

Fair Fields News

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On the Farm

Fall weather has stated to set in fast. We have had several nights with lows in the single digits and highs in the mid teens. Most seasons I hope for more heat around this time, but this year the change and drop in temperature has been most welcome! None the less, we are seeing the effects of cooler temperatures already. The raspberries have grown a bit slower over the past week. We are also seeing diseases like blight and mildew start to take over.

The crops most affected by blight are our tomatoes and potatoes. Our tomatoes succumb to blight every year, both in the field and the hoop house. They had a good run this year so we are not too concerned. We have also seen blight in some of our potatoes, and this is more concerning. Seed potatoes are fairly expensive and organic seed potatoes are not easy to find, so we try to save our own seed for 1–2 seasons before buying new stock. This is our first year with this stock and we are seeing some evidence of blight already. Blight infected potatoes, in addition

to spreading the disease, will not store well, meaning our seed could rot away over winter before we have a chance to plant it next spring... keeping fingers crossed!

With the fall weather, we have started to transition into our fall task list. The garlic has all been cured and cleaned and the onions have been harvested. Our next big harvest will be squash and then just storage potatoes. We are starting to put away the irrigation system, some of our fencing and other seasonal equipment and tools. There has been time to pick away at building projects, the greenhouse renovation last week. I always enjoy this time of year with the pressure slowly lifting, organizing and tidying up in preparation for winter and next season.

We were finally able to get a dry window to finish a bunch of field work. Ideally, we plant our oat and pea cover crop in the third or fourth week of August. This year there was about 5–6 inches of rain during that

time, so we have been unable to do it until now. We hope for a quick germination and warm temperatures for the rest of the month, so we can get a good enough stand (enough growth) to capture nutrients and prevent erosion this winter. Over the next couple of weeks we will also be trying to plant oilseed radish and fall rye cover crops.

With the change of the seasons is coming a change in the offerings. We suspect the tomatoes, peppers, eggplants, zucchini and cucumber to all die off over the next 2–3 weeks. Fall greens like spinach, arugula and cabbage are coming in as are both round and daikon radishes. The squash and pumpkins are looking beautiful and we will start giving them next week. We look forward to parsnips, rutabaga, celeriac and all of the lovely sweet earthy root vegetables that await...

Harvesting

- **Beets**
- **Carrots**
- **Cucumbers**
- **Eggplant**
- **Flowers**
- **Garlic**
- **Herbs**
- **Lettuce**
- **Onions**
- **Peppers**
- **Potatoes**
- **Raspberries**
- **Salad Mix**
- **Squash**
- **Zucchini**



Preserving ideas for Tomatoes

Making tomato sauce or simply canning whole tomatoes, can take a bit of time. The prime time for it also falls during late summer and early fall, a busy time for many people, when the thought of an all day canning session can be daunting...

We have explored and heard about many ways of

preserving tomatoes this year and thought we would share some with you.

One way to preserve tomatoes is simply to wash and freeze them. If you have a large fridge freezer or a chest freezer, this is a great option. When you are ready to use them you can take them out and quickly run them under warm water. At

this point the skins come off very easily and you can just peel them and throw them in the pot! A real advantage of freezing over canning, is you can take out what you need for a recipe and use them all, as opposed to opening a jar and then worrying about using the rest before they go off.

Nicole also started roasting tomatoes for sauce this year. As with freezing, roasting makes the skins very easy to take off. Roasting also evaporates off a lot of liquid, reducing your cooking time in the pot. Tomatoes can be roasted, chilled and put in the fridge or freezer until you have time to continue the saucing process.