

Fair Fields News

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On the Farm

Welcome back from another cold one! Most of our overwintering crops made it through with the exception of our poor little lavender patch and some of the new fruit trees we planted.

This winter and early spring shared last year's cold, but it has been much drier. That combined with a few heat waves has led to much drier soil conditions then we have ever experienced on this farm at this time of year. We have a new irrigation system, purchased last year, that has already been in use this season and we are grateful for it.

The heat has helped us with our earlier start date. Much of our produce for the first two pickups will be from our greenhouse and unheated hoop-house, and the field pro-

duce should follow immediately behind.

We had somewhat better luck with our beehives this winter. One of two hives survived the winter and appears to be thriving. Two new nucs (a queen with a few workers) are on their way, so we should have three healthy hives this season and hopefully some honey for sale at the end of it all.

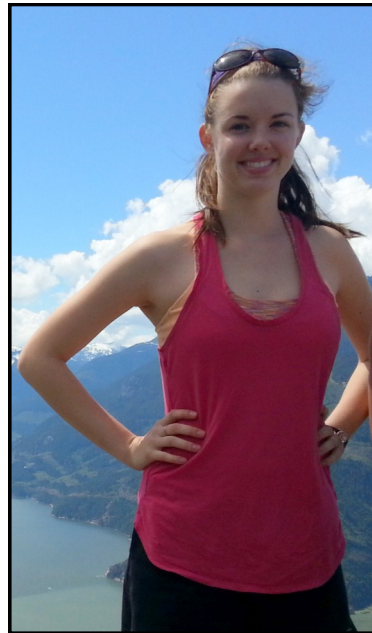
We have a new member joining our team this year. Here is a brief note from her:

Hi everyone! Kassia here, the new intern at Fair Fields CSA. I am from the Vancouver area and recently completed my undergraduate degree at the University of Guelph in Environmental Science. As a kid growing up, my parents' fruit-

ful garden was always a joy in my life. They instilled in me their love of nature and of the responsibility we have to protect it. This is my first year working on a farm and I have loved every minute of it so far and

am sure I will continue to throughout the season! I look forward to meeting all of you over the coming months!

Kassia



This Week's Harvest

- **Asparagus**
- **Baby Pak Choy**
- **Green Onions**
- **Head Lettuce**
- **Herbs**
- **Rhubarb**
- **Shallots**

U-Pick Strawberries and Raspberries

This year we are formally opening up for U-Pick strawberries in June and July and for raspberries in September.

We have been slowly expanding our production and feel confident this year that we will have plenty for the CSA, small scale U-pick sales and probably a few

restaurant sales as well.

Like our other CSA produce the strawberries and raspberries are not certified, but are grown according to Canadian Organic Standards. We feel this is especially crucial with berries, which are treated with and absorb a lot of toxic insecticides and fungicides under conventional production

methods. We hope you will share this with family and friends who might be interested in a healthier alternative for U-pick berries this season.

Pricing and picking times should be available on our website by the end of next week.

Mmmmm.....



Asparagus and Mushrooms from down the Road

This season we will be buying in asparagus for the first 1-2 pickups and hope to have it available for purchase till the end of June depending on availability.

The asparagus is grown by **Ahren Hughes** of **Blackshire Gardens**. Ahren began his agricultural ventures in 2004 and was able to purchase a farm down the road in 2011. Blackshire Gardens is a small-scale diversified operation that grows shiitake mushrooms, beans, grains and asparagus. Like Fair Fields, Blackshire Gardens follows organic and sustainable production practices, though it is not certified organic. In keeping with this philosophy, the shiitakes are grown in hardwood logs in the shade of a woodlot at the back of the property.

We love all that Ahren has to offer and hope to provide mushrooms and beans from Blackshire Gardens as they become available this season. If you live in Guelph you can also find Ahren's products at the Saturday Guelph Farmers' Market and at the Stone Store. In Grey Bruce you can look for mushrooms and asparagus, when in season, at Chicory Com-

mon in Durham. For more information on the farm, the farmer and the goods visit: www.blackshiregardens.com.



Working Shares, Volunteer Opportunities & Visiting the Farm

This year, we will again be offering Working Shares and other volunteer opportunities. The basic premise behind the Working Share is that members can make a contribution of 10 or more hours of work on the farm or business and receive a \$100 rebate on the price of their share.

We will be accepting help during the following times of the week starting the first week of June:

Tuesdays 6 - 8:30 pm

Fridays 6 - 8:30 pm

Wednesdays 9 - 11:30 am

Saturdays 9 - 11:30 am

There will be a sign up sheet at the pick-ups. We encourage anyone who wants to come during other times to contact us so we can try to arrange a time that works for all of us.

Members, friends and family who simply wish to volunteer are also encouraged to come and help out.

We hope to have some work-bee opportunities and a CSA potluck later in the summer.

And of course, if you are in the neighbourhood and want to drop by, please pop in and say hello!