



NEWS FROM PROVIDENT ORGANIC FARM

"Dedicated to a safe, just and sustainable food system."

Season 6, Volume 1

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THE STATE OF THE ONION

To our new members: welcome. I hope we live up to your (realistic) expectations. To our returning members: thank you for your continued support.

The weather this late winter and early spring has been a roller coaster ride. January was unseasonably warm so February must have decided to act like January. March never seems to know how to act and April was cooler than in previous years. It is drier than usual for this time of year; we have gotten less than an inch of rain in the past 5 weeks. This does not hinder us from getting the crops planted because we can irrigate them to get them to germinate, but the lack of moisture does hinder the decomposition of the cover crops that I planted last fall. I have had to make changes in the placement of some of the crops to compensate for this but that is part of the game we play when we try to implement our paper plans into the reality of the field.

Most of the crops have been planted as scheduled but the cool nights have slowed their growth. We covered a lot of them with row covers to help speed their growth. Row covers are lightweight fabric that allow the sun and rain through to the crop and trap the warmth as in a greenhouse raising the temperature under them about 4 - 6 degrees. They can advance a crop by as much as 2 weeks.

The sugar snap peas are blossoming now and should pick within 2 weeks. The zucchini is also blossoming and starting to make fruit. We had some freeze damage in transit from Colorado on the seed potatoes, the red varieties look fine, but we have a somewhat weak stand of German Butterballs and Yukon Gold. The first planting of 'maters are off to a great start and will be staked and tied this week. The peppers and eggplants were planted a bit later than I would have liked but they are doing well. I had some losses in the onion transplants due to some bad potting soil but I compensated for the loss by using onion sets purchased locally. I also lost some of the cucumber transplants so we won't have a plethora of them early on. The first two plantings of string beans

are faring well. I decided to give spring broccoli another try after 3 successive years of failure and I think it is finally going to work. Broccoli does not like to mature in the heat and usually goes to seed before it makes a marketable head. This year I set out transplants in early March and covered them. The covers blew off a couple of times and we struggled to keep them on, but it is starting to head up now and if it doesn't get too hot, I think it will make it. I planted almost twice as much garlic as last year and so far it is doing well. Last year I tried a few shallots for the first time and found them to be fairly easy and fun to grow. This year we planted 50 lbs. of sets so we would have enough for the members.

That's about all the news for now. The State of the Onion is good. I started writing this at 4 a.m. on Tuesday morning and it is now 6:30, time to start picking your shares. Until next week, I wish you all peace and good health.

Onward,
Jay

IN YOUR SHARE

There are known knowns,
there are unknown knowns,
and there are unknown unknowns.

Whatever we can get our hands on
it'll be what it'll be.

BAKED LEEKS

Leeks, Cream
Broth (vegetable or chicken) Tarragon (Spice)

Cut the ends off the leeks, then slice in half lengthwise. Clean leeks thoroughly. Place the leeks in a baking pan and cover 1/4 way with broth. Use the cream to almost cover the leeks. Sprinkle with tarragon. Bake uncovered in the oven at 350 for about 20-25 minutes, until the leeks are tender.