



# Bear Prints

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In case you forgot, second payments of \$260 WERE due by August 1st. I don't understand, but we have 25 people who still owe us money. Perhaps we didn't get the check you sent in the mail? I've starred names on the list, so please talk to us before next week. Thanks to people who have made arrangements. At least one person noted that she hasn't been reading the newsletter, so she didn't get the reminder. Take a printed copy if you won't get one off the website.

Have you forgotten to cross your name off the list? Do you split a share and accidentally each take a full share instead of splitting? We've all been known to miscount, but we've noticed lately that we are short at the end of the day. It seems a coincidence that everyone picking is miscounting. The other day I found a non member trying to pick up! In his defense, he might have thought it was more a farm stand. However, please be careful and cross off your name and don't take extra so we don't short anyone at the end of the day. After 7 we don't usually pick more, so if you came late & missed something, let us know. Thanks!

## Farm News

Yet another stressful week of rain. We still didn't get to plant all the stuff we had proposed to get in the ground last week (& the week before). We try not to be too whiny in the newsletter, but still be honest. Seems we have to give you the bad news that the tomato crop this season will be almost a total loss. The plants were hit hard by the hail this spring and never fully recovered. All the rain and humidity promoted early blight, a soil borne disease, which hit harder since the plants were already stressed. We tried a second planting, but we just couldn't get them in the ground with all the rain we've had & now it's too late. We'll give out whatever we can, but they probably won't look too good. That part of the field is very depressing. This hits us hard, as the tomato crop is our biggest money maker at the Sat. farmers market. Luckily we got the flowers planted this year, and we've been selling those at the market. We'll do our best with other veggies. We did get another planting of greens in the ground in front of the farmstand. You can watch their progress. Usually we just do one planting of them for the season, but with all the rain, even the greens are going down! The good news is that we still have 2 guinea hens and I baby. We had melons last week and hopefully this week, too, with another planting coming along. The sweet potatoes didn't seem to sustain any lasting damage from the deer (although we don't know how they feel about all this rain). I'm a little nervous to say any more. Remember how I mentioned the melons and then the deer found them?!

## What's New In Your Share This Week

Remember to help yourself to the cherry tomatoes and to save some for your co-members. Soon there will be a ton, hopefully. Don't forget the pick your own herbs, too. New this week is **carrots**. Usually we leave the tops on so the kids can see how they grow. This time we have to cut them off for you, though, because the tops are going down with all the rain. You'd have to cut them off to store them anyway. They are growing in front of the farm stand. They came up very thick this spring, for the first time ever. I should have thinned them, but I couldn't bring myself to "kill" baby carrots. I think they are best just eaten raw. If you must cook them, little gilding is necessary. Nothing like a fresh, sweet carrot (except for beet lovers maybe). Also new this week may be **cantaloupe** and **Asian melons**. As with the watermelon, we'll have a knife and plastic wrap if you split a share. They don't need much instructions. Just cut in half, scoop out the seeds and enjoy! The Asian

melons have a sweet, crisp, white flesh that is reminiscent of a pear. They might not all be ready at once, so if you don't get them this week, you may get some next week or it may be given out as a choice. We will also have **yellow storage onions** and **garlic**. Don't keep either in the refrigerator, as it is too moist in there. If they are wet, dry them out on the counter, then keep them in a cool dry place for storage. I've read you aren't supposed to store potatoes and onions together, too. You can cut the top stalk off your garlic. We just leave it on as a way to tie them up and hang them in the storage barn. That way they get plenty of air circulation. We save a bunch for seed stock for next year. Garlic is planted in the fall and harvested in late July usually, so it's a long season crop. More good news to report. The wrens have another family growing in the shed. They eat a lot of bugs, so we like having these cheerful birds around. We have a member named Wren.

## Bear Hill Farm CSA

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PICK UP MONDAY, WEDNESDAY, OR  
FRIDAY  
3 PM UNTIL 7 PM (but you can come late)

(Please make arrangements at least one week  
in advance to switch your pick-up day.)



COME ANYTIME —  
THIS IS YOUR FARM!

## Let us appreciate our lettuce.

Since most people already think I'm a little bit nutty, I hesitate to confess that in addition to being a CSA member, I also go to at least one farmer's market every week. I shop for fruit, handmade soap, extra veggies to freeze for the winter...and anyway, I just love the atmosphere. Yet one thing I rarely find at a New England farmer's market is **lettuce** in July and August. Lettuce is a cool-season crop, and it's just too much of a pain to bring it along in the heat of the summer. (A cool summer is preferable, but how can you predict in June what the temps will be in August? And *no* vegetable likes to float in rainwater!)

Lettuce can be direct-seeded—the seeds sown directly in the ground — in early spring and again in August for a fall crop. For the rest of the season, though, you have to start each seed in a little plug, keep it cool for germination, and then transplant it (again, on a day when the ground is not *muddy*—haha, when is that?). It's important to plan ahead, since lettuce requires 30-60 days from seed to maturity, depending on the variety. And do this consistently every two weeks ("succession planting") if you want to be rolling in lettuce all summer. There are special varieties of lettuce that tolerate heat better; those that are not "heat resistant" will become bitter or bolt right before your eyes. If you get a "loser" variety, though, you may not know it until the first harvest—at which point, you've already started plantings for future harvests. (Anne told me this happened to them this year. Bummer.)

Which brings me to Bear Hill Farm. Our farmers make a special effort to ensure that we have, to the extent humanly possible, a head of lettuce each week. Can you feel the love in that? I think of it as the same as mom putting a heart-shaped cookie in your lunchbox once a week. It wasn't until I became a mom myself that I understood how much forethought has to go into little touches like that. And how much a word of thanks is appreciated every now and then. (Hint hint!) — Anna Barker (annabarker@charter.net)

## Recipes: Basil

*It looks like the basil crop is doing pretty well this year. I say hooray because I love to make gobs and gobs of pesto. On the other hand, there are plenty of other recipes that use this sweet spicy leaf. Here is one from allrecipes.com. It gets a 5-star rating. — AB*

### Feta Cheese with Basil Salad

1/2 C chopped walnuts

1 pint cherry tomatoes, halved

1 bunch fresh basil leaves, sliced [I'm guessing 3 cups leaves]

1 bunch green onions, sliced

1 avocado, peeled and diced

1 (6 ounce) package crumbled feta cheese with basil and sun-dried tomatoes

1/2 C kalamata olives, pitted and chopped

1 red bell pepper, seeded and diced

Garlic salt to taste

1 TBS balsamic vinegar, or to taste

1 TBS extra-virgin olive oil, or to taste

Place the walnuts in a small skillet over medium heat. Cook, stirring constantly, until golden brown. In a bowl, gently mix the first 8 ingredients (through red bell pepper). Season with garlic salt, and drizzle with balsamic vinegar and olive oil. Allow to sit about 15 minutes, and toss again just before serving. (Serves 6.)

### Other Uses for Fresh Basil (besides pesto)

- Stirred into and/or sprinkled on top of tomato soup
- In a grilled cheese sandwich
- Mixed with any pasta sauce, of course
- Added to lettuce leaves to extend a green salad
- Combined with chicken breasts (add goat cheese and sun-dried tomatoes for "California cuisine," coconut milk and hot peppers for an Asian taste)
- As a marinade for shrimp, with olive oil and lemon juice
- Pizza
- Freeze or dry the rest—to dry basil, just hang a bunch upside down in a cool dry place (tying it up inside a brown paper bag keeps it from crumbling all over)

## Next Week: Special Double Issue FRUGAL FOOD

With prices continuing to rise and a looonng winter ahead, how do we save up enough money to feed our families well while still living sustainably?

Please send in your recipes and tips  
to share with us:  
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