



UPDATES

April 27 Deliveries

There are no CSA deliveries this week.

Iowa Fresh Farm News

What another beautiful and mild day to wake up to on this Wednesday morning. Almost seems more like mid May than April with the daffodils now in full bloom and any remnants of snow a blurry memory for a good two weeks now. But we're not out of the woods for the "s" (snow) word as we could get a reminder at any time until May 10th or so. (I began writing this before the front came through late this afternoon with a 15 degree drop in temperature and gusty winds.)

I've been planting cole crops (i.e., cabbages, broccoli, etc.) as well as varietal lettuce and radicchio but still shying away from too many seedlings until we have a good warm rain to hasten a flush of weeds to germinate. It's far easier to make another pass through with the harrow than to have to handpick amongst seedlings to remove the weeds. Somehow weeds just seem to find the most inconvenient places to grow.

And more thoughts on snow--even with a record setting amount of snow this winter the upper soil dried out quickly this spring. Some years we can hardly get in much tillage and prep work this early in the season. In fact the uppermost topsoil here is somewhat dry and could use the good shower forecast for later this week. The first planting of peas are just now breaking through the soil and some have yet to germinate as they were sitting in drier ground. With a rain and these temperatures all should be up and growing well soon. Field corn is already 19% planted this year (as opposed to 5% at this time last year) so my neighbors are ahead of schedule this year as well.

I make mention of this earliness as sometimes I forget that there are people new to the CSA concept of eating seasonally. Unfortunately CSA is not like a grocery store in that you can find almost anything at any time of year. That is part of the enjoyment and fun as you learn to eat what is in season and truly farm fresh. A grocery store's "farm fresh" may have been stored at the store a day or two before merchandising. Before that it may have sat at their warehouse for a few days and before that harvested and stored in California and stored several days before shipment out. Therefore the "Farm Fresh" is at least a week old.... not at all like harvesting and distributing often within the same day.

Iowa Fresh Produce News, cont.

Here in Iowa we have basically three seasons within the growing season : spring, summer and fall.

Spring: Spinach, lettuce, asparagus, radishes, rhubarb, etc.

Summer: Warm season veggies such as eggplant, tomatoes, peppers, sweet corn, etc.

Fall: Winter squash, pumpkins, etc. and a repeat of some of the spring type crops.

We will be in the spring season until the summer season crops begin to show up—sometimes late May but normally sometime in June. It all depends upon the weather—how warm it gets how soon. When the summer vegetables begin to flourish then it's getting way too warm for the spring crops to sustain themselves. Each year the dates change but the trend continues.

Marilyn said there was some concern among some members that all they had seen was basically lettuce and spinach so far. Don't worry—a diverse array of produce will be available before the season is over. So far you have been the beneficiary of extending the spring season earlier in the year. BUT that can go only so far so next week I will NOT be making a CSA delivery—only a la carte. We will resume CSA delivery the following week. If you search for CSAs on the Internet you will find that most begin sometime in mid May at the earliest and more likely June 1st so you are actually ahead and have seen some return on your investment already.

What's on the immediate horizon of produce I might expect? Spinach and lettuce in the weeks to come but also baby bok choy, gailan (an oriental broccoli), and rhubarb. In two weeks we should be harvesting some red leaf and romaine lettuce as well.

Remember—no CSA delivery April 27th. We will resume CSA deliveries the following Tuesday on May 4th.

Have a nice weekend!

Bruce

Reminder: No Baked Goods This Week

Tomoko is also skipping the week of April 27th and will again be baking bread and scones for the May 4th delivery.

Nick Wallace Delivering This Week

Nick Wallace will deliver pre-ordered grass-fed beef, wild fish, and other products on April 27th.

Please order directly from Nick at:
nick.wallace@wallacefarms.com.

Bring Us Your SPF Egg Cartons

For those of you with Small Potatoes Farm egg shares, please remember to bring your empty egg cartons to the site so Rick and Stacy can reuse them.

To Contact Farm to Folk

If you have any questions, please contact:

Marilyn Andersen
Coordinator
Email:
marilyn@farmtofolk.com

www.farmtofolk.com

Phone: 515-388-5501
Cell: 515-460-7273

Berry Patch Farm News

Cherries are in full bloom, and the apples and blueberries are just beginning to bloom. The strawberries are looking really good but bloom has not yet started. The honeybees were moved in this morning, and along with the native bees (mason and osmia), the honeybees are enjoying the calm warm weather. Our favorite bees, however, are the bumblebees because they work long hours and are not fussy about the weather. The bumblebees are especially active right now. We are planting 48 plum trees today. They should yield some fruit next year if all goes well. The tomatoes in the greenhouse are just about ready to turn red.

Regards,

Dean

Prairie Sky Homestead Farm News

Managing your Egg Inventory

The eggs you get from Prairie Sky Homestead are guaranteed to be less than 4 days old. That's great if you value their superior nutrition and performance. There is just one drawback, though. Fresh eggs, when hard boiled, are nearly impossible to peel. That's why we suggest using your most recently delivered eggs first for scrambling, frying and baking, and allowing the older ones to go ahead and get old. After three weeks or a bit more, they will peel in a single swoop. For a perfect yolk, place eggs in a pot of cold water, heat to boiling, then let water cool to room temperature. Peel eggs, then slice onto fresh greens, or whip up a batch of egg salad or potato salad using real mayonnaise and your favorite mustard.

Food Around Town

Wheatsfield Grocery (413 Northwestern) is holding cooking classes and demonstrations every Tuesday evening from 7 to 8 PM. Here is their schedule for the rest of April.

April 27

Have Your Cake and Eat It Too!

Madhu Gadia

Join nutrition counselor and registered dietitian, Madhu Gadia as she helps sort through the latest in nutritional jargon so you can enjoy eating again! Her warm personal presentation style and practical experience will provide useful information – regardless of your health concerns.

Rhubarb Crisp (submitted by Heather Greenlee)

I must credit the ladies of St Francis of Assisi in Balltown, IA for this recipe.

1 cup flour
1 cup brown sugar
1/2 cup butter
2/3 cup oatmeal
1 tsp. cinnamon
1/2 tsp salt

Mix the above together to form a crumble. Press half into a 9" square pan.

4 cups rhubarb cut in 1" (or less) pieces

Place rhubarb over top of pressed crust.

1 cup white sugar
1 cup water
3 Tbs. cornstarch

Combine above mixture, bring to boil and boil until thickened. Pour over rhubarb. Top with rest of crumble.

Bake at 350 for 30-45 minutes. If using rhubarb that has been frozen, bake for 1 hour.