

THE BUSY BEE

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Welcome to the Farm

By John

I have been thinking about this letter for a long time. For years I have dreamed of being in business for myself, running my own farm, a CSA. I always wondered, what would my farm be like? Who are the people that support the farm? What does CSA mean to them? How can I make my farm something truly special? I have thought of odd old bits wit of wisdom to include, anecdotes and observations that would make the perfect letter to introduce myself to my CSA members for the first time.

The better part of a decade later and I got 'nuttin'. There is simply too much to say, too much going on and too much emotion to put into a few hundred words. It simply isn't enough space to allow you to know Lidia and I. It will be an evolving process as we all become more comfortable with each other. Some of you who read this will become close friends of ours as we work together for the next 15 or 20 years. Others will not particularly like us and move on. It's an inexorable part of human nature and that these things happen. That we are at this precipice is very exciting for me. We are about to begin a journey together that has such a profound impact on the lives of Lidia and I that I am stymied for words to describe it.

This newsletter like the farm will evolve over time, the format will change, the content will shift, but the message will be the same. The newsletter will be more than just a recanting of last week's weather and some recipes for using obscure vegetables that only a CSA farmer would grow. Though, inevitably it will happen from time to

ON DECK FOR NEXT WEEK

More of the same can be expected for next weeks shares, though if the weather cooperates we will **PROBABLY** get into some tasty sugar snap peas, Arugula, Basil and if we are lucky, **MAYBE** heirloom beets and fresh cabbage.

time. Farmers are notoriously obsessed with the weather and can't help but talk about it and CSA farmers need to grow weird things to make well-rounded shares. But I think the point of a newsletter is to help the members understand the goings on at the farm. To feel like they really know what happens here and to feel more connected with the food they will receive every week and to the people who grow it. Not just as farmers but as people in their community. Some weeks it will be lousy with details about the weather and the tasks that were and were not completed. Some (hopefully with great rarity) will be about disasters that strike the farm. While others on occasion my not have much to do with farming or the farm at all but rather, our experiences as people outside of the farm. Albeit this time of year it is hard to imagine that a world exists beyond the farm. I will in generally leave politics alone except perhaps where it directly affects our ability to farm.

The bottom line is that we truly love farming. We work more hours per week than I wish to count because we take pride in what we do, and we want to share that love and passion with you. This is why our CSA will always come first. Not the farmers markets, not the retailers and not the wholesalers, but you. The CSA members, it is by you that may continue to live our dream.

Storage Tip

To keep your radishes and turnips fresh all week, trim the tops and store them in a plastic bag in the crisper drawer. Keep them separate from apples, bananas, melons, avocados, peaches and pears.



Lidia washing radishes with our new pressure washer

Recipe of the Week

Baby White Turnip Salad with Toasted Pecans and Bacon

4 small white turnips with their greens attached

1/4 c. pecan halves or pieces 3 oz. Bacon

2 garlic scapes or fresh garlic, chopped

Salt and pepper, to taste

1-2 Tbsp. balsamic vinegar

1-2 Tbsp. olive oil

Preheat the oven to 350. Remove the greens from the turnips. Tear the leaves with your hands into medium to large pieces and set aside. Slice turnips as thin as possible (use a mandoline if you have one). Put into a bowl of ice water. Toast the pecans in the oven just until they start to brown. Remove from the oven and set aside. In a non-stick pan, sauté the bacon until crunchy on the outside. Remove from the pan and set aside, reserving the fat. Prepare simple vinaigrette: combine vinegar with a pinch each of salt and pepper. Slowly drizzle in about 1-2 Tbsp. olive oil.

Set aside.

Heat the bacon fat in the same pan. Once hot, add the green garlic/onion and sauté until tender. Add greens to the pan, season with salt and just a splash of balsamic vinegar and cook until they are wilted. Remove the sliced turnips from the iced water bath, dry them with a kitchen towel and toss with the vinaigrette. Arrange the turnip slices and their greens in a mound and sprinkle bacon and pecans on top.

Final Thoughts

We want to extend our deepest gratitude towards Gardens of Eagan and Linda Halley in particular. Their continued support makes this all possible.

News and Notes

- If you haven't already noticed, we do CSA a bit different than most farms in the Midwest. We have as strong an aversion to wax boxes as we do for love of choice. With that in mind you might want to bring a reusable market bag each week though we will keep plastic bags on hand each week.
- Well-seasoned CSA members know that eating seasonally means lots of greens and lighter shares in June and into July. They also know that come mid-July you will hit CSA pay dirt for the duration.
- Volunteer Share members, please contact John or Lidia about your availability to play in the dirt with us
- If you are out to the farm in the next few weeks you can expect to see some baby chicks out on pasture eagerly awaiting the arrival of the culled sweet corn and watermelon.