

HappyDay CSA Newsletter

In the Share This Week: Tomatoes from HappyDay. Beets, Carrots, Winter Squash and Salad - Irene's Garden Produce. Potatoes - Covelo Organics. Apples - Redtail Ranch

Today a spring that has flowed every day of my life thus far, ran dry. This spring is marked on old land deeds from cattle ranchers many decades ago; it is a staple of great importance to us, providing water for household use. There are two small springs that support 5 households; one has gone dry and the other is very low. We are rationing water use to the bare minimum and praying for rain.

In my 36 years, I have never seen a fall so dry. The wildfire that is rampaging to the East of us is a grim and visceral reminder that climate change has arrived. The time has come for concerted efforts by both the public and private sectors to address climate change by engaging in aggressive cuts to fossil fuel use and massive efforts towards carbon sequestration programs through regenerative farming practices. We need more focus on renewable sources of energy and we need to ramp up methodologies that help plants pull carbon out of the atmosphere.

It is a strange feeling to experience the landscape being so dry in the middle of November. There is no rain in sight on the NOAA forecast, which I check each morning in hope of predicted precipitation. The ag pond is low and we have restricted irrigation and rationed household water; we await the rain.

I am a creature of habit, and have come to enjoy the ritual of writing the newsletter each Sunday evening. The process involves a natural reflection about the week that has just gone by; a moment for absorption and consideration. It helps me to gather lessons and offers an opportunity for organizing my thinking. I check in with my various theoretical pathways and the action items on my social change agenda.

Looking back on the things we've done on the farm each week offers a chance to gather information and store goals for future progress. Each trip around the sun we refine our process; this winter we hope to continue the practice of articulating our methodologies into work binders that describe tasks and operations on the farm. The old saying "a failure to plan is a plan to fail" rings in my head as I look to strategic planning for next year. We are creating budgets, considering compliance requirements and looking at crop plans. Soon we'll be ordering seeds and beginning the journey anew.

We planted out several hundred kale and kohlrabi (over)

Always wash your veggies before eating them! :)

Have any recipes you like making with CSA produce?

Email them to us

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 :)

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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but what's the point? It's imperative to have permission to make mistakes, otherwise innovation will be stymied by fear and flow will be broken by concern. They say that worrying is like praying for things you don't want, so don't do it.

As I write, the glow expands upon the Eastern skyline. Day breaks upon my reality, with joy, love, and work. I am glad to have the opportunity to work the land; to increase soil fertility and bounty over time. It is a thrill to produce nourishment for my community and to see the land flourish with our efforts. The life of the farmer is a process of deepening connection with the land; a visceral reminder of the bond between us.

My identity is defined by my relationship with land and my work upon it. I treasure the opportunity and am grateful for my place in the world. As I move through life, my body carries the memory of the many injuries and strains that have been done to it. I wouldn't trade them for anything, but I am also forced to reflect on the fact that I won't be able to do it forever. One of the great travesties of American farming is that there is very little in the way of safety nets.

My injured shoulder is a constant reminder of the frailty of life. I reflect on the fact that I need to learn to be more careful in my work. I tend to use my body with rough, blunt force; O'Neills are stubborn, determined workers, often at the expense of body parts. It is time for me to learn how to be more cautious in my efforts, so that I can maintain my life of physical labor for as long as possible. It is also time for me to plan for the future; I expect that over time, we will transition away from rapid rotation, labor intensive crops to more perennial cultivation with fewer labor requirements.

It is an odd feeling to be in charge of payroll, work comp, and the other paperwork aspects of employment, but that is part of the tradeoff for not doing all of the labor myself. I enjoy mentoring young farmers, and I expect that over time our internship program will be able to take on some of the physical labor requirements as I age. Though I hope to have many years of physical prowess left, I find comfort in the process of considering options and alternatives. Focusing the lens is necessary; too much in the future is not helpful, but without an idea of where we are going it is easy to become mired and stuck. It is a joy to learn the lessons, though they may be painful.

Casey's Easy Recipe Action

Beets N Apples N Onions

- Saute diced onions for two min
- Add thinly diced beets cook 10min
- Add diced apples cook 5 more min
- Add diced or powdered ginger, salt, to taste

Whole Beet Skillet

- 4-6 medium beets
 - Beet greens.
 - Place beets in large saucepan, cover with water, bring to a boil. Reduce heat and simmer until beets are tender when pricked with fork, 15-20 min. Drain cooked beets, rinse with cold water. When cool enough to handle, slip peels off with fingers (or eat if you no care). Cut beets in slices.
 - Saute greens in bacon grease or choice of frying oil for 7-10 min and add in beets, heat through. Cook less time for greens more crunchy, more time for more cooked.
 - 1-2 tbsp lemon juice, 1-2 tbsp minced ginger, 1-2 tsp honey (optional)-
- Stir in and serve immediately :)

Late Fall Salsa

- 6 medium tomatoes
 - 1 medium onion
 - 1 large green peppers
 - 2-3 hot chili peppers
- Dice all these.
- ¼ bunch fresh cilantro (chopped)
 - 4 cloves garlic (minced)
 - 3 tablespoons fresh basil (chopped)
 - 2 tablespoons vinegar
 - 1 tablespoon lemon juice
 - ½ teaspoon salt or to taste
- Combine in bowl. Let stand 30 minutes then serve.