. Hopefully we will get a bit more rain over the next few weeks to help out the ranchers in the area who are feeding livestock on pasture, and working on growing forage and hay for this winter.

This week seems to have flown by and, as we sit down to put together this email, it feels like we haven't actually done anything, which may just mean that we are getting into the rhythm (slipping into a timewarpy worm hole?) of weeding and picking peas. We're mid-maintenance: tending to animals, trellising plants, transplanting successions, harvesting, chasing away deer & rabbits, keeping all this "suspect edifice upright in air" (do you know the poem, Atlas, by UA Fanthorpe? it's a good one). Aside from seemingly endless pea picking, bindweed detangling, & thistle pulling, we have been harvesting and drying herbs for tea blends and flowers for dying projects. And we've started processing garlic scapes into scape powder which has the whole house smelling terrific and our eyes a bit weepy.

On Sunday morning, we cut our arugula seed crop down and laid everything out on a tarp in the tunnel to fully mature and dry. One of our goals with the farm is to start growing regionally adapted seed to make available for other local growers and home gardeners. We have played around in the past with a number of varieties of other seeds, but this arugula is perhaps our biggest, most beautiful, seed crop harvest. We will let it dry down for a little while before dancing on the seed pods to release the seed, Then we'll winnow and sieve the chaff from the seed. Finally, we'll do some germination tests, and if those come out looking good, we will package up the seed for sale next spring. It should be mentioned that all this depends upon the carrying capacity of the stomachs of two goldfinches who are currently lurking around the tunnel and have clearly taken a fancy to arugula seed.

The back chickens are moving through a part of the orchard with uneven ground, which means that every once in a while, when we go out to check on their water, we find a few free roaming birds that snuck out of a low spot. To this point, we haven't had any run-ins with predators (owls, hawks, enthusiastic neighbor dogs) and they have all been easy to reunite with their friends in the tractors, as they say: birds of a feather...

This week at the farm stand we plan on having: kale, rainbow chard, cabbage, beets, snow and snap peas, pea shoots, garlic scapes, purslane, fresh herbs, eggs, and a few flower bouquets.

We hope you all are doing well, enjoying the rain, and we hope to see you at the farmstand soon.

With soggy pant cuffs, muddy fingers,
and big smiles,
Jeremy and Trish

July 21

Good afternoon Farm Friends,

We are tucked inside, out of the sun and heat - there is a big list of inside and in the shade to-dos, so we're still keeping busy. On Sunday, Trish ground and packaged the first of this year's garlic scape powder, and when going to put it away discovered a box with a few more bags of our most recent batch of garlic powder (horraaY!). There have been many recent requests and we are happy to say we will have both of these available at the farm stand this week.

We also started harvesting this year's garlic crop - just the soft necks at this point. We're still working on timing the dried flower bloom time with garlic harvest. We set up and spread out in the packshed last night: I cleaned garlic heads while Trish made some beautiful garlic braids, incorporating colorful flowers. The braids will hang to cure and be available later this fall at the farmstand. In the field, our garlic is planted in

alternating beds with winter squash. Ideally, the way this works is that we harvest our garlic crop just as the squash are starting to send out their runners. This year the squash are doing pretty well, ahead of schedule, and have already sent out a fair number of vines across the beds, making garlic harvest and foot placement a little bit delicate.

On Tuesday morning we started working on remapping fruit tree varieties in our orchard with a young farm friend, talented artist, and pea shoot glutton, Rosalee. We're looking forward to sharing the completed map later this summer. In other fruit related news the chokecherries have started darkening. No sign of veraison yet on the grapes, but that should be happening soon as well.

Although this may be a surprise to some folks who aren't paying particular attention, and certainly to us on occasion, the farm is not an ever-flowing fountain of abundance and joy. Late last week we had what we think was a raccoon (or a few?) get into our chicken tractor mid morning. We lost 45 chickens, all but one of the meat birds we were intending to butcher and sell in early August. We've lost birds before: weak young chicks to just being weak and young, to inexplicable and explicable illness, to hawks and neighbor dogs - but never this many, never before in such a violent, wasteful, senseless way. And with this comes a whole storm of emotions, pushed mainly by a big front of sad. We've set out a live trap and haven't seen any raccoon sign since, but are trying to figure out what we need to do to protect our next batch of fifty birds that should be heading out to the orchard this weekend. If anyone wants to visit on death and dying, the fragility of our local food system, low-stress, humane livestock handling and the true cost of meat, the healing power of poetry, come join us for dinner(or weeding or garlic braiding) sometime, this is (mostly)what we're talking about these days.

When asked, "But those dark, deadly, devastating ways, how do you bear them, suffer them?", Rilke answered, "I praise." So here we go, all of us!, come to the farm and join us for our annual mid-summer's Moth Party this Friday, July 23rd. Each summer, we host this as part of [National Moth Week](#) with the purpose of celebrating the moths and other invertebrates that we share this space with. On Friday evening, starting at 8:30PM, we will have sheets all lit up, all the bug ID books out, and treats to nibble on while we wait to see who else decides to show up. We will have some farm-grown herbal iced tea available, please feel free to bring other beverages, if you are so inclined ;), and your macro lens, loupe, etc.

This week at the farm stand we plan on having zucchini(!), basil, cabbage, beets, snow peas, snap peas, scallions, garlic scapes, chard, kale, pea shoots, eggs, herbs, and garlic/scape powders.

With heaps of praise for birds and bugs,
for life and death -
Your farmers,
Jeremy and Trish

P.S. A group of raccoons is called a "gaze"; this seems perhaps too polite. Gawk seems more like it. Or maybe a leer.

July 28

Hello Farm Friends,

This week we have been taking a lot of shady breaks and drinking plenty of ice water. And we still managed to get quite a bit of work done. We repaired and reinforced the chicken tractors and yesterday moved our second batch of meat chickens out to the orchard. Two more varieties of garlic are harvested and we finished

braiding this year's softneck garlic. We pulled out the lettuce that was so delighting the rabbits and have transplanted out another succession that we are trying to keep their cute little noses away from. And on Tuesday morning, Jeremy and Tom were able to walk down the road to [Fretless Farm](#) for a little bit of neighboring; helping to put together part of a tunnel structure for shade cloth in the summer and plastic in the winter. It feels good to be part of such a neat community of growers in the area.

Last Friday we hosted our first on farm event in over a year. The Moth Party was a success, though it may have been the first time we had more moth watchers than moths. Fortunately, there were many other invertebrates that showed up to mesmerize us. If you missed it, don't worry, we will probably host another in a few weeks (likely August 8th, but that's not set yet).

And get out your zucchini recipes; zucchini butter, relish, bread, pasta. Usually the plants start producing slowly but this year it seems to be all at once. We are harvesting every other day and getting about 60 pounds each harvest, so there is no need to be bashful.

This week we plan on having; kale, chard, cabbage, beets, carrots, zucchini, the first eggplant, the first garlic, scapes, peas, basil, purslane, herbs, pea shoots, eggs, and on Saturday morning some flower bouquets.

We hope you are staying comfortable and hydrated,

Your farmers,

Jeremy and Trish

August 4

Hello Farm Friends,

Happy August greetings from the farm! We've been in harvest mode a good deal this past week, still the regular peas and zucchinis, and a whole lot of garlic. We have harvested six of the eight rows we have planted, all that is left is two rows of Music. The other rows are mostly looking good, Music is typically our favorite variety (tastes good and the large cloves are just SO easy to use in the kitchen), so we are looking forward to getting these dug up. We have also started in on the chokecherries - the fruit look beautiful, dark red-black and glossy, and it feels like such a gift to have something to harvest that is not only in the shade, but also has us able to pick fruit while standing up with straight backs. We are sharing this year's harvest with friends who are making medicine (good for lungs and respiratory issues) or food for their relatives and as such we won't have these available at the farm stand this year. In addition to our snowballing vegetable harvest schedule, we have been continuing to pick flowers for dyeing this fall.

Earlier this week, we picked up a load of fresh horse manure from a generous neighbor - two generous neighbors. The horses' names are Chester and Jackie. (; We collect a load of manure each year when it's time to flip our compost. The manure gets spread in layers between our old, partially finished farm-compost - like a fancy, steamy, heaping lasagna. A feast for a billion microbes. In the fall, just before everything freezes, we will sieve finished compost from this pile to set aside and use in our earliest spring potting mix. The rest of this pile will sit until next spring when we will apply it to some of our vegetable beds.

Also this week our amazing orchard cartographer, Rose, came back by to finish up the orchard map we started a few weeks ago. We're so appreciative of Rose's help in our arboreal record keeping. The young chicks in the orchard are doing well and although they seemed uninterested in the mapping work being done nearby, certainly they are pleased to have a better understanding of who all (what variety of apple/pear/apricot/cherry/plum) they are helping to fertilize.

We spent a hot afternoon cleaning up the farm-grown scallion and arugula seed and starting some germination tests. Our germination tests on the arugula look great and our friend Jared, with Budding Moon

Farm, is planning on doing a side-by-side trial with our seed and his standard commercial variety. We are eager to see how things grow.

And lastly, the farm these days is positively effervescent with little live things; grosbeaks, catbirds, goldfinches, eye-spotted ladybugs, big yellow garden spiders, praying mantises, ambush bugs, and mating pairs of monarchs.

This week at the farm stand we plan on having chard, kale, cabbage, scallions, the very last of the scapes (now's a good time to put up some scape pickles!), garlic, zucchini and summer squash, beets, carrots, tomatillos, eggplant, peas, pea shoots, herbs, eggs, and, on Saturday, some super pretty flower bouquets.

We had been intending to send out remaining farm stand credit emails this week, but that slipped away from us. If you are curious about your balance, please feel free to ask us at the farm stand or we should be able to get those emails out next week.

Thanks all!

Your farmers,
Jeremy and Trish

August 11

Hello Farm friends,

Tomatoes are ripening, peppers are setting loads of fruit, cucumbers are coming on strong, and our heavy, frequent zucchini harvest continues. The broccolini is suffering from encroachment from eager sunflowers, the peppers are newly uncovered from bindweed, the cabbages and celery are freshly weeded, we spent Sunday morning picking and jenga-ing drying racks for tea herbs (lemon balm, beebalm, anise mint and nettles).

Fall migration is kicking into gear, as evidenced by the return of the binoculars to Jeremy's daily chore uniform. Also as regards birds: the Freedom Rangers in the orchard are doing great; there is a bunch of neat new diversity in the vegetation back there – much of which looks like it has come in with the chicken feed mix. Our pastured birds get a supplemental certified organic grain mix that comes from a farm in Nebraska, the mix include flax, sunflower, and an as yet still unidentified weedy looking plant, which we find now growing in the wake of our chicken tractors. We also moved the coop for our laying hens to fresh forage, mostly grass and grapes and plums. Moving the coop went WAAAY easier than (Trish) expected, many big thanks to help from Taylor and Tom. Moving the coop involves several big cinderblocks, muscling the frame up corner by corner, mounting two rather rickety cart wheels to the center of the long edge posts, and balancing & rolling the whole lot over relic irrigation ditches and grounded grapevines. No eggs were harmed in the moving process, nine birds even made the move perched in the nesting boxes (“northbound express bus line, tickets please!”), and everyone seems to be enjoying the new forage. The area where the hens had been is well worked, well fertilized, and now seeded with a summer cover crop mix. Lastly, the white layer ducks just started laying! Let the daily egg hunt commence. Did you know? - ducks don't lay in nesting boxes like chickens. They lay them any old place they feel like. And then they use their precious, sweet bills to tenderly tuck grass and straw, etcetera, over them, very discreetly hiding them. From us.

We've been seeing many chickadees and gold finches in the field sunflowers. Insect highlights from the week include: big praying mantises, more monarchs (including a striking pale, buttery yellow-orange one), a burying beetle, lacewing eggs all over, and a bunch of bumble bees in the anise hyssop. Jeremy set up the sheet on the clothes line for another moth party – this time with the new moon. Disappointingly there were not too many moths that came by, even on a warm, humid night. This seems to pair similarly to the lack of abundance in native bees earlier this spring. We haven't yet had a chance to read the new IPCC report. We're not looking forward to it, but, all the same, we're feeling a responsibility.

This week's harvest list includes beets, carrots, scallions, garlic, chard, kale, zucchini and summer squash, snow and snap peas, eggplant and tomatillos and tomatoes and ground cherries, cucumbers, and there may be cabbages too. And some herbs and eggs.

Lastly, we are taking this new surge in COVID-19 cases seriously, if you have any specific concerns about how we are handling things at the farm stand, please let us know.

We hope you all are keeping well during all the blur and roar of this week.

All the best,
Your farmers,
Trish and Jeremy

August 18

Hello Farm Friends,

A few of our farming books talk about a fifth season in the course of the year, late summer, usually described as the six weeks prior to the fall equinox. We are starting to see little glimmers of yellow in the trees around the farm, this seems to pair with the feeling of transitioning into this fifth season, some crops are starting to look tired, fall diseases are starting to appear, and fall migration is certainly here.

We finally pulled out the pea plants, this will be the last week peas will be available at the farm stand. In some of the beds that had peas in them we will try to sneak in a late crop of spinach and arugula for this fall. We do have a recently germinated crop of arugula in the greenhouse where the kale had been, but more will be just fine. We just transplanted out what is probably our last succession of lettuce. Jeremy has been covering and uncovering the previous succession every day and so far it has stayed protected from our still abundant rabbit population. The pea trellis hardly had a break at all, we almost immediately put it up alongside the field cucumbers that were getting a bit sprawly.

These hot dry days have been great for drying herbs quickly for use in teas and culinary herb blends.

However, the chickens have not really been liking the heat. We have been heading out to the pasture to spray down the grass in and around the chicken tractors to get a little bit of an evaporative cooling effect in the afternoons. The birds seem to appreciate this.

Also, back in the pasture and orchard we gave all of the fruit trees a nice drink of diluted compost tea (ingredients: fermented plant extracts of comfrey and nettle, vermicompost, normal compost, homemade (and quite stinky) fish emulsion, and some fresh comfrey leaves). This will hopefully help the trees harden off well for winter without being so stimulating that they put on a bunch of new growth that doesn't have time to get ready for cold temperatures.

And lastly, a list of further excitements from the week: hummingbirds, Wilson's warblers, monarch butterflies and monarch caterpillars, a new type of assassin bug, five kinds of migrating sparrows, a wren family in a robin nest, soba noodles with sauteed eggplant, garlic-green chile-peach-feta pizza, and [a decadent chocolate zucchini cake](#).

This week at the farm stand we plan on having: beets, carrots, chard, kale, a few cabbage, scallions, garlic, eggplant, cherry tomatoes, tomatillos, ground cherries, jalapenos, peas, zucchini and summer squash, cucumbers, basil, other herbs, eggs, and flower bouquets on Saturday.

Our apologies on not getting the Remaining Credit emails out. We will try to have the book caught up at the farm stand this week to share balances but otherwise hopefully we can get those emails out soon. And just as a heads up, at this point we are planning on having the farm stand open until October 30th which is 11 weeks away.

We hope you are all doing well post-rally and we look forward to seeing you soon.

Your farmers,
Jeremy and Trish

August 25

Hello Farm Friends,

Just a quick update this week as it is already late and there are still remaining credit emails to send out tonight.

We started harvesting potatoes this week, we will have two varieties at the farm stand. Our yields are pretty low this year, unfortunately this matches what we have been hearing from other growers in the area and around the northern Rockies. Also, we harvested our grapes this morning, a pretty good harvest compared to the last few years. The bird netting that we put up to protect the grapes is now down and put away until next year. No more thrice daily trips down the rows to make sure no birds (or one year a skunk!) are tangled up. And bird related, fall migration is still picking up, with a total of 39 species identified on the farm last week plus a few mystery sparrows. This week the owls are hanging out close and we've seen our first crossbills of the year (eating sunflower seeds). And we had the first Bobolinks that we have ever seen on the farm come by Tuesday morning. We have known about the [Birdcast](#) website for a few years, but this is the first time we have looked at it deliberately, such a fascinating use of technology and big data. The live maps are especially mesmerizing.

We had a small farm tour here today and Trish was able to go on a group farm tour to three neighbor gardens on Sunday. It is so neat to see what other growers are up to.

And sadly, today was our friend and farm helper Tom's last day with us for the year before he heads back to university. Our field conversations will be ever-so-much-more-mundane in his absence.

This year has probably been our best year yet for growing eggplant. We have been getting to eat some almost everyday which feels like such a treat. If you are new to or skeptical of this sometimes funny fruit, just ask for recipe ideas at the farm stand and we will let you know all the ways we have been enjoying it over the last few weeks.

This week at the farm stand we plan on having: chard, kale, cabbage, scallions, garlic, cucumbers, zucchini, beets, carrots, cherry tomatoes, eggplant, hot peppers, tomatillos (salsa verde!), ground cherries, basil, herbs, grapes, potatoes, eggs and bouquets on Saturday morning.

Oh, and next week is Spearfish Bike Week! See the attached flier for a whole week of fun events.

With joy,
your farmers,
Jeremy and Trish

September 1

Hello Farm Friends,

This week we have mostly been celebrating Spearfish Bike Week, which has had us off farm more than typical. We are still staying caught up on animal care, watering, and harvesting of zucchini, but have not had time for

much bird/bug watching or other not-just-maintaining tasks Before Bike Week started Trish and Randi (Jeremy's mother) and Amanda (our sister-in-law) spent Saturday evening cleaning up and deadheading in the zinnia rows as well as picking a bunch of flowers for dyeing with later this fall.

We started picking the crab apples up at the farm stand, if you'd like some for jelling just let us know. And we picked a small basket of wild plums from plants along our property lines. We have three different types of plum that are growing wild here, a biggish purple, an inch diameter red, and a small yellow. Most years the little yellow is the best tasting, but this year the more typical red wild plum is superior. If any of you know of some plum patches, this would be a good year to go pick them.

And in mixed-emotion news, we think we figured out who killed all of our chickens a number of weeks ago. Today there was a pair of neighbor dogs causing havoc in one of the chicken tractors. Luckily a neighbor alerted us to the commotion; we only lost eight chickens and we were able to catch the dogs. Jeremy spent the early afternoon trying to learn how to skin a chicken without making a feathery mess, he is certainly better at it now than he was this morning.

This week at the farm stand we plan on having: chard, kale, cabbage, scallions, garlic, cucumbers, summer squash and zucchini (really just a type of summer squash), topless beets, carrots, cherry tomatoes, slicer tomatoes, eggplant, hot peppers, ground cherries (definitely on Saturday, they are last on the harvest list for tomorrow so we might not get to them for Thursday), tomatillos, potatoes (we didn't get any new ones dug this week so just the same as we had last week), herbs, basil, eggs, and flower bouquets on Saturday morning.

We hope to see you all soon,
Your farmers,
Jeremy and Trish

September 8

Hello Farm Friends,

The very beginning of autumn looks like -- everything setting seed and consequently tubs of different seed accumulating, downy mildew spreading on the squash leaves and stems, crab apples cluttering the driveway, cool mornings and shorter days, yellowing branches appearing along with sweatshirts, monarch caterpillars growing bigger and bigger and off to chrysalize, and so many sparrows including Lincoln's Sparrows that set Jeremy's heart aflutter.

In other farm news, we have been catching up on farm chores after a very fun and busy Spearfish Bike Week. Leones' Creamery has their amazing and oh-so-pretty Ginger Beet with Chocolate Speckle flavor available now, it's made with Cycle Farm beets which makes us like it even more. This morning we hosted a local ladies hiking group called the Hlkerettes, they had so many wonderful questions, it was a pleasure to get to see the farm through new sets of eyes.

And, not immediately farm related, yet wholly farm related, a plumbing repair in the bathroom (much needed after suffering for years) has upped the shower situation, which has us feeling not only cleaner, but day-spa-pampered by **gasp** water pressure.

This week at the farm stand we plan on having: zucchini and summer squash, cucumbers, tomatoes (slicer and cherry), tomatillos, ground cherries, eggplant, hot peppers, garlic, scallions, sweet onions, kale, chard, a return of lettuce!, carrots, beets, herbs, basil, eggs and on Saturday some beautiful bouquets.

It's starting to look like autumn but everything still tastes like summer. All the best from the farm.

Your farmers,
Trish and Jeremy

September 15

Greetings farm friends,

It's already a late evening, so please accept this quick note. Here are the highlights from the farm this week: picking apples amidst fluttering, brand-new and dazzling monarchs, a couple of late night rainfalls that didn't amount to much moisture, but sure helped cool things down a bit, collecting bucket loads and loads of weed seed heads, hauling them out of the field. Into a giant pile in the middle of our driveway. If we have the fire, you bring the s'mores? We found about 10,000 ladybug larvae in the vetch growing by our front door stoop, many of whom were cordially invited (or gently relocated) to sup at the greenhouse pepper plants all you can eat aphid buffet. The plants are doing just fine, great fruit set and ripening, but so too are the aphids. The male Freedom Rangers (our pastured meat birds) are full-on into their rooster crows now which is no doubt delighting the neighbors and clearly signaling maturity and time to butcher. If you are on our pastured chicken interest email list, keep your eyes out for a note from us soon regarding pre-orders. This summer has been an especially tumultuous rollercoaster ride of emotions with regards to these birds, and planning (both mentally and the actual nuts and bolts of set up) for butchering is very much a continuance of all these deep joy/appreciation/heartbreaking/lunchloosing/furious directions all at once. And, lastly, we had an opportunity to attend a Dark Skies Festival in Rochford this weekend where we got to learn about Lakota star knowledge and the winter count records as well as nocturnal insect navigation via the Milky Way and/or the moon and the dangers of artificial/residential lighting for the health and wellbeing our insect populations (and, in turn, us).

These last couple of days' bird visitors have been superduper showy: a Loggerhead Shrike, a Great-crested Flycatcher, a Red-naped Sapsucker, and even a pair of Western Tanagers.

Our harvest list this week includes; lettuce, chard, kale, cabbage, a few carrots, beets, zucchini and summer squash, scallions, sweet onions, garlic, cherry and slicer tomatoes, tomatillos, ground cherries, eggplant, hot peppers, basil, herbs, and, if there is time to wash them tomorrow afternoon, eggs too. And, on Saturday morning we will also have flower bouquets.

With the hurry-scurry of late summer,

Your farmers,

Trish and Jeremy

P.S. Oh goodness! The Almond agaricus mushrooms started to fruit in the new greenhouse beds! Well, ok, we found two lone mushrooms, but still: very exciting. And delicious. Hopefully there are more to come so we can share.

September 22

Greetings Farm Friends,

Happy Autumnal Equinox. This week we had two light frosts, one on Thursday evening after the farm stand that singed the leaves on some of our winter squash and then again Tuesday morning Jeremy brought in a little sheet of ice off of a tarp in the back. The Monday night frost seemed harder than Thursdays but did less damage to the crops. This first frosting signals to us a big acceleration in our to do list; hurry up and harvest the rest of the potatoes and the winter squash, get garlic seed ready and prep the beds for planting in mid-October, keep up with herb drying and food preservation for the farm stand and winter feasting, and keep working on some last minute construction projects before the weather gets too cold.

Today we graded out garlic seed from our Music variety. Most of what we grow is this variety and we are so delighted when we have a good year for garlic like we did this year. More than 350 pounds of Music came in from the field this year. The smallest of these heads have been up at the farm stand over the last month and a half, but now that we have separated out our seed (almost 100 pounds of the best looking heads) we will bring up some of the bigger non-seed heads as well.

On Monday evening we hosted some good friends who were moving from Madison, WI to Seattle, WA. Neither of them like to sit around idly, so while we visited we also prepped the last of the grapes for jam, saved some seeds from our cherry tomatoes and peppers, dehydrated tomatoes and tomatillos, and cleaned chicken feet for stock.

The chicken feet came from our meat birds which we butchered on Sunday. We had the much appreciated assistance and warm smiles of good friends and family, who helped with care, respect, interest, skill, and love. This was a gentle and graceful end to a very challenging year for us with our chickens, some of the biggest and strongest birds we have yet raised. The first bird Jeremy picked up fell asleep in his arms as he carried it to the kill cone, this seemed to set the tone for a smooth, calm, and thoughtful morning.

We grew a cantaloupe! One cantaloupe! It was tiny and delicious and we saved the seed hoping that we can manage to grow more to share in future years. We try to grow these every year, and are so excited to have finally produced something edible from a melon planting.

And in other excitement, we are working with the City Parks Department and a BHSU art class on a project that we are really delighted by, which should hopefully be done before the temperatures drop too much. We will share more as the pieces come together.

This week at the farm stand we plan on having; lettuce, kale, chard, cabbage, celery(!), scallions, sweet onions, garlic, beets, carrots, cucumbers, zucchini (getting towards the end), slicer tomatoes, cherry tomatoes, tomatillos, eggplant, hot peppers, ground cherries, basil (also getting towards the end), other herbs, eggs, and on Saturday flower bouquets.

And lastly, for your planning purposes, we are planning to have our annual (outside, socially distanced) harvest party on Sunday, October 10th from 2-5pm. We'll have farm tours, the cider press, and farm fresh snacks including our much loved garlic and winter squash tasting flights. We will share more as we figure it out.

With crisp evenings, your farmers,
Jeremy and Trish

October 1

Happy October Farm Friends,

Our apologies for not getting this email sent off as we usually do on Wednesday evening. The week just flew right by. We've been bouncing around between a bunch of different projects, meetings and activities along with routine fall farm to-dos. A big exciting project has been starting on a mural of an American Dipper along the city rec path underneath the Hillsvew Bridge. The Dipper is an amazing aquatic songbird (they swim!) of clear mountain streams. Spearfish Canyon and upper Whitewood Creeks are the easternmost parts of their range. The mural is just below the intake for the Evans-Tonn ditch which is the source of our farm irrigation. An art class from BHSU, some high school students, and a few other community members are helping put bright colors along the creek in celebration of this wonderful bird, the riparian corridor, and this precious creek we all share. And hopefully the mural will serve as inspiration to pay attention and a good reminder of our responsibility to be courteous, respectful members of this wondrous biologic community.

This week we dug most of our potatoes - more than 450 pounds so far. And we finished cleaning and grading our garlic. We have seed garlic set aside and are working towards getting ready to plant (sourcing compost,

straw bales for mulch, and preparing beds). If you are interested in planting garlic, please just let us know - we'd love to get you some good seed grade garlic.

Fall bird migration has mostly slowed down, though with our busy week we may have just not been giving as much attention to the birds as we do typically. Yesterday during harvest we had a beautiful and newly emerged Monarch butterfly linger on the Mexican Sunflowers that are next to the packshed. She was probably acclimatizing herself to the flavors of Michoacan before her long flight south.

Next weekend, Sunday October 10th, will be our annual farm harvest party from 2-5 pm. We will have our much loved squash and garlic tasting flights, the cider press squishing some fresh sweet cider, and some other farm fresh snacks. This is a great opportunity to come take a tour of the farm, meet the laying hens, and coochicoo some extremely endearing ducks. The gathering will be outdoors, please dress for the weather, but if it's miserable, we'll plan to reschedule.

This week at the farm stand we plan on having; lettuce, arugula, kale, chard, scallions, sweet onions, garlic, carrots, beets, potatoes (4 types: French Fingerling, Yukon Gold, Dark Red Norland, and Purple Viking), zucchini, cucumbers, slicer and cherry tomatoes, ground cherries, tomatillos, hot and sweet peppers, flower bouquets, and if everything goes as planned today some wee little, yet still very delicious, plums.

We hope you all get a chance to enjoy [October's bright blue weather](#),

Your farmers,
Jeremy and Trish

October 6

Greeting Farm Friends,

This afternoon found us gathering apples from one of our neighbor's trees to add into the blend for cider pressing this Sunday at our harvest party. We will be celebrating a productive season and our 10th on the farm from 2-5 PM. We will have our annual garlic and squash tastings as well as other farm fresh snacks. Farm tours too. Masks welcome.

Today we also did a little bit of harvest for this week's farm stand. The last couple of weeks we have stretched out the harvest to two days to ideally have more time to get everything ready for our Thursday evening market. Ground cherries and onions, two of the most time consuming vegetables to pick or clean, are already done, which hopefully will give us time to weigh out and price some garlic braids.

Earlier this week we completed the majority of our winter squash harvest. This is an activity that typically happens on a cold rainy day at 5 o'clock in the evening preceding a predicted hard frost, with raincoats and muck and cold fingers, wrestling with row cover and icy cold squash. This year, it's sunshine, short sleeves, and shade breaks.

Deer have effectively though slightly less endearingly eaten all of our eggplant plants. Eggplant leaves are thick, full, wide, and slightly fuzzy - imagining doe-eyed and soft-eared darlings munching on these - it seems a suitable, though unfortunate if not inevitable match.

Also this week; drying hot peppers for chile powders, swimming in the creek (87 degrees), [fermenting hot peppers](#), collecting weed seed heads in buckets to try and reduce weed pressure next year, and collecting wildflower seeds. The back porch is now home to at least nine buckets of seed, and still unlabeled even though it is against the rules (Jeremy's fault). The black walnuts are falling and leaves are yellowing in earnest, we even have a few bare trees already. Chickens have slowed down their lay a surprising amount, molting and

shorter days. And on Monday the irrigation ditch was shut off for the season, which is another sign that we are getting close to the end of the year.

This week at the farm stand we plan on having; lettuce, arugula, kale, chard, celery, zucchini, cucumbers, slicer and cherry tomatoes, tomatillos, ground cherries, hot and sweet peppers, sweet onions, scallions, garlic, garlic braids, potatoes, beets, carrots, basil, winter squash and on Saturday some bouquets.

This week we were hoping to start getting more teas and herb blends packaged but that will have to wait until next week. As soon as this email is sent we will send out remaining farm stand balances as well. For those of you that have a negative balance we can run out an IOU until the end of the season and settle up then. Or if you'd prefer to pay weekly that works for us too.

We hope to see you all soon,
With gratitude,
Your farmers,
Jeremy and Trish

October 13

Greetings Farm Friends,

We hope you are all safe and warm and tucked inside, cozy as can be. Our last measurement has us at just over 17 inches of snow and a lot of broken and downed tree branches. The hens have been keeping to their coop, disinterested in the fluffy white; the ducks are more adventurous, but they have snowshoes and down jackets.

We enjoyed a wonderful afternoon with friends on Sunday. Many thanks to all of you that were able to join us.

And, thanks to the wonder of weather forecasting, a very pleasant Monday and kind of dreary Tuesday were spent in a rush rush rush to harvest tender fruits and greens from the field. The last of the potatoes and winter squash, zucchini, cucumbers, tomatoes, peppers, eggplant to save seed from, basil and parsley seed crops, lemon balm and the last of the sweet onions all came in from the field on Monday. Tuesday, before the snow, we were able to harvest and wash (brrr!) all the greens for the week.

And today, Jeremy set to some neglected cleaning in the kitchen and Trish packaged up tea blends, hopefully tomorrow we will get some chile and garlic powders as well as herb blends put together to sell.

This week at the farm stand we plan on having; lettuce, arugula, kale, chard, beets, potatoes, garlic, garlic braids, sweet onions, cucumbers, zucchini, tomatoes, tomatillos, ground cherries, hot peppers, celery, winter squash, basil, and eggs.

With gratitude for the moisture and sudden boon of wood for spoon making,
Your farmers,
Jeremy and Trish

October 20

Greeting farm friends,

Mud, muck, and piles of... very useful things.

It seems we have at last come to the familiar hills and dales, mostly hills, of autumn. Usually, this accumulation of heaps and stacks around the farm is spread out over several weeks, this season it feels like it's happened all

at once and exacerbated by last week's storm. Associated with each hill/pile/stack/trailer-load is the work in gathering and, then, redistribution of said hill/stack/pile/etc. Hills of the farm at present: piles of storm-damaged and tidied up branches, pickup truck loads of pine needles and a dump trailer-load of wood chips, a pallet load of chicken feed from Nebraska, and a trailer load of straw bales from Belle Fourche, piles of muddy boots by the back door, trays and bowls and pie tins of seeds spread out and stacked with all sorts of precarity, drying on the table.

Also of note this week – big flocks of sandhill cranes chortling in the sky overhead as they are headed south, warblers and sparrows in the branches around the house, the very last bouquets of zinnias fading in a jar on the table, salted caramel apple pie (our recipe comes from the [Hell's Backbone Grill's](#) beautiful cookbook *This Immeasurable Place*), lots of Cosmo Sheldrake on the stereo, and the fancy-pants paint order we've been waiting on has been delivered, so we can take advantage of some of these warm days coming up and finish the dipper mural under Hillview bridge.

Thursday will likely be a cold, mucky morning, but we are still planning on harvesting what we can – friends, look forward to parsnips!

This week, at the farmstand, we plan on having: garlic (heads and braids), winter squash, kale, chard, onions and potatoes, parsnips, celery, cucumbers, hot chiles, tomatoes (ripe and green), dried peppers, garlic scape powder, and herbal teas.

Happy full moon, in Lakota - Chanwape Kasna Wi - wind shakes off the leaves moon.
your farmers,
Trish and Jeremy

October 21

Harvest list addendum!

1. We have just started in on the baby ginger harvest! BLISS - they look great! Here are some ideas for this young and tender, bright and amazing ginger: <https://cyclefarmkitchen.wordpress.com/2015/04/08/ginger/>
2. And no chard this week. Even with row covering, those pretty leaves didn't like the hard frost last night.
3. We are going to try and get carrots dug tomorrow for Saturday's market, we will not be able to dig them today.

Thanks all,
Trish and Jeremy

October 27

Hello there Farm Friends,

Happy second-to-last farm stand weekend. That is right, November 6th will be our final market for the year. From our first market on April 24th, this will put us at 29 weeks total. We have enjoyed seeing you all throughout the growing season.

This week we have been starting to clean up the field after the heavy snow and last Wednesday's killing frost. The big priority is to get the beds we need for our garlic cleared and ready to plant. We have also been trying to stay on top of the accumulating piles in the driveway, moving wheelbarrow loads of pine needles and wood chips. Hopefully we will have room for the compost we need for the garlic beds.

Our apologies to those of you that wanted ginger last week after we sold out. We have a lot more to dig up tomorrow so we should be able to meet your needs this weekend.

The dehydrator has been running with the last of this year's hot peppers, converting them into chile powders to keep bellies warm all winter.

The ducks and chickens are doing well, adjusting to the cooler days just fine. Trish gave the hens the residue from making grape jelly, but instead of pouring out nicely as intended the whole pot contents plopped out all at once. This was a big surprise to the flock of chickens gathered around her feet. Two poor birds couldn't get out of the way quick enough and are now entirely stained a beautiful deep purple.

This afternoon we finished painting the first half of the mural under Hillsvie Bridge. See attached photo. Hopefully the second half will be put up once the weather warms next spring.

This week at the farm stand we plan on having: a little bit of greens - lettuce, arugula, chard, and kale, potatoes, beets, parsnips, celeriac, celery, hopefully some good looking carrots (last week's ended up being pretty buggy), winter squash, sweet onions, garlic, garlic braids, Jerusalem artichokes, baby ginger, teas, dried herbs, chile powders, and eggs.

With autumnal joy, especially for the recent long colorful sunsets and sunrises,

Your farmers,
Jeremy and Trish

November 3

Dear farm friends,

Here we are with the final week of the farm stand. What a long and gracious fall, following such a plentiful summer - we hope you've enjoyed the fruits of the season as much as we have. This season will be remembered for several spectacular things: lack of massive hailstorms, lack of much precip at all, oh what a bounty of eggplant!, poorly behaved neighbor dogs, and technicolor rainbows of flowers, buoys and balms of bouquets all season long.

This week on the farm, we've nearly got all eight 72' beds of garlic planted. Last year we were scrambling to plant garlic late into the evening as it was beginning to snow. This year it's been sunshine on our shoulders and we're all the more appreciative of it. We're set to top dress the beds with compost and straw mulch. The remaining to-be garlic bed is super bromey and will take time (and effort, thank you Jeremy) to clear of rhizomes. We have a special order of daffodils to plant out tomorrow afternoon, these will be more cut flowers for next spring's bouquets.

Jeremy has drained the irrigation lines, and pulled down most of the trellising in the field. We've also started clearing out beds in the greenhouse - so long peppers and cucumbers, unsurprisingly considering how much compost we dumped on those beds, the ginger beds are full FULL of worms. We should probably give ALL the greenhouse beds a ginger-crop-load of compost. There are still quite a number of things left to do before this farm will feel tucked in and ready for winter.

With the end of the market, we are entering a season of reflection and foremost in our thoughts right now is gratitude - for the soil that's sustaining us each day and in which we are feeling more and more rooted each year.

Gratitude for the sky and water, the diversity of ecology, all the wee beasties and feathered marvels, the stripey-tailed cat that's been patrolling the field, and, yes, we're back to the soil, all the billions of living and working and being bodies in our soil, so itty bitty and magnificent - all this dazzle and sparkle, blood and guts that we have the privilege to grow with.

And we are grateful for you, our community - we are so grateful to have had the opportunity to better get to know you and share this season. Some of you have been with us as share members or customers,

cheerleaders and enthusiastic eaters, recipe sharers, and volunteers for 10 years! In many ways we feel as though we are growing in a heap - imagine, if you will - a glorious compost pile, rich in love and abundance, nourishment and care. And each of you is a part of this. Thank you.

This week at the farm stand we plan on having: the few remaining potatoes, winter squash, parsnips, beets, celeriac, celery, arugula, baby ginger, garlic, garlic braids, green tomatoes, tea blends, herb blends, garlic scape powder and eggs.

With abundant appreciation,
Your farmers,
Jeremy and Trish