

Jenny-Jack Sun Farm

"good food news"

Two of the people's favorite crops, carrot and strawberries, made the morning to-do list this week. The agenda dictated that we harvest fall's first carrots for CSA members and plant the first few beds of strawberries in anticipation of a bountiful spring harvest. We shall begin here with the sweet tooth crop requiring a tooth or two to crunch.

The inspirational and charming carrots are a shoe-in every year for a superlative like "Best Tasting Veg" or "Best All-Around" or "Most loved because it's juice-able and the kid will eat it." The bright, bite-sized taproot is so endearing that all neighboring vegetables would unhesitatingly choose to have a beer with it even over the 'Watermelon' radish, with the enticing spice and deep red center. And to our begrudging dismay the carrot has only made an appearance in one of the four-100 ft. beds seeded. Let's dwell on that dagger to the heart a bit more. Each 100 ft. bed is wide enough to include three rows of an attractive variety like 'Nelson', 'Scarlet Nantes', 'Mokum', and 'Purple Haze.' That's 12-100 ft. rows seeded straight down the lifted dirt as pretty as hard work, where they had all they ever needed to be happy. After 14 days only three of the twelve rows were capable of making it above the soil. The rest mysteriously disappeared, we believe from the penetrating rule of tyrannical fire ants. They either devoured the seed outright, munched the tender, emerging seedlings once they germinated, or performed some freakish fire ant fetish on those poor seeds unknown to the carrot farming masses. So, you dance with who shows up and we have a fourth of what we expected but a tasting nonetheless. I think fire ants are scarier than fear mongering. Both seem to siphon courage and resolve from tumultuous times, both sting and it hurts, but at least fear mongers aren't stirring up sub-soil trouble.

The elegant and captivating strawberry was on our minds this week as we tucked half a field of plugs politely into the amended soil. The hope is that by planting the 1500 plants beneath the black landscape fabric in October, the roots will establish before winter and come early spring, vines will stretch out like morning, free to form the coveted fruit early and often. Of course, before we planted we battled trillions of ants attempting to setup house along the lines of drip tube running the length of our beds. They've eaten hundreds of transplants, beet and carrot seed, and God knows what else we accidentally blamed on some other hapless vagrant and not a single safe killing approach seems too effective. Please God, let us keep the valuable assortment of endangered toads, frogs, and woodpeckers, but to make plenty of room for these species to survive, relieve our bare feet and broken-hearted fields of the uninvited, underwhelming, and unnecessary fire ant. With visions of fields free of tunneling, seed-snatching bullies, amen.

What Is Available to Buy at the On Farm Market?

Arugula, Garlic, Butternut Squash, Turnip Greens, Kale, Lettuce, Sweet Potatoes, Rainbow Chard, Radish, Beets, Stone Ground Grits, Eggs, Foster's honey (Columbus), Bulger Creek Goat Cheese and Soap, Comerford Farms Ground Beef, Bariani Olive Oil and Balsamic Vinegar, and an assortment of canned goods made at the farm.

Sue B's breads and granola bars will be at market tomorrow. Jenny will also be selling some delicious Pumpkin Pecan muffins (made with butternut squash and pecans from the farm).

We also will be selling select pork cuts from our heritage breed pigs. Smoke-cured ham: ~\$12.00/package (\$8#), Pork Chops- \$8.50/#, Smoked Ham Hocks- \$5/ #, and Sausage (patty and link, mild, medium, and hot): \$6.50/#. We also have lard available for those adventurous, rendering types.

Pictures of the Week



All five of these beds were seeded with carrots in August and only one (the second bed from the left) germinated successfully. Dill, cilantro and parsley are planted to the left of the carrots. Lettuce and mizuna to the right.



Miranda is slinging the washed turnip bunches dry before packaging them for tomorrow's on farm CSA pick-up. The lovely carrots glisten in the parched light.

Our produce may be found at the Market on Broadway in Columbus from 9-12 on Saturdays and our On Farm Market Wednesdays from 9-12. We have a 140 member CSA with drop-off locations in Lagrange, Columbus, and On-farm. You can also find our produce on the menu of Food Blossoms Catering out of Hamilton and the Bakery and Café in Pine Mountain.

Take good care,
Chris and Jenny