

### **Farm News**

Welcome! It's almost time to start. We've been getting a lot of calls wondering when the first pick up will be so we figured we'd better send this off saying that we'll start the week of June 18<sup>th</sup>. It has been a very cold spring, with small snow storms into April, threats of snow in early May, and we even had a frost on May 18, a week later than normal. The early plantings of peas and greens didn't make it, despite multiple plantings. Even now it has been cold at night, with temperatures in the 40's three nights this week. But the days are warming nicely and things are coming along. We have planted some of the early greens again, some for the third time, and it's looking much better. We will try peas again in the fall.

On a much more positive note, we are way ahead of last year with getting stuff in the ground. We already have the tomatoes and eggplants out and about 5 acres of veggies planted. It was dry, but we got some rain, avoiding the hail, luckily. We just need those cold nights to warm up so the plants will really take off. The first couple weeks will be slow, but after that it looks great.

We're trying artichokes, soy beans and sweet potatoes for the first time this year, as well as celery and celeriac again. We're also planting a few different kinds of melons and beans. And there's already quite a bit of corn transplanted in our great new field on Graniteville Road in Westford. We're looking forward to a fantastic 10<sup>th</sup> year!

Our daughter, Michalle (aka Blondie), & Mike & I have been joined by Paul, who is living with us and working hard on the farm this year. Our nephew, Patrick, will be back as well as the crew from last year, Emily (already here) & Erin. We also have a new person, Annie. Our granddaughter, Allie (the little blonde) has taken on the role of chief egg cleaner. It's a big responsibility, so make sure to let her know how she's doing. Member Anna Barker will be back to help with the newsletter on a part time basis. Volume 10 already! We got better last year about putting the newsletters on the website in a timely fashion. We'll try to keep it up. We've hit a milestone. One of the kids from a family who got a share is now getting her own share!

As always, we encourage you to consider this "your farm" and to come visit anytime. Directions can be seen on our website at [bearhillfarmcsa.com](http://bearhillfarmcsa.com). I've trimmed the established plants in the pick-your-own herb bed and planted some more. The chickens are laying so we have eggs. We were planning on raising some more pigs like last year and we'll have pork for sale the first week. Old members will be impressed with the new land we've cleared.

### **Homeless Shelter**

For quite a while members have contributed towards donating shares to the Pawtucket House, a family shelter in Lowell. We already have 1 full share, and we're also taking donations of any amount to add together to make up more shares as well. We can provide you with the info so that it will be tax deductible. Over the years we've had 2 to 4 shares donated, which adds up to a lot of food.

### **Pick-up**

The first pick up is the week of June 18th, rain or shine as always. We don't take holidays off either. We will try to make up for the late start in the fall. At the beginning there won't be a lot, and there may be some short weeks even after we've started, so please be patient with us. As soon as the warm weather sets in things will pop out of the ground.

Pick-up is any time between 3 and 7 on Mondays, Wednesdays or Fridays. Feel free to call if you don't remember which pick-up day you've chosen. If you go on vacation & would like to switch your day for a week PLEASE let us know a week ahead of time. You can have friends pick up for you as long as you explain to them what to do. That way we won't waste your veggies if you don't show up on your chosen day. We can't donate shares to the shelter that aren't picked up because we have no way of getting them there unless we know a week ahead.

Our farm dog, Missy, is now 15! She's pretty deaf, but she's still getting around. The only rule is no dogs, please, there are too many small children. Speaking of which, please make sure they are extra careful around the road since some people drive fast. There is also quite a bit of poison ivy on the farm, adjacent to paths, particularly on stone walls. Be careful! The only other rule is no kids down by the pond without a grownup that can swim, for obvious reasons. The area around the irrigation pond has been cleared, so we need to be more careful. Park anywhere but in the bar ways (which look like dirt roads within the farm).

The farm stand is up a short path next to the shop on the same side of the road as the house. All you have to do is read the board to see what a full share is and chose your veggies. Cross your name off first so we know you've been by. We have a full share listed, so people who split shares should pick out a whole share and then divide it up to prevent confusion. If your share partner is also coming to the farm separately make sure their bag is labeled so they know it's theirs and feel free to leave them notes on the sign in sheet.

Please bring your own plastic or cloth bags since the veggies are often wet. We'll also take your clean egg cartons to reuse. Looking forward to seeing you soon!