

# HappyDay CSA Newsletter

In the Share This Week: Garlic, Kale and Hot Pepper from HappyDay. Spinach, Beets, Carrots and Broccoli from Irene's Garden Produce. Onions from Goosefoot Farm. Potatoes from Covelo Organics. Mustard from Nurturing Seed Farm

Knocking on November, my the season has flown by! Garlic is done except for a couple of new varieties that will be going into smaller plots. Cover crop is sown under the vast majority of the farm; odds and ends remain as the last cannabis stumps are pulled and those spaces are sown. A thick mat of peas, vetch, beans and oats covers the beds that were seeded earlier in the fall; we will soon be pulling up the drip lines to store them for winter.

Removing the drip is a new methodology for us; last year Amber and I argued over whether it made sense to pull the lines or leave them in over the winter. I felt that they would take less abuse from the weather if they were under the mulch and cover crop, but Amber pointed out that ripping them out in the spring when the cover crop is a tangled mat is more damaging and requires significant labor. This year, we'll pull the drips in the fall once the rains have come but while the cover crop is still short enough that the lines will come out with ease.

Pulling the drip in the fall is part of the process of "Leaning" our farm; seeking to make our practices as efficient as possible within our context. We made a major transition in process this year with the purchase of a BCS walk-behind tractor, a 30" flail mower and a 24" power harrow. The machine allows us to handle much larger stands of cover crop with much less effort; it cut our labor needs by 60% last spring. Next spring, startup will be even easier because the machine will be able to chop cover crop and stir it into the top inch of the soil horizon without us having to go ahead of it and pull the drips.

Our farm began as several dozen short beds, ranging from 15'-75'. With the machine, longer rows are desirable because most of the effort and extra space required are in turning it around. We are in the process of connecting beds and moving towards a more uniform bed length in the 60'-75' range. We'll never get to complete uniformity of beds with our uneven terrain and varied farmscape, but the closer we can come the easier our farming will be.

Having beds of the same length means that planning and practice can become interchangeable. Crop planning becomes more organized; knowing the amount of bedspace will allow us to make our seed planting calendar with greater accuracy and less intuitive guesswork than past years. This foundation of crop planning creates the opportunity to build a house of practice out of clear baselines and simple math.  $\text{Bed space} \times \text{crop spacing} + 20\% \text{ for weaklings} = \text{the number of seeds to sow}$ . This equation creates a systematic methodology for deciding how many of each crop to grow, based on the amount of bedspace we want to dedicate to it. Knowing what grows well and sells well for us through the CSA and farmers markets is an important piece of the puzzle, along with the choreography of timing given the limited amount of bedspace (over)

**Always wash your veggies before eating them! :)**

**Have any recipes you like making with CSA produce?**

**Email them to us**

**[happydayfarms42@gmail.com](mailto:happydayfarms42@gmail.com)**



**On the back of this newsletter you'll find a recipe. To see other recipes you can go to the blog page at [happydayfarmscsa.com](http://happydayfarmscsa.com) :)**

**The newsletter gets printed the night before CSA and there are sometimes changes that happen on packaging day. If you ever find that what is in your share differs from what is listed on the newsletter, this is the reason :)**

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and many varieties that we grow.

Similar bed lengths means that drip lines are the same. It also means that fertility requirements will maintain a general baseline that can vary along the axis of individual crop needs without the variable of bed length to complicate the equation. This would allow us to be more precise with our fertilization and to continue the process of lessening our outside inputs.

The transition to Fermented Plant Juice (FPJ) for crop fertigation enabled us to take a major step towards self-sufficiency this year, though there will always remain many more steps to go. With the abundance of comfrey, alfalfa, borage, mallow, horsetail and various other plant species growing on the farm, we have a ready source of fertility just waiting to be converted. In addition to making plant juice teas by fermenting these and other species in water, we are considering harvesting, drying and grinding them to produce a dry-mix fertilizer rich in the nutrients needed to grow strong plants that are adapted to this site and microclimate.

Producing fertility on-farm by using the plants that have taken up residence here closes a loop in the cycle of the farm, but also in the psyche of the farmer. Terroir is the concept of place; fertilizing with plants harvested on farm makes the farmer and the crops take on a deeper sense of being "of this place". Saving costs on fertilizer makes the farm more viable on the economic axis, while reducing carbon footprint and saving the resources that other forms of fertility require.

We have a long way to go in our process of building fertility, soil and the practices that make up our farm organism. Each trip around the sun is an opportunity for learning and gathering the knowledge that makes us better farmers, and makes our farm a better place on which to live and work. It is a deep joy to gather unto us this knowledge and information; sharing of community and dialogue about farm practices is something that we cherish on a deep, spiritual level.

The lot of the farmer is to strive to create form from the canvas of land with which s/he is presented. That opportunity is a deep honor and a powerful responsibility that carries with it implications for the future of humanity. As goes farming, so goes society; a culture of farmscape practices that regenerates soil and soul holds hope for our future; a flame to the darkness and anomie of the industrial complex.

## Casey's Easy Recipe Action Roasted Winter Vegetables

- 6-8 cups winter veggies: potatoes, garlic, onions, beets, carrots, etc.
- 2 tablespoons oil
- Toss ingredients together, keeping onions separate cuz they cook faster; add them 10 minutes in.
- Roast in preheated oven at 425 til tender, 45-60 min

## Casey's Easy Recipe Action

### Casey-Style Shepard's Pie

- 1-2 lb ground beef or diced chuck/stew
- Lots of onion and garlic, potatoes, carrots, kale, broccoli pretty much any other veggie you wanna use.
- 1. Put potatoes in a pan to boil so you can make mashed potatoes to top the pie
- 2. In a big, deep pan, Dice onion and saute in lard or other room-temp-solid-fat. Try not to use toxic canola or vegetable oils. If it wasn't a product that existed 100 years ago, it's probably no good.
- 3. As onions start to brown, add in beef. Saute on high heat, browning meat lightly.
- 4. Add in diced vegetables, sauteing on high and stirring regularly.
- When potatoes are soft enough, mash up with butter and milk, s&p to your taste, you know how you like em.
- 5. Once you've got all the veggies in and mixed well enough, pour in a pint to a quart of gravy depended on how big your pie is and how much gravy you want. Hard to go wrong with gravy.
- 6. Spread mashed potatoes over the top, some folks also like to add some cheese here. Sprinkle spices.
- 7. Bake for 45-60 min depended on how much you sauteed everything first. Watch for browning on the top, that's when you know it's action jackson.