



Summer CSA: Week 1

Welcome everyone! Whether you're a spring greens CSA member, or you're just on board for the summer, we want to say thank you for joining us for our Summer CSA. As with most farms, from week to week we continually encounter new challenges and learning opportunities. Our goal with this newsletter is not only to let you know what's going to be in your share this week, but to pass some of our learning experience on to all of you. The students have been having a wonderful time out on the farm, and we couldn't be happier with how things are going. As we continue to harvest new vegetables in different quantities we are filled with joy and a feeling of accomplishment. Our mission is to pack some of this passion into each share.

- Dylan Fishman, Marketing Manager

Things to Remember

- CSA pickup is every 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. Small produce bags will be helpful too as we start distributing some vegetables without bags or ties.
- 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.



Wild flowers and cut flowers are blooming all over the farm. These flowers give our pollinators a resource, make harvesting in the fields a beautiful experience, and can be cut for bouquets. We'll be selling some of our arrangements this week at CSA for \$8 each.

"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

Napoli (F1) Bulk Carrots

Sugar Snap and Sugar Ann Peas

Lacinato, Redbor (F1), and Winterbor (F1) Kale

Dragoon*, Breen*, and Truchas* Mini Romaine Lettuce

Guardman Scallions

Flash (F1) Collard Greens*

Azur Star (F1) Purple* and Winner (F1) Green Kohlrabi

Hera Dill

Aroma (F1) Basil*

U-pick herbs readily available upon request

Cut flowers available for \$8 a bouquet

* = new this week



Note from Towne's Harvest Director Dr. Mac Burgess.

Welcome to the 1st week of the Towne's Harvest Garden 2017 Summer CSA program. If you've been a supporter of our spring greens CSA for the last 6 weeks I hope you've enjoyed the veggies so far. If you're new, I think you'll be impressed by our offerings this year. It has been a year of extremes already, with a May snow storm, a light frost on June 12, and now a whole week of 90 degree high temperatures in the forecast. We're well equipped to deal with Montana weather, though, and like another Bozeman small farm says we are "insured by diversity". We also get a little bit of help from row cover and high tunnels. Early July has us in a period of transition where our cool season crops are rapidly finishing up and our warm season crops are just getting going. We are excited to share the bounty of this seasonal transition with you. Enjoy these last tastes of spring as you await the fruits of summer

We have 18 students enrolled in the Towne's Harvest Practicum this summer (the most we've had in recent years), and we have been hard at work for the past 7 weeks planting, cultivating, irrigating, and now harvesting for 60 CSA members. You'll also meet the students of the "Culinary Marketing- Farm to Table" course at Wednesday's CSA distribution. Please stop and visit when you come to pick up your share, I know the students learn a lot from the interactions

they have with our supporters.

We've also been thinking hard about our farm's sustainability- both the successes and challenges. We've pumped over 100,000 gallons of water (just a few inches on our ~2 acres in production), and we've started building compost piles for ongoing soil fertility management. In future weeks this newsletter will feature tool, veggie, and special project reports from our practicum students as well as biographies so you can get to know your farmers.

Our 2017 management team consists of MSU Alumnus (BS Horticulture, MS in Plant Pathology) Elisa Boyd as interim field manager, SFBS student Dylan Fishman as Assistant Manager of Marketing, and Conservation Biology Major Wes Cawood as our Assistant Manager of field operations.

Tool of the Week

By Althea Hogle

Harvest Knives

During the spring months there is a frenzy on the farm to till, prep, sow and plant. As the season progresses into summer, this frenzy is turned towards the harvest. You may think the natural star of the harvest is the lush array of vegetables brought to your table. However the bounty would not be the same without the tools that enable us to cut mass amounts of produce efficiently. On our farm, come time to harvest, a few main tools get the job done.

Field and Produce Knives:



With two edges this knife is an optimal harvest choice. The Short edge can be pushed against lettuce heads for a quick precise cut. The side edge is great for

trimming and harvesting broccoli, cabbage, cauliflower, kohlrabi and many other veggies.

The Trusty Pocket Knife:



Have an odd task that requires a knife? Or scissors? a saw? The pocket knife is always there to get you by, no matter what you need. Although handy for many things, using it for harvest may dull it.

Serrated Greens Knife:



These knives are particularly useful when cutting greens, herbs, and squash. Serrated Blades come in various curvatures and sizes depending on what you are looking to harvest.

*Images found on google images and through Johnny's Seeds website. Source information available upon request

Crop of the Week

By Dylan Fishman



Brassica oleracea

One specific species of plant dominates our plates and makes up a significant portion of our grocery stores produce section. *Brassica oleracea* is a species of many forms – Broccoli, Cabbage, Kale, Collard Greens, Kohlrabi, Brussel Sprouts, Cabbage, Cauliflower, and Romanesco all go by this genus and species. How did we get such a wide variety of shapes, colors, and flavors?

The history of *Brassica oleracea* isn't extremely well known, but we do know that the Romans and Greeks both cultivated it as types of cabbages. Over time, humans selected for the tastiest part of their plant creating distinct varieties in the process. Some selected for thick prolific leaves (kale and collards), some for tight fleshy leaves that store well (cabbage), some for a delicious immature inflorescence (broccoli, cauliflower and romanesco), some for a swollen stem (kohlrabi), and some for tight edible buds (brussel sprouts). Each selection suited the needs or wants of each group of people in each place. Cabbage is particularly important because it has a long storage potential and provides essential nutrients for people throughout the winter when fresh greens are scarce.

All varieties of *Brassica oleracea* share some similar characteristics. They're all cold hardy which makes them a wonderful crop to grow here in Montana. In fact, a slight frost often makes the leaves of kale sweeter than without! All of the plants have a flower with four petals in the shape of a cross which gave them their old taxonomic family name Cruciferae. Unfortunately, they all share a common pest too – the flea beetle. Flea beetles are one of the earliest pests to emerge, specifically targeting Brassica species, but also enjoy munching on Solanaceae species. We combat this problem by covering all of our Brassica transplants with row cover. Row cover is a thin synthetic fabric elevated off of the ground with wire hoops designed to keep pests out and retain heat. When the plants get large enough to where the pests can't stunt their growth we take the row cover off.

You'll be seeing *Brassica oleracea* species throughout our summer CSA! We hope

you enjoy the diversity seen within this species and find a way to uniquely prepare each one to your heart's delight.



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Contact Dylan Fishman at
(847) 409-5567 with any questions