

Fair Fields News

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On the Farm

Warm dry summer weather has finally arrived. Last year at this time we were begging for rain, being in the middle of a drought, however, this year we will take all the heat and dry weather we can get! Of the last five growing seasons we have had two very hot and dry years and two very wet and cool years and we start to wonder if these extremes will be more the norm moving ahead. It would certainly confirm the predictions scientist have been making about the likely impacts of climate change.

Most of the crops we are harvesting now are showing less or now signs of hail damage, for which we are grateful. It can be very disheartening to see a beautiful bed of spinach, lettuce or tender boc choy suddenly full of holes and tattered leaves. It was quite uplifting to start harvesting spinach and salad mix this week, that had less or even no sign of

hail. Let us hope that is behind us for this season.

The strawberries are finishing up. We were hoping for one more week, however, insect pests and disease have caught up with the patch and we are having a much harder time finding and picking significant amounts of nice fruits. It has been a good run and we are now looking forward to the other fruits this province has to offer, especially cherries, hopefully just around the corner.

Cut flowers will be starting soon. There are a few sweet peas on the vines and many other flowers that are just starting to show promise.

Our basil is also coming ready and we will start harvesting whole plants this coming week.

We apologize for not having parsley sooner this year. We were using older seed and our germination was very poor. The plants from newer seeds we purchased are looking ready for trans-

planting, so we hope to start having a steady supply by the end of this month.

We are seeking your input on the quantity and variety of vegetables for this season. So far this year we have had a bit of a challenge with the cold wet weather. Ground hogs and deer have also taken their share and as a result have seen some crop failure. We have also planted a bit less, as we had feedback from members last year that we were giving too many vegetables, causing concerns around waste. Any feedback you could give us around the quantity and variety of vegetables thus far and as the season progresses would be appreciated, so we can continue to adjust our planting schedules for next year. At the end of the season we will try to send out a survey, however, please share your thoughts with us in person, by email or phone, or any other way you like.

Harvesting

- **Baby Beets**
- **Bunch Onions**
- **Broccoli**
- **Cabbage**
- **Chard**
- **Cucumber**
- **Garlic Scapes**
- **Head Lettuce**
- **Herbs**
- **Kale**
- **New Potatoes**
- **Peas**
- **Salad Mix**
- **Zucchini**

Garlic Scapes

As garlic scapes are not something commonly found in grocery stores and some members are new to them, we thought it a good idea to feature them for this newsletter.

Garlic scapes are the flower stem of garlic plants. They typically start emerging in the last week or two of June and if left unharvested, will

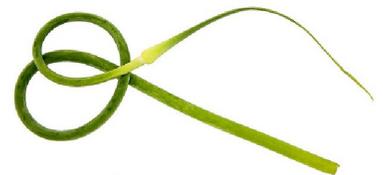
eventually fully flower and produce seeds.

We harvest scapes for two reasons. They are a lovely early garlicky treat, as the cured bulbs are not ready for another month or so. Removing the scapes also allows the garlic plant to focus all of its energy on growing the bulb, it's other method for reproduction.

Garlic scapes are packed with anti-oxidants and are a source of pro-vitamin A and vitamins C and B6. They are also a good source of calcium, manganese and selenium.

Many members have shared different ideas for preparing garlic scapes. They are good finely chopped in green or potato

salads and in dressings. They can be used in place of or in addition to garlic and green onions, sautéed for pastas, stir fries and sauces. They also hold up well to grilling, roasting and pickling. Members have even used them to infuse oil. Next week will be our last for scapes so enjoying them any way you choose!



Recipe Ideas

Grilled Sesame Garlic Scapes

When grilled, scapes lose their garlicky bite and become mild and almost sweet. They pair very nicely with the toasty nutty flavour of sesame oil and are good served as a side with an east Asian oriented meal or just about anything else.

The tapered end after the flower bulb can be very

woody, so either remove these before or after cooking or simply advise those who are eating this delicious treat.

Ingredients

- 10-20 garlic scapes
- 2-3 tsp. toasted sesame oil
- 2-3 tsp. mild heat tolerant oil (like grapeseed)
- 1-2 tbsp. sesame seeds
- Salt and pepper to taste

Method

Wash garlic scapes and allow to dry. Toss scapes with oils, sesame seeds and salt and pepper.

Preheat bbq on low to medium heat. If you have one, use a vegetable tray, if not just throw the scapes on in a pile. Cook scapes on low to medium heat, tossing or flipping the pile several times, till they are tender

and have some grill marks on both sides.

Remove from grill, check seasoning and add more salt if desired. Enjoy hot or as a cold treat with a charcuterie board or lunch of cut vegetables, pickles, cheese, cold meats, bread, fruit, etc.

Cucumber Beetle

Cucumber beetle is a common name given to about 6 different species of beetles, the two most common being the spotted cucumber beetle and the western striped cucumber beetle. Both feed on cucumber plants, all other members of the cucurbit family, which includes zucchini, melon, squash and pumpkin, and some other crops as well.

The beetles feed on leaves, stems, buds, flowers and fruits... basically everything! The larvae also burrow into the soil and feed on the roots. They can do a lot of damage just through feeding, but they also are im-

portant vectors for diseases like mildew, bacterial wilt and in particular mosaic virus. We use row cover, a fine woven breathable plastic netting, to keep the beetles off of the young plants, however, this eventually needs to be taken off to give pollinators access to the flowers. We thus keep the beetles from destroying the young tender plants, but can do little about the eventual damage to flowers and fruit, as well as the spread of disease.

We also mulch our field cucurbits, which slows the migration of egg laying adults into the soil and that of larvae through the soil.

Deep tillage (plowing) and cover cropping (planting a crop to cover the soil) can help remove and destroy crop residues, and disturb and bury overwintering adults. This is not always easy for us as we don't harvest our squash and pumpkins till sometime in September or even early October.

Another control we would like to try is the application of kaolin clay. This clay has many fine sharp particles that flake off and irritate many insects. Though not lethal, it encourages the insects to clean themselves instead of feeding on your



plants! It also deters them from further foraging.

While it is possible to control and delay damage, we find that they will come on eventually and complete eradication is near impossible. Just another one of this planet's lovely creatures we need to work around and learn to live with...!

(Information for this article from High Mowing Seeds and Wikipedia)

Fair Fields CSA Potluck

This years CSA Potluck will be **Saturday August 12z**, from **2—7 pm**.

We will be throwing some food on the **BBQ** during that time and enjoying it with some **salads** and **homemade beer**.

We are welcoming members, friends and family and encourage you to bring yours as well and enjoy a **tour of the farm** and some food and beverages with us. There will also be some games set up on the lawn.

Please **RSVP** if you think you will come so we can get a sense of numbers.

Hope to see you there!

Devan, Nicole, Lilly and Jordan