



NEWS FROM PROVIDENT ORGANIC FARM

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

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www.providentfarm.com

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FEARLESS FARMING

I am an organic farmer. While I am not certified as such by the USDA, I do not use any materials that are not approved by OMRI (Organic Materials Review Institute). OMRI is a 501(c)(3) non profit organization that specializes in the review of substances for use in organic production, processing, and handling. OMRI's board is representative of the industry with members distributed among certifiers, farmers, suppliers, processors, handlers, consumer organizations, and animal welfare and environmental groups. Their primary focus is to provide guidance on the suitability of material inputs under the USDA National Organic Program. Any company wishing to offer their product for use in certified organic farming systems must submit the product for review.

I also like to think of myself as a sustainable farmer, although there are aspects of my farming practices that could stand much improvement. I would like to make better use of cover crops for soil improvement and weed management and improve my crop rotations incorporating cover crops into the rotations. When I am thrown into the situation such, as I have been again this year with my only semi-trained helper quitting everything becomes an emergency. I am now working 7 days a week, a minimum of 10 hours a day and up to 16 hours a day, merely to keep up with the necessary work that only I am able to do. Some tasks get dropped from the "to do" list immediately. Writing a newsletter is the first casualty. I will not get any summer cover crops in the blocks in the field that have produced the spring crops and will not be used for vegetable crops again until next year. I find this very frustrating. I expect a lot of people who work with me and I tell them so when I hire them. I want things done correctly and completely the first time, explaining to my helpers that if we can't take the time to do the job right the first time, we cannot expect to find the time to do it again.

Some can hack it, some can't, and very few know when they agree to take the job. I would like to think they all know themselves better when they leave.

But most of all, I would like to think of myself as a fearless farmer. Other than the situation I described in the previous paragraph, I am not afraid of anything out there. I have always believed that living with fear is extremely counter-productive. I believe our fears stalk us and hit us HARD when least expected. Hmmm? Perhaps that is why for 3 years running my primary helper has quit in mid-season. But, I do not live in fear of insect damage or disease problems. That is not to say I ignore them, or that I am not aware of their presence or potential harm, I simply don't live with the fear that my crops will be devastated by them as most conventional farmers do. I have not used any pest control measures in the passive greenhouse in at least 8 years and it has been at least 5 years since I have had to intervene in the gardens. I see lower incidences of pests in the field every year. I attribute this to improved soil condition. Conventional farmers are told by the USDA, the American Farm Bureau (known in organic circles as the American Harm Bureau) and their suppliers

IN YOUR SHARE

Yellow Wax or Italian Flat beans
German Butterball potatoes
Cucumbers
Valley Girl tomatoes
Green Bell peppers
Eggplant?, Italian or Japanese

Some crops may not pick enough for all the shares. In this case, we will put some of them in the share bin. Please feel free to take what you can use or leave anything you can't use for others.

if you do not pick up your share for 3 consecutive weeks without explanation, we will discontinue packing a share for you until we hear from you.

(Monsanto, et al) that they must "feed the world". As of 2 years ago this country can't even feed itself! We are now net importers of food. Carrying the burden of feeding the world engenders fear. So farmers go to their local farm supply dealer and purchase pesticides with names like POUNCE and AMBUSH and go home and apply them at twice the recommended rate and expect to see those critters dead before they get to the end of the row, knowing or caring little about what collateral damage they may have done. If I was a conspiracy theorist, I could make a case that it is part of a strategy to boost sales.

Most organic farmers, on the other hand, take a wait and see approach to a pest infestation. How bad is the infestation? Will it really hurt the crop too much before I can get it harvested? Are there any predators present? If so, are they present in numbers sufficient to control the pest? Is there another solution? Which pesticide will target this particular pest and do no harm to the bees and/or any beneficial insects that may be working for me? If I do decide that I have to apply a pesticide, it is somewhat comforting to use a material with a name like CONSERVE or SERENADE that will target the problem pest, do no harm to other creatures and, most importantly not add to the level of toxins already in our environment.

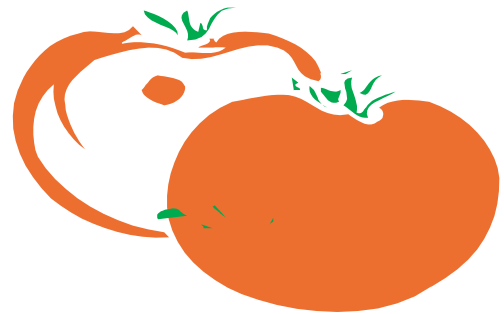
Being able to respond to a potential problem without fear enables us to analyze the situation and make a well-informed decision. Works for me!

Onward,
Jay

SAVE A TREE

If you wish to save some paper (and \$\$\$), you can read the newsletter online at
www.providentfarm.com
or request an email copy by emailing Kelly at kelly@kcpandg.com.

We can then reduce the number of printed copies we make each week.



***Wondering what to do with all this wonderful food?
How to store it? How to cook it? Try our website at
www.providentfarm.com. There is a great
section on produce and recipes.
www.providentfarm.com***

MARK YOUR CALENDAR!

Mater Mania

Has become our most popular event . It is held at Cedar Hill Park which adjoins the farm in beautiful downtown Bivalve. Mater Mania is celebrated in late July or early August when the tomato crop is in it's full glory, This year it will be on August 19th.