



## In Your Box\* 6.19.08

**Scallions**  
**Radishes (halves & quarters this week)**  
**Swiss Chard**  
**Garlic Scapes**  
**New Carrots**  
**Lettuce Mix**  
**Bull's Blood Beet**  
**Greens**



Falling water CAN be a good thing!

\* Depending on your share size, you may not have every item listed. Don't worry, we do our best to make sure everyone gets some of everything before it runs out. Questions?

## Chris's Announcement of the Week

I thought we should start off this newsletter with the most significant news at hand. Due to the weather, it's complications of late frosts, delayed plantings, and erosion, Middlebury Hills, for two weeks, must cease delivering produce and eggs.

For full shares, two boxes will be made up at the end of the season. For half and quarter shares, one box will be added at the end of the season. All ten or twenty deliveries promised WILL be made.

Reflecting on this decision, I hope that we all can see the fairness in it. I feel better extending our season after playing catch-up (and replan, replant, repair) than I would feel delivering scantily filled boxes on schedule. Questions? Call me—my cell phone is 712-2516—with any issues or comments.

**The affected, or delayed, deliveries are as follows:**

**We will not deliver on July 3 or July 10.**

**Group 1, or those of you who took your first delivery on June 5, will pick up produce and eggs again July 17.**

**Group 2, those of you started on June 12, will resume normal deliveries July 24.**

**The usual email reminders will go out.**

## Camela's Notes

This is by far the most depressing week on the farm I think we've ever had. The time, effort, and planning that go into your weekly boxes is sometimes overwhelming, but has always been worthwhile. We've had a few individual crop failures over the years, but we've never failed to provide a box of fresh, good produce before. Facing that is very difficult to get past. What happened? Weather, in short. The late cold weather in spring delayed a lot of crops that we would normally be providing now. And to complicate matters, all the rain flooded and buried or simply washed away many of said crops—like peas. Plus the rain has further delayed planting of future crops because the mud is just unworkable. How could we have avoided this? I'm not entirely sure. I do know it isn't the result of a lack of planning.

How do we usually do it? We start with our 20-week delivery calendar and target what we should have in each box throughout the season. While we can influence a lot of things with our hoop house and row covers, we have to work around the season—for instance, tomatoes and peppers and eggplant just aren't ready earlier than August and peas won't grow in hot July. From there, we work backward to create the seed starting, transplanting, and/or direct seeding date schedules for first, second, and third or more plantings, all carefully based on the number of days to fruition for each vegetable. These numbers vary by variety of plant, so if and when we change or add a variety of broccoli, say, we have to amend all our broccoli dates. The spreadsheets include quantities of plants, and the required row feet for that quantity so we can plan field space. They include plant spacing, notes about plasticulture, drip tape, special weeding or hilling needs. They include pests to be wary of. First and last frost dates are always noted so we have the row covers ready to go. All in all it's quite a notebook of details that I valiantly try to condense and squeeze onto one sheet of paper for a quick week-by-week chart of what needs to go in

the ground when so that it will come out on the right day for your boxes. When I mention farm paperwork, people think I mean tracking customers, box sizes, locations, newsletters, and so on, but what I think of is these multiple spreadsheets that we create and update each year for every crop.

Obviously this year's problems will mean lots more notes. I think we have some field rows that will be abandoned because we can not control erosion there when it rains this hard, and it might rain that hard again anytime. We were already discussing plans for a second hoophouse, and I think we'll be putting that at the top of our investment list this fall when season ends because they allow us so much more control. What else? I don't know yet, but I do know we'll be thinking about it all the rest of the year.

## **Vegetable Notes:**

**For any vegetable not mentioned here, please see last week's newsletter!**

**Radishes**—remove the tops (which are holey by the way because of something called a flea beetle. Flea beetles are about the size of a pin head and ravage greens) before you store these. Put them in a plastic bag in the crisper.

**Swiss Chard**—This is one of my favorite greens, and we usually reserve it for fall, but given this year's problems, it's a good thing we've got it early too. It's a lot like spinach for cooking and using, although I've never tried it raw! I always sauté it with some garlic. Cut out the thickest parts of the stems and then treat the rest like you would spinach. The stems can be reserved and chopped up to use as you would celery in salads.

**Beet Greens**— These will store quite well in a plastic bag in your fridge or crisper. Try sautéing some red onion and garlic, then add the chopped up tops (they wilt down like spinach). Add 1/2 cup of water or chicken stock. Cover and simmer. Add about a tablespoon of orange juice to it toward the end, salt & pepper to taste. Or use the beet greens in a stir fry with some soy sauce much like a cabbage. Or, easiest of all, add to your lettuce mix.

**Garlic Scapes**—these are the forming flowers of garlic plants. You remove them to increase the size of the later garlic bulb. Use as you would scallions for a special flavor. Great lightly roasted or used raw.

## **From the hired help (a.k.a. Farmer Kari)**

She's too discouraged this week to say anything at all . . . This problem really hits us all hard!



*Better days—This is Jonathon, who volunteered time to help us build the pea trellises back when we thought Chris's broken foot was the worst of our problems . . . And yes, this is exactly the ground pictured in the "washing away" image last week.*