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Spring Greens: Week 4

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Spring Greens: Week 4

These past two weeks we transitioned from spring to summer by transplanting some of our favorite plants into our hoop houses. Last week we took out a lot of our greens, which can thrive outside just fine now, and put in the last of our tomatoes, peppers, and eggplants.



Despite our summer preparations, on Monday morning our weather applications predicted a night of freezing weather. We took heed of this warning and took the time to row cover more of, but not all of, our winter squash and green beans. All we could do was hope that the weather would stay above freezing, or only dip below for a short period of time.

Upon waking up Tuesday morning, the weather station on the farm reported temperatures of 32 degrees at 3:00am and 30 degrees at 6:00am which means we had at least three hours of freezing and below freezing temperatures. We hesitantly came to the farm to find frost resting on a lot of our outdoor vegetables in the field.

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When the frost is still on the plants, it's really hard to tell if the plant is going to be okay or not. We discussed the implications of this frost and waited until the sun took its official position in the sky and melted the frost away to assess the damage. We found that we had lost some squash, pumpkins, and maybe some chard, but not nearly as much as we thought we were going to lose! We would've lost more if we hadn't row covered our squash on Monday, and would've been facing close to total losses on both summer and winter squash. Instead, we saved a couple rows so that we still have some squash coming our way, but now we have to decide a plan of action - do we seed more and hope it ripens in time? Do we buy transplants from someone to ensure a healthy, quick start, and ripe fruit? This is still a discussion that we have to have and decide upon.



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have some really amazing additions to offer all of our members including some root crops that stray away from the theme of spring greens, but are an essential part of Montana's early season food system. Enjoy this week's offering, and please come prepared to CSA pickup with some stories and experiences from what you received last week, how the weather affected your plants, or anything else you think we may find interesting!

Student Biography

by Kellene Zepeda



Katherine Going is a Sustainable Food and Bio Energy Systems major at MSU. Her degree has a concentration on Sustainable Food Systems. She was born in San Francisco, California, but she was raised in Mount Vernon, Washington. Katherine's favorite vegetable is the snap pea, however, she told me that choosing a favorite vegetable is almost impossible. She was fortunate to be exposed to farming and gardening as a child and young adult with her family. They grew snap peas, tomatoes, strawberries, green beans, pumpkins and various other varieties of fruits and vegetables.

The experience of cooking the food that was grown in the family garden sparked her

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program. This will give her the experience in community supported gardening, immigrant nutritional education, and farm to table education for young people which is the field that she would like to have a career in in the future.

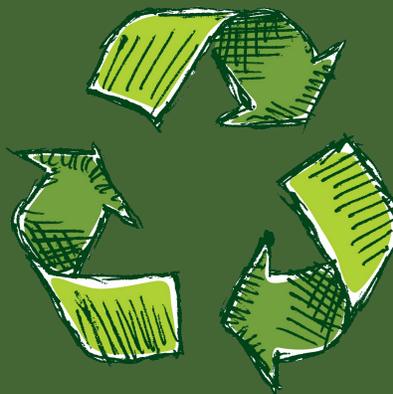
What's in the CSA this week?

Spring Greens: Week 4

Green Magic (F1) Broccoli*
 Guardsman Green Onions*
 Hakurei (F1) Salad Turnips
 Redbor (F1) and Winterbor* (F1) Kale
 Red Ace (F1) Beets*
 Napoli (F1) Carrots*
 Tiara (F1) Green Cabbage*
 Spicier Mix (Arugula and Spicy Micro Mix)
 Chives

* = new variety or item

Do I Need to Bring Anything?



Towne's Harvest Garden is trying to use the least amount of plastic as possible - therefore, we ask that you please bring your own large reusable grocery bags and small produce bags every week. We will have extra produce bags on hand, but we'd love it if we could reduce the amount we provide to zero. Other than that, just bring us any questions you might have and a smiling face!

Favorite Veggie Report:

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Broccoli
by Jen Jones

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Broccoli (*Brassica oleracea*), a well-known vegetable that is hated by some and loved by others, is a member of the Brassicaceae family, along with cauliflower, Brussels sprout, and cabbage. Interestingly, its plant family was once referred to as the Cruciferae, or “cross-bearing” family, due to the cross-like image formed by the four petals of the plants’ flowers. ¹ Typically grown in cooler temperatures, broccoli can be a tough vegetable to grow in Montana, as it requires constant moisture. Some varieties that grow better in our climate are the Green Magic, Gypsy, Diplomat, and Arcadia hybrid varieties. From direct seed, broccoli can take anywhere from 64 to 160 days to mature, depending on the variety. Transplants will take 44 to 140 days to mature. Although usually green, broccoli can also come in purple varieties. ² While broccoli florets are typically the only part of the plant eaten, broccoli stems are edible as well and make for a great snack to munch on throughout the day. Among other benefits, broccoli provides a whole list of nutrients, including vitamins A, B, and C; magnesium; calcium; potassium; iron; zinc; and carotene. ³ Many people revolt at the thought of eating broccoli in its raw form, which is understandable, due to its bitter, somewhat “pungent” taste. ⁴ However, it can be prepared in a variety of ways that make it both delicious and healthy. ⁵ Simply steam it, roast it, or sauté it with a dash of pepper, salt, and red pepper flakes, and the problem is solved. One of my favorite ways to prepare broccoli is to use it in a cream of broccoli soup. ⁶

In this week’s CSA, Towne’s Harvest Garden is featuring Green Magic (F1) broccoli, a unique hybrid variety that really is a bundle of green “magic” for several reasons. First, this particular variety has an exceptional tolerance to heat, which is amazing, considering that most broccoli varieties fail to perform well in hot climates. Second, Green Magic grows incredibly uniform, smooth, and attractive-looking, blueish-green broccoli heads, making for nice presentation; the flavor is even pleasantly “buttery,” according to some ⁷. Third, its days to maturity from transplants are comparatively short, only fifty-seven, compared to another variety’s seventy-one. ² Lastly, Green Magic broccoli, as well as broccoli in general, is considered a super food because of its cancer-fighting capabilities found in its incredible compound, sulforaphane. ⁹ No more skimping on the broccoli!

¹<http://www.newworldencyclopedia.org/entry/Broccoli>

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- [7https://parkseed.com/green-magic-hybrid-broccoli-seeds/p/52493-PK-P1/](https://parkseed.com/green-magic-hybrid-broccoli-seeds/p/52493-PK-P1/)
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Contact Dylan Fishman at
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