



BLUE GOOSE NEWS

AUGUST 28 - 30, 2018 – WEEK 13

From the Farmer...

At our farm, we have had a hard time with strawberries. Over the past few years, we did a lot of work for little in return. When our berries were at their best and we were doing well with tending them, we had used berry plugs that we bought in New Jersey. And even then it didn't seem worth it for all the travel and expense. Don't get me wrong, the flavor was incredible, and we certainly enjoyed indulging in the pleasure of eating our way through the berry patch when it came time to pick. But all-in-all, on paper, things didn't look the way I had hoped.

This year, I found a place in Shippensburg that grows and sells strawberry plugs. It was less than a third of the travel and the whole process seemed much better. We planted 6,000 plants last week! The plugs are in the landscape fabric (as you can see in the picture to the right). We tilled the ground, rolled out the fabric and burned the holes 12 inches apart, then planted them all by hand. As I was planting most of them, I had the kids put up the electric fence to keep out the deer. Many of you may remember our horror stories of the deer invading our berry patches over the years. Well, enough is enough. And a farmer's gotta do, what a farmer's gotta do! So an electric fence it is. Once the plants become established over the next two months, we will cover them up with row cover to hold them and protect them through the winter. This is the only way I have found to grow them without using any sprays.

With this particular strawberry system (hence the name...Annual Strawberry System), they will only stay in for one season. We will rip out the plants next July, then till the ground and do it all over again. This way there is not a chance for diseases to build up because the plants are in that ground such a short time. Also, weed pressure is much less of a problem because as soon as weeds become a real problem, the strawberries are already harvested and done for the season. It just sounds too good to be true.

On my end, I was disappointed this past June. It just didn't feel right not having strawberries for my CSA members this year. The berries seemed to be the best "kick off" to the season each summer. And with a little luck (and a lot of prayer), we will have those luscious strawberries again next year!

Have a great week,
Scott & Chrissy Farabaugh

IN THE BOX THIS WEEK

Cabbage
Celery
Corn
Grape Tomatoes
Green Beans
Green Peppers
Onion
Potatoes
Roma Tomatoes

NEXT WEEK'S BEST GUESSES

Carrots
Grape Tomatoes
Hot Peppers
Potatoes
Roma Tomatoes
Winter Squash



Our electrified strawberry patch!



Pretty,
Pretty
Cabbages.



FOOD FOR THOUGHT



HOW TO CUT CELERY

It seems that those pesky “strings” on celery is what deters many people from eating celery. Fortunately, Farmer Scott’s Tango Celery doesn’t often have this problem. But, here is a simple trick to rid those strings when you do get them before proceeding with slicing or dicing those stalks.

First, using a paring knife, score the lower part of a stalk. Using your hands, gently break the stalk but keep strings attached.



Then gently pull the smaller portion of the stalk down along the bigger portion of stalk to remove the strings. Now, with a cleaner celery stalk, you can proceed with slicing. Or if you prefer dicing, here is a nice trick to keep it easy and quick:

Keep the leaf end attached and slice lengthwise in thin strips. Then cut crosswise creating tiny diced pieces.



And don’t forget the celery leaves.

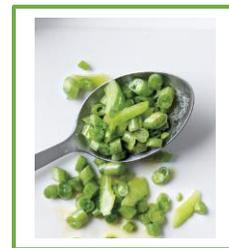


They are often discarded, but they hold the most abundant flavor. Prep them as you would any herb by mincing, chopping, or even using whole leaf. Toss the leaves in salads, stir-fries, soups, dips, or vinaigrettes. Perhaps try them pureed in a pesto!

~ HAPPY EATING ~

FRESH GREEN BEAN AND CELERY SALAD

- 2 T apple cider vinegar
- 1 T Dijon mustard
- 1 T honey
- 1 T fresh lemon juice
- ½ t salt
- ½ t black pepper
- 2 T canola oil
- 1 lb. green beans, trimmed and cut into ¼-inch pieces (@3½-4 C)
- 1 ½ C celery, stalks halved and cut into ¼-inch



In a medium bowl, whisk together vinegar, mustard, and honey. Add seasonings and oil and continue to whisk. Add beans and celery, toss to combine.

NOTE: We added ½ C each of finely chopped celery leaves, chopped green onions, and chopped walnuts which made a very nice variation to this salad.

STEWED CABBAGE WITH PEPPERS AND ONIONS

(from immigrantstable.com)

- 1-2 onions, cut into thin strips
- 1-2 bell peppers, cut into thin strips
- 1 head cabbage, halved and thinly sliced
- 3-4 cloves garlic, coarsely chopped
- 1 can tomato paste (or 4-5 fresh tomatoes)
- 2 t dried oregano or basil (2 T if fresh)
- 1 t salt
- ½ t red pepper flakes (more if desired)
- 1 T sugar
- 1 T apple cider vinegar
- Chopped celery leaves, parsley, chives to taste (optional)



In a large skillet, saute onions over medium heat for 5-10 minutes or until translucent. Add peppers, saute another 5-10 minutes or until onions and peppers start to caramelize; stir occasionally. Add garlic, saute for 2 minutes. Add cabbage, stir to mix with other ingredients; cover with lid and cook for 15 minutes. Every 5 minutes, stir to be sure nothing is sticking to the bottom of the skillet. Add tomato paste and remaining ingredients and let them cook, uncovered for another 15 minutes. (If using fresh tomatoes, chop them finely and let them cook for 10 minutes before adding remaining ingredients. Taste and add seasonings to your liking. Serve over boiled or mashed potatoes, rice, or pasta.

NOTE: Slices of Italian sausage or kielbasa may be add for the meat lover without taking away from the integrity of the dish.

HAPPY EATING!