

CSA
WEEKLY

Week 9
2108

In The Box:

- Okra
- Cherry Tomatoes
- Banana Peppers
- Dill
- Green Beans
- New potatoes
- TOMATOES
- Zucchini
- Yellow Squash
- Onions

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LIFE ON THE FARM

Though I thoroughly enjoy writing the newsletter, it sometimes falls down on the priority list. Thank you for your understanding last week when it just didn't happen. As stated in the "unofficial" edition last week, we had our inspection on Friday and I learned a lot. See "Farm Lesson for the City Girl" section on page two for more info.

Back to (improved) business this week—waiting on rain. Others around us are getting some while we aren't getting any. The area storms of a few weeks ago help keep that frustration in check as those nearby had major damage and we didn't have any. So if the storms are going to miss us, we will deal with the rain missing us and be thankful for that as well.

Some new appearances in the box this week: okra, cherry tomatoes, banana peppers. Dill is back for another showing and beets are taking the week off. There are lots of little blooms on in the pumpkin/melon field and hoping for cucumbers next week. Many of the new plantings and the established plants just need some rain for a kickstart. Dale is watching and figuring out how he may need to get some water to the far corners of the farm.

You will see Bridgewater Farm making an appearance at a new attraction in West Des Moines—Hy-Vee Health Market. **GRAND OPENING TODAY.** It is a new concept store near Jordan Creek Town Center, concentrating on fresh produce/organic items. We dropped off some items over the weekend and got a "sneak peak" of the inside. For you Winterset folks, a familiar face is running the produce department and she was instrumental in making us a supplier based on her involvement with us in the past in Winterset and our growing relationship with Hy-Vee. Stop in to check it out and say hi.

Sweet potatoes are almost all weeded thanks to the diligence of the crew. Field tomatoes and peppers are getting full weeding attention now. High tunnel tomatoes are keeping Dale busy with about 4-500 lbs a week going to stores in addition to those for CSA and farmer's market. That will continue to increase as more plants produce. We are trying to keep up with the production and the demand.

ADDITIONAL WORKERS ARE NEEDED: We have recently lost a couple employees for health reasons or other job opportunities. We can be very flexible with schedules and currently have mostly part-time workers: moms, those who come mornings or afternoons only, those with other jobs who come once a week, weekend workers, etc. How about you? Your friends/relatives? Please pass the word and our contact information.

Thank you for being a part of our dream and supporting Bridgewater Farm!

-Food Storage Tips-

Okra: wrap in paper towel, store in paper bag in crisper

Banana peppers: refrigerate in paper bag in crisper

Zucchini/Squash: Refrigerate in plastic bag, do not wash until ready to use

Beets: maintain tail, bag root bulbs, store in crisper drawer, keep leaves in separate bag

Tomatoes: room temperature, single layer out of direct sunlight, stem side down to keep fresher longer and finish ripening

Green Beans: store unwashed in reusable container or plastic bag in refrigerator crisper.

New Potatoes: Do not wash until ready to use. Store in paper bag or loosely wrapped plastic in fridge. Use within a few days

Onions: vented and closed brown paper bag (use lunch size for air flow, paper punch to vent, paper clip to close), store in cool, dark, dry place AWAY from potatoes

Food for Thought

“Never sacrifice the ultimate on the altar of the immediate.”

(Author unknown)

I remember this statement from my teenage years and believe it was part of a pastor's message but couldn't tell you whose message it was and haven't been able to locate a source. Perhaps it was original with that pastor, but I have referred to this simple and memorable statement throughout my life in a variety of situations, both everyday choices and major decisions. It applies to life, food, work, etc.

Farm Lessons for the City Girl:

This week's lesson: priorities. It seems that on the farm, EVERYTHING is a priority! Planting is obviously important, as well as the resulting harvest. Planting must be done at the right time, with (hopefully) the right weather/soil conditions, and then items must be harvested at right time: when it is ripe, when it is safe for the plant to be touched, and when those conditions are met—when it is needed for you, for a farmer's market, for a store order. Those things regulate the day for this farm and the weather regulates (almost) EVERYTHING!!

Never before have I paid much attention to the weather. I used to look out the window/open the door to see how I needed to dress for the day on my walk to work. Now I see Dale checking the weather numerous times on his phone and watching the weather news at least once a day and therefore, I pay more attention to it as well. When you are always planting/harvesting instead of the conventional spring/fall, the weather plays a major part every week. I can't even begin to comprehend all the things Dale tries to keep track of and my appreciation and understanding for the farm life that produces the food that I used to just pick up at the store has increased GREATLY!

Back to priorities, with so many things that HAVE to be done (the immediate), it is hard to take/make time for the other important things that make the farm run smoothly/successfully (the ultimate). Since I am new to this, our recent organic certification inspection provided an excellent opportunity to “pick the brain” of our inspector for best practices/tips/guidelines for the many things we have to track/document in the operation. He was an organic farmer, now inspector, so he has been where we are, therefore making the information practical/invaluable. I am a detail-person by nature and can tend to overdo the specifics and Dale would rather just grow plants and forget paperwork. It was helpful to both of us: I was encouraged to concentrate on the necessary details (that's easy) to be in compliance and run a good business (that's the desire), but not let the many additional details (the immediate) interfere with the efficient running of the business (the ultimate). Dale was encouraged to take more time for some of the documentation (the immediate) to help him better analyze the daily work and how it relates/affects the success (the ultimate) of the whole operation. They are two sides of the same coin, but the same coin and both are needed to make the coin valuable.

Recipe of the Week: Okra with Tomatoes

(website: Food Network)

(I'm not sure I want to cook 4 c of okra for my first taste but seems like recipe would be easy enough to reduce). All things on hand here and most in your CSA box, so giving it a try!

Saute 4 smashed garlic cloves in 3 T olive oil over medium heat until golden.

Add 4 Cups okra (halved lengthwise) and 1 small onion (cut into wedges); season with salt and pepper and cook until okra is tender and bright, 10-12 minutes.

Add 1 pt halved cherry tomatoes; cook until just bursting, 3 minutes. Finish with a splash of cider vinegar.