

A Well Fed Seed

www.awellfedseed.wordpress.com

January 2012

Friends of Wayward Seed, Happy New Year! We hope you all had a happy and healthy holiday season. While we are excited for what 2012 will bring, we also find ourselves reflecting on the year we've left behind.

In this email, you'll find a note from Farmer Adam, details of an upcoming CSA Open House, and a reminder for CSA sign up.

Have a favorite recipe using
CSA ingredients?
Share it by emailing us at
farm@waywardseed.com.

A NOTE FROM FARMER ADAM

Based on our efforts of the past 15 months, my outlook for the 2012 growing season is extremely optimistic. I have spent countless hours studying customer feedback notes, emails, and general research in an effort to make our CSA even more enjoyable. I believe shareholders will find a larger box that includes more volume of kitchen staples like sweet corn, potatoes, petite green beans, and melons. We will make broccoli and cauliflower an important product for the fall season, as they are difficult to produce in the spring with the strong heat and insect pressure.

With decent spring weather, your boxes should be teeming with colored carrots again. (Yes, the crop that earned us cult status amongst market shoppers will be back.) In Ohio, it is essential to get a sowing completed in April or early May for summer carrots. They take approximately 80 days to grow, so August carrots are sowed in early May. This is extremely difficult when it rains almost every other day in that time slot--we just need a little sun to warm our raised beds. We even went to the lengths of pre-shaping our raised beds this fall for spring carrot production. We tilled our beds in early November to ensure they would be ready, dry, and tilthy for carrot seed in April. Cross your fingers... Red Dragon, White Satin, and other varieties you love should be in ample quantity this season.

Currently, we are setting up our greenhouse and field planting schedules. This is an important step to ensure success in the field. We specify how many units we need for our shares and set a consistent production calendar. Onions, shallots, cippolini, celery, and celery root will be planted in mid February (yes, mid February!). Celery and celery root take almost 240 days to grow from seed. (Talk about a commitment to products and quality?!) I almost shed a tear when folks want to trade in or not use the celery we grow for them. You can almost taste the 8 months of effort that went into growing those tender stalks. Anyway, I digress...

Our mechanical weed control has improved markedly since the flood in 2010. Weed free fields are the goal at Wayward Seed Farm. We have crew members cultivating crops with our tractors or hand hoeing almost daily. We address weed pressure issues in the field in a more immediate sense. Pigweed that is 1 inch today will be 6 inches in just a few days with moisture and sun. We are more experienced and nuanced to our property. We anticipate weather and our labor needs better, and I think the food tastes better because of our attention to detail, our fastidious nature. We had almost 100 percent crop loss in the spring of 2010--we know failure and great success. The 2010 events were a great challenge to me personally and professionally. Looking back, I don't know if we could have ever anticipated that much rain. And today, I would have our crew and volunteers out hand weeding the fields after the first week of rain. Never assume the weather will stop--take decisive action today! Be a better farmer! We feel humbled by nature continuously.

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A major factor that will contribute greatly toward our success in 2012 is our newly rented packing facility at Oakvale Farm (it's the former cheese house of Oakvale Farmstead Cheese). We now have a heated and air conditioned facility to wash, store, and pack produce 365 days a year! Our storage capacity may allow us to store upwards of 100,000 pounds of vegetables during the winter season, giving us an optimal position for winter distribution of CSA or wholesale vegetables. Gone are the days of moving our food between Oakvale Farm and Fladt Road. Today, we are a centralized operation. Your food will be cleaner, handled more efficiently, and moreover, be better in quality because of this upgrade. Additionally, the facility at Oakvale Farm may become our commercial kitchen space in the next couple seasons. Products like pickled Dragon carrots, dried Charentais melon, and for those of you who have tried it, my applewood smoked jowl bacon. The future looks bright with this new found space!

Another development at Wayward Seed Farm over the last season has been our upgrades in fertility management. We have always maintained a consistent program, but this season we will be conducting more tissue testing in our plants during the growing season. This will enable our foliar feeding program to address mineral and nutritional deficiencies in a more immediate way, thus growing more disease resistant, insect free crops. That's what organic farming practice is all about, producing healthier, highly nutritious plants and hopefully people!

Stay warm and be well this winter,

Farmer Adam

CSA OPEN HOUSE

Early last year we hosted an event at House Wine in Worthington and it was such a rousing success that we're back to do it again. The event is open to everyone. Whether you're a current member of the Wayward family, a CSA newcomer or just simply curious about local farming, please join us! (And bring your friends!)

The event will be held Wednesday, February 1st from 6-8pm at House Wine in Worthington. For those who wish to enjoy a drink, House Wine will offer \$4 wine pours and craft beers. Reservations are not required. Also, there will be plenty of free parking. For more information, including directions, please email us at farm@waywardseed.com or visit www.housewine.biz.

We hope to see you there!

2012 CSA SIGN UP

2012 CSA sign ups have begun! Visit our store at www.waywardseed.com and process your order today! You are welcome to select supplements now, or wait until the start of the season. Delivery locations will be confirmed in the spring. And lastly, if you are splitting a share, we will still need to process your payment manually. Please email us at farm@waywardseed.com for more details.

We believe the checkout process is a simple one, but if you have any questions or suggestions please contact us.

Thanks again for being part of the Wayward Seed family, and here's to 2012!