



Spring Greens CSA: Week 3

Here at the farm we're learning, working hard, and harvesting a lot! Every Monday we've been getting more and more plants in the ground, weeding problem areas, and setting up irrigation and other farm equipment to make our jobs easier in the future. Tuesdays and Wednesdays are our harvest days! We usually start off the day with a farm walk to assess the conditions of our crops, and to address any issues that we may need to make a discussion out of. Harvest is followed by washing and packing the veggies away into our cooler. On Wednesday evening, we prepare the barn for our CSA pick-up, and get to share our joy with all of you while you come and pick out your greens for the week. Thursday we usually have another work day, accomplishing things that can't be left for the entire weekend without attention. On Fridays we don't work very much! We sit down for a farm-fresh communal lunch, and students teach each other something they've learned about farming from their experience in the fields or from what they've learned from diving into a specific topic. Then we do it all again, gratefully! It seems that we're getting in a rhythm, and everyone is playing their part perfectly.



photo of Kale by Jennifer M. - Practicum Student

As the weeks pass by (too quickly might I add) we get to happily unveil new crops and new varieties to our CSA members. This week, we have two entirely new crops and three new varieties of crops you've already taken home and enjoyed. We're proud to provide you with beautiful, flavorful baby arugula and parsley this week - both of which have been growing in our passively heated hoop house. This is also the first week that we're harvesting Kale from the field (pictured above). Kale is always a hardy, early producer that provides for weeks on end and can be worked into many different types of meals.

"So, what's in the CSA for this week?"

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We could not be more thrilled to provide you with a bountiful share of hand harvested, hand washed, passion borne fresh vegetables

Deluxe Baby Lettuce Mix
Spicy Mix
Bloomsdale Spinach
Baby Arugula*
Victoria Head Lettuce
Redbor Kale*
Winterbor Kale*
Hakerei Turnips
Scarlet Queen Turnips*

Red Ace Beets
Roxanne Radishes
Green Onions
Parsley*

* = new this week

Things to Remember

- CSA pickup is on Wednesday from 4pm-6pm.
- We do not distribute our CSA's in boxes, so please bring a reusable produce bag to transport your share home in.
- If you can't make it during this time, please email or call us to arrange another time to come get your share. Contact info can be found at the footer of this email.



SFBS Practicum Students Cameron Skinner and Timothy McMillen start in on cultivating a 400' double row of garlic. This garlic has already been cultivated along the rows with a wheeled version of the scuffle hoe, and here they are using 7" wide Swiss-made glaser Stirrup hoes. Controlling weeds while they are

small, and doing it the day after a light rain mean the soil is soft and the work is fairly easy. I personally own the 3.5", 5" and 7" versions of of the glaser stirrup hoes and have more than 20 years of use on them, having only replaced the blade of the 5" one, so I guess that is the one that has seen the most use. Towne's Harvest Received a grant from the Gallatin Gardeners Club in 2014 to buy a few more, and we make use of these sturdy tools regularly.

- Mac Burgess, THG Director and Practicum Instructor

Tool of the Week

By Cameron S.



Agriculture first began 10,000 years ago in Mesopotamia. Shortly after the agricultural revolution came about so did a tool for weeding, shaping soil, and clearing land. The revolutionary new tool was called a hoe. The first hoes were made with animal bones, stone or animal antlers connected to a long wooden shaft. More recently, with the invention of metals, humans have been able to precisely shape their hoes. Today there are over 20 different kinds of hoes that are all similar but have slight variations on their use. You would be hard-pressed today to find a farmer without a few different hoes in their tool shed, especially the legendary scuffle hoe.

The scuffle hoe (dutch hoe, hula hoe, stirrup hoe, action hoe) consists of a hollow rectangular blade connected to a long shaft that you hold onto. The blade is sharp on both sides with a slight oscillating motion used to get one or two inches under the surface and push or pull to cultivate weeds. The blade typically ranges from 3-7 inches wide. This type of hoe is so popular now-a-days that you can get one on the back of a wheel, called a wheel hoe, to cultivate long strips of weeds, and even bigger to be able to pull a blade on the back of a tractor for bigger, wider, faster cultivation.

Hoes like the scuffle hoe have revolutionized farming since their invention thousands of years ago and continue to be an essential tool of farming to this day. Since the agricultural revolution made it possible to sustain a larger population, and since the hoe revolutionized agriculture, we all owe a little thanks to the humble tool that made it all possible, the hoe.

Crop of the Week

by Madde G. - Practicum Student

Spring Mix Baby Lettuce



For the past two weeks we have featured baby lettuce known as salad mix or spring mix, both planted from the Fedco “Deluxe” seed collection. The salad in

week 1 CSA was planted April 10 in our best high tunnel with a double layer of plastic with air inflation and thermostatically controlled fans for ventilation. The baby lettuce for week 2 and this week were from beds planted outside on 3/29 and 4/7. We plant many of our baby greens and small root crops (lettuce, spinach, mustard, arugula, radishes, turnips) with a 4-row precision seeder that with 3 passes plants 12 rows in a 30" bed. This close plant spacing doesn't leave room for any mechanical cultivation, so any weeding is done by hand. This close of plant spacing also allows for excellent crop competition with weeds.

The harvest process differed between the plantings due to the amount of weeds in the first week's harvest. We decided to examine the effort and time that went into harvesting and preparing the crop to determine if baby lettuce is economically viable at our scale when annual weeds are present. The spring mix was cut and harvested by hand with knives with any small weeds intermixed in the batch and later sorted through during the cleaning process. For week 1's harvest this sorting process was very time consuming and made us consider whether this crop was worth growing or not.

The second and third week's harvest from outside took much less time because there were no small annual weeds present. The earlier outdoor planting had a lot of weeds present, but they were large perennial weeds which we could harvest around easily. The later-planted other outdoor bed was completely weed free which also allowed for a fast harvest and cleaning time.

In the end both weeks harvests produced similar yields but we estimated that the first week's harvest took about two more hours to produce than the second week. In comparing these we determined that if we are able to keep the weeds under control, the spring mix is a great crop. Besides the conditions in the fan tunnel being warmer, it seemed to be somewhat chance which makes it hard to definitively say if it is economically viable or not. If we can determine what specific growth conditions keep the crop consistently weed free, it is a fairly easy and rewarding crop that we hope we can continue to harvest.

Bringing it to your Table

by Mac Burgess

Parsley is one of my favorite leafy greens. Relatively strong in flavor, with a nice substantial texture to it, this annual herb is our first offering from the umbelliferae (carrot) family this spring. I'm not offering a recipe here per se rather encouraging you to think beyond garnish and let parsley take center stage in a salad. At my house we eat a lot of what you might call tabbouleh,

but we use the term loosely. Don't think you cannot make tabbouleh because you don't have mint or tomatoes or time to cook bulgur wheat. Try any combination of quinoa, couscous, coarse corn grits, millet, or other grain with a healthy dose of finely chopped parsley, green onions, oil and vinegar or lemon juice, salt and pepper to taste, and don't be afraid to toss in some al dente lentils or other greens. Enjoy, there is more to come, along with close relatives cilantro, dill, carrots, and celeriac later this season.



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