



Vol. 18 No. 1

June 4 - 8, 2017



POTOMAC VEGETABLE FARMS
www.potomacvegetablefarms.com
(703) 759-2119 ... Vienna
(540) 882-3885 ... Purcellville

Radishes, Scallions and Scares – Oh My!

This is our 18th season for the Community Supported Agriculture program, and it is our 56th season of farming. We are still working out the kinks but we are not the slightest bit nervous about the first day of CSA. It's exciting! After so much practice, we have learned to stay calm despite weeks of soggy weather and we have developed strong relationships with other farmers who help to make our CSA a dependable adventure. We are ready.

We started to prepare for your first week of vegetables last October when we pushed hundreds of pounds of garlic cloves into the soil. They had a great winter and now we have two late spring items with a brief season: scapes and green garlic. Make sure you take advantage of both, as they are only harvested for a few weeks before the garlic matures and is no longer tender and juicy.

During the indoor season in the middle

of winter, Carrie and Hiu studied the seed catalogs and chose from the organic offerings. They ordered onion seeds to be planted in the greenhouse in February, tomato seeds for the middle of March, squash seeds for early April. The FedEx truck delivered boxes of seeds from Johnny's Selected Seeds in Maine – it was like Christmas for weeks.

As you may remember, we had a very warm spell in February that lasted longer than a couple of days. The soil dried out and was ready to till, so we turned over everything that was not growing a cover crop. This gave us a head start

when it was time to plant leeks and chard and lettuce. We are ahead of schedule on the Vienna farm from that blast of tropical weather. But we were relieved when the temperatures returned to mostly-normal ranges for the next few months and the rains started.

For the 150 new CSA members, the spring vegetables may not be so easy. Kohlrabi, radishes, chard, leeks, scallions – those foods may not yet be the building blocks for your menu planning. We hope that you will rise to the challenge of learning to make lots of salads and trying new combinations for a colorful stir fry and possibly even making

one-day pickles out of these cute little radishes.

In about a month, the more familiar summer vegetables will begin to appear and your stress level may decrease. Cucumbers and squash and potatoes are simple compared to kohlrabi and fennel! It will seem like an eternity before the tomatoes come in, but they are absolutely worth the wait. 18 years of record-keeping tell us that you will be eating tomatoes for eight to 10 weeks straight.

As you eat your way through the Northern Virginia vegetable season, you will see how quickly things change. One week you will be overwhelmed by the quantities of lettuce. Two weeks later lettuce is replaced completely by a mountain of squash. Two more weeks and the spring salads are a memory. Eat well and don't look back. Just enjoy the flow and make sure that you have a lot of olive oil on hand. We will make sure you have plenty of garlic.



Hana Newcomb

...is the chief instigator of farm potlucks and is responsible for the daily flow of work and vegetables on both farms.



The 2017 Crew

You may only get to meet a handful of the people who are growing your food – you should know that there are about 20 farm workers spread over two farms planting and weeding and mulching and picking and washing and watering and pounding posts and digging holes and stringing tomatoes. Some have been here for years and some have only been here for a few weeks. So far, morale is excellent!



Polly Healy

...is a Loudoun local. She worked on a vegetable farm last summer and grew up raising sheep and chickens. She hopes to have a huge garden someday.

Mariette Hiu Newcomb

...is a founding farmer, still farming after all these years.



Michael Lipsky

...came from an urban life as a political science professor. Now he has been married to Mariette for 15 years and has been part of the farm community for even longer.

Misty Chepetin

...is an environmental educator and a burgeoning writer. She is an advocate of sustainability, organic farming and social justice.



Carrie Nemec

...is in her 12th season farming and her second season as mom of Zoey. She's still learning a lot but feeling very comfortable in these roles.





Katie Storch

...found out about the farm when she was shopping at the Reston Farmers Market and when her family joined the CSA. She lives just a few minutes away, and this was just where she wanted to work.

Ari Lindenbaum

...s favorite way to prepare vegetables is to heat them up and eat them when he is cold. He believes organic methods are important because they provide healthier food to people and preserve the planet, and fewer farm workers have to come into contact with harmful pesticides and herbicides. He also enjoys thinking about how vegetables start out as seeds and then become plants and then become humans.



Ben Dietz

...is new to PVF (and farming in general) so working here has been a learning experience for him - but a very fun one!



Ciara Prencipe

...is going into her fourth season on the farm. In past years she's worked summers while she was in school at Warren Wilson College, where she studied sustainable agriculture. Now she's graduated and excited to pursue farming as a career. She loves starting seeds and picking flowers. When she's not at work, she likes to cook, do yoga and hang out with her dog.



Jill Evans-Kavaldjian

...is our Farm Stand Manager in Purcellville. She is an artist and gardener, and has worked at the Loudoun Farm for 15 years.



Amy Page

...has been loving gardening and eating fresh veggies since she was born. She grew up in the Midwest where soil characteristics and the growing seasons are rather different than in Virginia. PVF sounded especially appealing as a place to learn and work because it is ecoganic and the southern growing season is so long-lasting and expansive.



**Vida Castro**

...thinks that if she were a vegetable, she would be a tomato because she grows better when transplanted. For two years she volunteered and lived on farms and hostels internationally before coming to farm back home. She also just likes tomato plants.

**Eric Avery**

...is in his first season farming PVF and anywhere. He's looking forward to learning more about sustainable agriculture, to being in closer proximity to the natural world and its cycles, and to contributing to the continued evolution of PVF. He's not only new to the farm, but also to the area, so say hi if you see him!

Ecole Venskytis

...is a co-manager of the Loudoun farm and going into her fifth season at PVF. You can find her at the Leesburg Farmers' Market on Saturdays, and the rest of the time she is laughing alongside young folk either in the greenhouse or in the field, likely with a hoe in her hand.

**Sarah Waybright**

...is a dietician who loves food so much that she wants to see the whole process from seed to plate - and learn more about how farming practices affects our food supply! Her dream is to have a farm that will give people the chance to visit, learn the whole process and enjoy a delicious meal.

**Nina Stewart**

...has always had a passion for art, animals and cooking and can now add farming to the list. She goes home from work every day applying what she has learned to her own garden.

**Scout Parker**

...loves cello, bare feet, and lots of beets. She also enjoys studying religion and philosophy, and she always carries around lots of books. This will be Scout's third season at PVF.



Not pictured: Michael, Stephen, Jon, Robert, David, Paul (all men – what's that about?)