

Fair Fields News

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On the Farm

Sorry for the tardiness! Normally I aim to have our first newsletter out by the first pickup, or at the very least by the end of the first week. This year the season took us by storm.

Early in the spring it seemed the winter would go on forever. Then some time in early May the heat came and it feels as though it has been at or above seasonal temperatures ever since. This has translated into continual surprise for us, as our crops appear early and beautiful. We have been caught unawares by ripe strawberries, cucumbers, broccoli and garlic scapes, earlier than they have ever come for me before.

Another change this season that has kept us busy is diversifying into small scale wholesale. We were having troubles increasing and maintaining member-

ships in Guelph and Kitchener and so have decided to stop doing those locations. This leaves a large revenue gap that we are trying to fill by doing some small scale wholesale. The first crop we have focused on for this is strawberries. Later in the season we will be trying to market extra garlic, raspberries and even hay. With luck we will be able to replace much of the lost income from the CSA, something that would make me very hopeful in our first year of wholesale.

The strawberries have kept us picking 4-5 days per week, for several hours a day. We have been making wholesale deliveries, picking for pre-picked sales and Nicole has been selling on Saturdays at the Eatwell Market in Hanover. We feel blessed that it has been such a good season for strawberries, though I will admit there have

been some pains and groans while picking and dreams of strawberries at night...!

Our champion picker this year has been our new employee, Jessey. From Reaboro, Ontario. Jessey grew up farming and brings over fifteen years of experience in sustainable small scale agriculture to the table. He ran a business raising heritage breeds of pigs for three years, as well as doing mixed cropping. He hopes to learn more about market gardening to start his own diversified farm in the future. We would be lost this year without him.

There are a few projects we started this season that we are eager to resume when the strawberries slow down. We are finally continuing our barn renovation. We finished most of the initial framing, have ordered our roof steel and planning out the siding. The other goal for this summer is to overhaul our herb beds. We have given up battling the bindweed and are instead building raised beds out of hemlock that we will line with landscape fabric. Hopefully this will provide a low maintenance long term solution.



Jessey surveying the fields.

Harvesting

- Arugula
- Broccoli
- Cabbage
- Cucumbers
- Flowers
- Garlic Scapes
- Head Lettuce
- Herbs
- Kohlrabi
- Turnips
- Peas
- Rhubarb
- Radishes
- Salad mix
- Spinach
- Strawberries



Strawberry Fields Forever...

Recipe Ideas

The kohlrabi has been really large and succulent this year, so we have been eating a lot of it. One way we have really enjoyed cooking it this year is by grilling. You can serve it with many different types of meals. It gets sweet and really juicy if you cook it slowly. We are able to eat almost a whole kohlrabi per person this way!

Grilled Kohlrabi Ingredients

- 2-3 kohlrabi bulbs
- 1 tbsp. oil
- 1-2 cloves garlic, minced
- Salt and pepper to taste
- 1-2 teaspoons of chopped

fresh herbs (optional)

- 1/4-1/2 teaspoon of your favourite sweet spice (optional)

Preheat grill on medium.

Slice kohlrabi into pieces 1/4 -3/8 thick. Toss with oil, garlic, salt and pepper and herbs or spices if using.

Grill for 5-10 minutes on either side, until it is softer and has some nice dark brown grill marks and edges. If the outside of the kohlrabi is browned but they still feel very firm, put them on the top shelf or another cool part of your grill.

Remove from the grill and toss back in the same bowl you tossed the kohlrabi in to begin with.

Eat immediately...!

Kohlrabi Stir Fry Ingredients

- 250g thread egg noodles
- 2 tbsp oil
- 2 garlic cloves, crushed
- 2cm piece ginger, grated
- 1 carrot
- 2 kohlrabi bulbs
- 1 fresh or dried chilli
- 1 bunch spring onions
- 3 tbsp hoisin sauce
- 2 tbsp soy sauce
- 2 tbsp water

- 1 tsp peanut butter
- 2 tbsp peanuts, toasted & crushed

Peel and cut kohlrabi into thin sticks. Wash and thinly slice bunch onions.

Cook noodles according to instructions on the packet.

Heat oil in wok or larger pan and fry garlic, ginger, kohlrabi and carrot for about 3-4 minutes.

Add noodles and green onions and fry for an additional 2 minutes.

Add the rest of the ingredients, stir and serve.

Still Looking for Members

We are still looking for members for the 2018 season. As in past years we are not quite at our membership goals and would be happy to take on prorated members. If we can keep getting a couple of members per week we will reach our membership goals by mid-July.

For new members starting partway through the season,

we offer prorated shares roughly proportional to the number of weeks left of pickups. Shares are usually weighted a little heavier towards the end of the season as the overall value of produce rises throughout the summer peaking in late August or early September. This year, however, we have started with a bang, so the

value should be fairly constant throughout the season.

If you think of anyone who may be interested let them know. Also, if you feel comfortable, posting on social media or to any distribution lists you are a part of, please pass our information along. We did a little more marketing this year, however, our member's enthusiasm

through word of mouth continues to be our best form of advertising.

Thanks again for your continued support. Without you this would not be possible and it would also be a lot less fun!

Devan

Opportunities to Visit the Farm

There are plenty of opportunities for you to visit the farm this season. As with past years we welcome volunteers to come and work with us transplanting, weeding, harvesting and with other farm tasks. Please let us know if this interests you and we will try to figure out some good times to get you out to the farm.

As our strawberries, and later our raspberries, come into full production we will be in touch to offer U-pick to CSA members. Our strawberries from last year have been overridden with weeds, but should still produce many good berries.

We will again host a CSA BBQ on the farm this Au-

gust, the exact date still to be determined. Last year we had a great turn out and very good weather, which made for a wonderful time. We hope you can all join us this year and help make it even better!

Finally, we welcome anyone to visit the farm if they are in the area or passing through, just let us know

ahead of time. If the timing is good we can go for a brief tour of the gardens and share a snack together.

We want people to feel connected to their food and where it is grown, so feel welcome!