

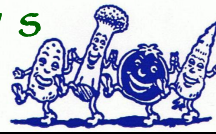
Enterprise Farm News

Week of May 24, 2010

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Dear Members & Friends,

In case you forgot, the farmshare program is on vacation this week. **With the end of another East Coast share season, we'd like to THANK YOU for your support of all that we do!**

From November to May, in so many ways, each member allows us to bring the best of the season from small, organic farms up and down the East Coast. We've been reading through the answers & comments from our latest member survey, and we really appreciate all of your feedback.

We're taking a week off from the farm share, but that doesn't mean we're taking a vacation! It's one of our biggest planting weeks of the year. This week, we're seeding all our winter squash, plus beans, cucumbers, zucchini, and another succession of arugula & salad mix. We're transplanting sets of fennel, radicchio, tomatoes, onions, cabbage, and strawberries. We're harvesting the first spinach, rapini, lettuces, and baby bok choy of the season. If you visit the Northampton, Somerville, or Brookline Farmers' Markets, we'll see you there! For those on board for the Local farmshare, it all starts next week. **Looking forward to a great Local season with you!**

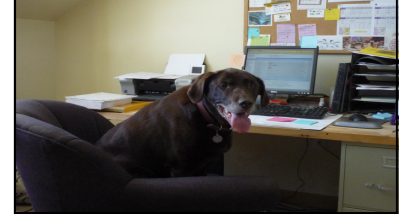
~ Dave Jackson and the Enterprise Crew



Potato planting.

Dave Weighs In

Mr. Jackson has been spending so much time on the tractor these days, we had to bring in an understudy. This is Dave. He hangs out in the office, he wanders through the greenhouse, and he entertains us during lunch, offering opinions on everything from fashion to local politics.



On the subject of the farmshare program, Dave has a few observations to offer up. We are currently on hiatus after our second East Coast season, and in many ways it was vastly different from the first season. For one thing, the weather in the Southeast was unpredictable, challenging our ability to keep up with produce availability and maintain a varied share each week. We went from a year of endless cucumbers, oranges, and melons to a winter of greens and grapefruit. This winter taught us to find new ways of being resilient in our sourcing. It taught us the importance of our relationships with our partner farmers to the north and south. And the local sourcing that we were able to do in a pinch made us very appreciative of year-round local availability. Why not go for more local availability in the future? It's time to look into expanding our ability to grow produce, year-round, while also preserving our vision that good food (especially local food!) should not be an elite item in the market. Healthy, organic food should be affordable. Woof!



Above: Veggie starts and bedding plants from the greenhouse ready for field and for market.

Top Left: Matt and Adam load up the box-truck for farmers' market.

Bottom Left: Our first Saturday market in lovely Northampton.



Here you see a recent photo of our 1948 potato planter in use.

Dave acquired this little gem of a machine back in the 1980's, from another

Whately farmer. The neighbor farmer, watching Dave and friends plant potatoes by hand, took pity on them and gave them the potato planter to keep. Apparently, it hadn't been used "since the Red Sox won the pennant in 1967." While Seamus (seen in the opening photo of this newsletter) drives the tractor, Dave's job is to make sure the seed potatoes don't get stuck in those four chutes before him. We're very excited to be planting potatoes again, after several years of storing this planter in the barn. It is really only because of the farmshare program and our farmers' market customers that we can take the risk of growing on such a small scale. Thank you, and here's to potatoes in the Local share.

SHARE ROOM LOST & FOUND

A ring was found in the Share Room on a recent Tuesday. Could it belong to you?

Enterprise Farm is Getting Greener!

One of the many challenges a farm faces is packaging of product to ship out to customers. We are always looking for ways to do this without creating too much waste. We are very excited to be working with a company called IFCO to bring RPCs (Reusable Produce Containers) into our program. This will immensely cut down our use of disposable boxes.

This is how it works:

- We pay a small fee, or rental fee, for the boxes to be dropped at the farm.
- We pack our produce into these boxes and send them out to many of our wholesale customers.
- These customers save the boxes in their back rooms. They are totally collapsible and stackable.
- Some customers will send them back to the farm, and others will have scheduled pickups by IFCO. The boxes sent back to the farm are picked up by IFCO at the time of the next drop off.
- IFCO then cleans and sanitizes the boxes and readies them for the next drop off. This is done entirely with heated steam, no chemicals are used.

IFCO is an international company that has proven success all over Europe and parts of North America, including western USA. They are just this year moving into the northeast and we are in line to begin with them as soon as they get rolling. We are looking forward to seeing them early this summer. We'll send out some pictures when we can.

Until then, reduce, reuse, recycle!

Matt



Notes From The Foodshed Initiative Summer Tour

It's an "inch by inch, row by row" kind of project, but we're gonna make this thing grow!

Here are some details:

- * We've gone through the USDA permitting process to accept SNAP benefits (which used to be called Food Stamps). Now to buy a portable point-of-sale (P.O.S.) machine to take with us on the bus.
- * The bus itself is ready for a makeover. After removing the seats, we'll build the interior with shelving and other storage spaces to carry and protect fresh produce on the road.
- * We've been working with [Nuestras Raices](#), a community development organization in Holyoke, to identify some good Bus Stops in urban areas. Nuestras Raices supports eight community gardens and a farm in the city of Holyoke, so our partnership will actually enable growers at their farm (La Finca) to bring fresh produce to market in their own neighborhoods!



For more information, or if you would like to help with the Bus project, e-mail shelly@enterpriseproduce.com. This project brought to you by the Foodshed Initiative at Enterprise Farm!