

June 24, 2010



Vermont Valley Community Farm

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Pea Pick

When: Sunday, June 27th Time: 2:00 pm

Details: Arrive between 2:00 and 2:30 Sunday afternoon. At 2:30, Barb and David will escort everyone to the pea field to begin the picking. Bring something to pick into and extra plastic bags if you have them. You are the harvesters for the upcoming week's CSA pea delivery. Some of your harvest goes home with you and some stays on the farm for the delivery. You may take home half of what you pick, up to 3 quarts; the rest stays on the farm. Of course you can eat as many peas as you like while you pick. Late comers run the risk of the peas being all picked by those who came by 2:30.

Where: The pea pick is not at our home farm, it is across the valley from our house, on land we rent from the neighbors who live there. PLEASE respect their property and DO NOT walk around their yard or farm buildings. But please feel free to walk around any of the vegetable cropland; you will see tomato plants, peppers, eggplant, melon, onions, leeks, pumpkins and cucumbers. The directions below take you there.

Directions: From Madison take Highway 14 (University Avenue) to Black Earth. Turn left at the stop light onto Hwy 78 (the Shoe Box Shoe store is on this corner) You will go thru Black Earth for 1/2 mile and then turn right onto County F. Follow County F and continue to Cedar Hill Lane (about 4 miles). Turn right onto Cedar Hill Lane; the pea field is at the end of the Lane. Drive all the way in for the best parking. The grass field next to the road is very wet, do not drive into it. Please park close to the next car to make room and leave ample space for people to pass on Cedar Hill Lane. A map to the farm is on our website at www.vermontvalley.com.

The peas look great! Again this year we transplanted the peas, generally unheard of. We put them in raised beds and irrigated them with drip tape. These peas had it good, and they have responded well.

Fruit Boxes Begin Soon

Everyone who has signed up for the fruit boxes received an e-mail reminder this week. Your pickup begins as described below.

You may still sign up for the fruit. The fruit is purchased from organic fruit farms across the country. Details are posted on our web site under Fruit Share.

The following pickup sites begin on July 1

Baldwin
Research Park
Crestwood
UW Hospital
Cross Plains
Verona
Just Coffee
Vilas
Monona
Mt Horeb
Parmenter - EOW
2214 Parmenter
Parmenter- Standard
1547 Parmenter

The following pickup sites begin on July 8

Black Oak
Mason
Capitol Ins.
Middleton Hills
CLC
Nakoma
Farm
Oakridge
Hampshire
Seminole
HospiceCare
Jackson
West Lawn
Jenifer
Shorewood



Another Muddy Tuesday Without fail every Tuesday has been extraordinarily muddy. Tuesday mornings are big harvest days. For the past four weeks we have been harvesting lettuce heads, radishes, turnips, scallions, escarole (in the mud and rain). This Tuesday's lettuce and escarole harvest was a real treat. Although Monday night's 1 inch plus of rain made for squishy walking and heavy boots and shoes, the sun did come out (along with the humidity). Other Tuesdays have been raining or pouring. Everybody must come up with raingear and rubber boots. The longer it rains the more somber everyone becomes. Gleeful chatter ceases and the focus becomes getting through the morning. When the



fields are muddy we need to make special accommodations. The truck where we put the harvested goods often gets parked rather far away and then we walk all of the crates of vegetables to it. If we parked it where it was convenient most likely it would get stuck. We need to pay attention to where we place the crates so they don't become embedded with mud. But unless it is lightening we are out harvesting your vegetables. Afterwards we laugh about it all.



The Full-Time Crew: (in the truck) Levi, Jonnah, Janna, (standing) David, Shanna(dog), Barb, Jesse, Cari, Eric

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Strawberry Harvest 2010 has been a challenge this year. We grow strawberries for you because they are so good, a June treat. They are also a tremendous amount of work. If we choose our crops based on the effort required, strawberries would be the first crop we'd stop growing. The harvest alone engulfs our work crews for two weeks.

Strawberries are a very sensitive crop. In conventional strawberry production, there are several fungicide and insecticide sprays used for various disease and insect pests; it is one of the most heavily sprayed crops. We use no sprays on our berries and have had fabulous berries over the years. However not using berry pesticides makes us more susceptible to bad weather conditions; which we had this year; rain, rain, rain. The harvest crews needed to discard lots of berries. The pictures show the rare blue (partially anyways) sky and the much more frequent harvest in the rain. The constant misty rains created a tremendous slug population, and also is extremely favorable to various organisms that like to rot the berries. Our and your commitment to organic agriculture sometimes means our work effort far exceeds our harvest results.

We hope you have enjoyed the berries we have been able to harvest for you. We look forward to a dryer 2011 harvest. That's how farmers think, optimism for next year's harvest. As a CSA member who experiences the bounty and scarcity of the harvest, you too get to think like a farmer.

