

Cover Crops

This is a great week for cover crops! You've already seen a wonderful cover crop growing right at the front of the u-pick field. That tall grass is called Sudan Grass. It grows ten feet tall, and sends roots deep underground, collecting nutrients and re-building our soils organic matter along the way. And... more fun than anything, it's home to a maze! I've mowed a path all through the Sudan Grass that you are welcome to walk next time you're out... if you can find your way to end, that is...

In the front of the East Field, you can see a small sea of white flowers. That's buckwheat blooming. Buckwheat is a fabulous summertime cover crop. It not only restores nutrients and organic matter in our soil; it also smothers most weeds and provides fabulous habitat for bees and other insects. Buckwheat is a wonderful source of food for bees, and they need lots of food. In fact, I sowed buckwheat primarily to feed bees and other insects. It's working very well. I'll gladly accept all the other benefits.

Summer is here in full force. Bugs are alive and kicking. Weeds are doing their thing. Rain is reluctant. The sun is unrelenting. I do my best just to keep up with all the changes. It's a lot of work these days, a lot of long, hot days. I've been encouraged, though, in too many ways to tell by our regular volunteers and our farm assistants. Several folks have come through in weeding, hilling, planting, you name it. In no way could I have produced all this food alone. Far from it. I hope all of you know that you are one of the primary reasons I do this work...

... And then I find a bright red tomato this morning! Some times you get these moments that are hard to explain, but make it all seem more than worth it. So, thank you all, and welcome summer!

Upcoming Events

Garlic Harvest! Saturday, July 7 @ 8 a.m.

Shareholder Gathering! Sunday, July 8
from 4 to 6 p.m.

What's in Your Share

Fennel

Summer Squash

Cucumbers

Basil

Beets

Chinese Cabbage

Turnips

Lettuce

Scallions

Swiss Chard

Herbs, Flowers, and okra OPEN in U-Pick

What's For Dinner:

Braised Fennel

(from Vegetable Love, by Barbara Kafka)

Serve as an accompaniment to meat or fish

1 fennel bulb, trimmed and fronds reserved, cut lengthwise through the core into 1/4 -inch-thick slices so that the pieces stay together.

3 Tbsp. olive oil

1 Tbsp. lemon juice

salt and pepper to taste

Preheat oven to 500 F

Put fennel slices in 14 X 12 X 2-inch roasting pan.

Drizzle 1 Tbsp oil over slices and gently toss until slices are evenly coated. Spread slices in a single layer.

Roast for 15 minutes. Turn carefully with a spatula. Roast for 15 minutes more.

Drizzle with remaining 2 Tbsp. oil, lemon juice, salt and pepper. Serve either hot or cold. Chop the reserved fronds. Sprinkle over slice just before serving.

Looking Ahead

In the coming weeks, look for tomatoes, onions, potatoes, sweet peppers, and carrots! Yum!

Cherry tomatoes are coming very soon!