

Fair Fields News

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On the Farm

This is the last week of CSA pickups for the season and it looks to be another warm one! Last year this time we were seeing lows in the single digits and highs in the mid teens, far from the highs of 24 over the next few days. You may notice as a result that fall leaf and root vegetables are not getting their characteristic sweetness as they usually do this time of year. To sweeten up fall vegetables really need night time temperatures in the low single digits and ideally one or more light frosts and this year, we don't know when that will finally arrive...

Despite the unseasonably high temperatures our tomatoes and peppers are slowing down. There may still be a few peppers, but the tomatoes are done. We feel very lucky to have had such a good yield and flavour from both.

We have planted all of our cover crops at this point. The oats and peas are coming up well, as is some volunteer buckwheat. When a previously planted crop reseeds itself or fails to fully germinate the first time and comes up in future crops we call this a "volunteer" crop. This term differentiates these plants from weeds, which we never try to plant in the first place! This year the volunteer buckwheat continues to show up. The soil was so dry in June, when we first planted buckwheat, that we had very poor germination. We started to receive rain in August when we were working down the buckwheat and preparing for our next cover crop, oats and peas. As a result, along with the oats and peas that have been emerging we are seeing a lot of buckwheat, finally able to germinate with now adequate moisture levels. Thankfully in this situation it is not a problem

as the buckwheat will winter kill or die-off, along with the oats and peas, neither of which overwinter (i.e. survive).

We split out wood for 2018 greenhouse heating, this week. The trees on our lane continue to donate large limbs, usually during storms, to our greenhouse heating cause... During the first few years we purchased wood for heating the greenhouse, but are now self-sufficient in this. Ideally wood for burning should be dried for about 2 years, so we are happy to finally be getting 2 years ahead on our supply. We would prefer to be doing all of our heating on the farm with wood from the property. Then the carbon we release will have come from trees on our farm, recently captured out of the air, as opposed to releasing carbon from fossil fuels, sequestered out of the atmosphere millions of years ago.

Harvesting

- **Beets**
- **Carrots**
- **Daikon Radish**
- **Garlic**
- **Kale and Chard**
- **Lettuce**
- **Onions**
- **Parsnips**
- **Pumpkin**
- **Shallots**
- **Spinach**
- **Squash**



Sweet, Sweet, Apples

Many tree fruit farmers in Ontario had a hard year this year. They received few to none of the late frosts that affected crops last year, but the drought really took its toll. This was especially true for stone fruits (peaches, plums, cherries, etc.) on fields with little or no irrigation. The apples on many trees have also

been a bit smaller and many apple orchardists are also looking at reduced yields. The apples that have made it through are very sweet though. The lack of water means that the moisture content in the fruit is lower and this concentrates all of the sugars, minerals and other things that give flavour. As a result the apples on our farm this year are very sweet and tasty,

even the wild apples in our fence lines and bush. With this in mind we harvested as many apples as we could this year and last weekend had them pressed at a local mill. Greg Russel, who runs the mill out of his driveway/garage, has been pressing apples since he was a kid, like his father and grandfather before him. People come from quite a distance to get their apples

pressed, including the cidery and winery "Hoity Toity." We were very impressed and completely surprised by the amount of juice we came home with, about 200 litres! As our orchard grows we hope to provide cider for sale to the CSA and look forward to sharing this sweet, sweet fall cider with all of you.

Daikon Radish

We are giving daikon radish this week and wanted to talk a bit about it as it is a vegetable that many people are unfamiliar with. The daikon radish originated in East and South-east Asia, though it is also common in South Asia through to East Africa. It goes by several names, but is most commonly known in English speaking countries, by its Japanese name "daikon."

In Asia, daikon is commonly grown as a human food crop, with some varieties being shorter and stouter and others long and slender, like the one we grow. Some varieties are much better suited to warm weather, where as others will tolerate quite cold temperatures and long term storage. We had daikon radishes from last year till early spring this year.

In North America daikon radishes are primarily grown as a cover crop, with the deep tap roots improving soil structure and preventing compaction, and the leaves being harvested as fodder for livestock. The deep tap roots also help bring up nutrients from lower in the "soil horizon." The roots die off in harsh winters and release these nutrients, along with nitrogen, to spring planted crops. Radishes also put out sulphur compounds that can help suppress pathogens in the soil. With all of these benefits we wonder why we haven't planted it as a cover crop before... but never fear! We will likely plant a daikon radish cover crop next year to try and break up compacted soil and to try to suppress nematodes that have been infesting our garlic.

CSA Marketing

We will be expanding our membership next year and are again looking for your help. There is always some word of mouth marketing that takes place between members and their friends, family and co-workers and this is indeed a big part of how we have grown our membership in past years. We encourage all of you to continue passing along our information and this year are hoping to

Nutritionally, daikon is a bit of a superfood (take that kale!). It is high in vitamin C and over all very nutrient dense. Despite this, it is low in food energy. Daikon radish also contain anti-oxidants, compounds and enzymes that help with digestion, reducing inflammation, cancer prevention and a host of other benefits. So eat your daikon....

Like many other Asian brassicas, daikon radish is good in stir-fry, salads, and soups, but is also good steamed, roasted, pickled and even used in baking. It can be eaten raw and also develops a nice texture when cooked. Daikon is a mild radish, not as spicy as many European varieties, and becomes even more mild when cooked. Cooking also softens the texture, which becomes similar to other root vegetables in soups and stews.

Following are a few simple recipe ideas for using daikon radish. We hope you will enjoy them!

Daikon Radish, Carrot and Pork Rib Soup

Ingredients

- 5 cups sliced daikon radish
- 2 cups sliced carrot
- 800 grams (1 3/4 lbs.) pork ribs
- 1 1/2 liters water
- 1 tsp salt
- 1 tbsp light soy sauce
- Garlic and ginger (optional)

Preparation

Bring a pot of water to boil then quickly blanch pork ribs, drain and set aside. Slice daikon radish and carrot into cubes and put them into a

pressure cooker. Add the blanched pork ribs and water and cook on high for 20 minutes. Once cooked season with salt and light soy sauce, then let simmer for another 2 to 3 minutes. The soup is ready to be served, but for a more tasty soup let it remain warm in the pot for a minimum of 4 hours.

Daikon Steak

Ingredients

- 1/2 daikon radish (you need a 12 cm / 5 in long piece)
- 1 tbsp sesame oil (or other) for frying

For the Sauce:

- 1/2 cup dashi or other broth
- 2 tsp mirin
- 2 tsp soy sauce
- 1 Tbsp sugar
- 1/2 tsp miso paste

Preparation

Cut daikon into 4 thick slices that are 3 cm (1 1/4 in) thick each. Cut shallow criss-cross pattern on both sides. Put slices on a rack and let dry for a few hours or overnight. Mix the sauce ingredients in a small bowl and set aside. In a big frying pan that has a lid, heat the oil on medium and fry both sides of the daikon slices until they have a nice brown colour. It will take a couple minutes for each side. When both sides are browned, pour the sauce into the frying pan and put on the lid. Let it cook for 3-4 minutes (the sauce should be boiling). Take off the lid and let the rest of the sauce boil away almost completely - it can take a few minutes. Flip the daikon over 1-3 times so both sides get covered in sauce. When the sauce is almost gone, keep checking the pan so it doesn't burn. Turn off heat and try to spread the thickened sauce on the daikon if there's any left. You're all done!!

take it one step further. We hope to give some short talks and/or have some informal meet and greets at members workplaces, community gatherings, or even houses. These could also have an educational focus, if desired, with a topic around local food production and food security, sustainable agriculture, agriculture and climate change, etc., all topics that we are very familiar with!

If you are willing to try this with us we can try to arrange some events over the fall and winter to try and drum up some awareness and support for our CSA in the coming season. Please let us know if you are interested and we can take it from there.

Thanks again for your continued support!