

Field Walk...

We've had a series of mechanical and infrastructure breakdowns the past few weeks, all coming at once, all at the wrong time. It happens like that sometimes. If one tractor goes down, it's likely the other one will, too. Things happen in bunches.

However, we are blessed to have several talented electricians, mechanics, and all-around journeymen among our membership who have given a lot of their time this past month making repairs and keeping the farm running smooth.

A few weeks ago, during harvest, I discovered the electricity was out in the barn. A wire had burned out in the old fuse box. Then, the farm truck broke down. A couple days later the flail mower (responsible for keeping down all those tall weeds you see around the farm), snapped a belt and was immediately inoperable. And then the big green John Deere tractor we use for tilling and bed prep also died. I was shaking my head. I haven't even mentioned the large tree that crushed part of the East Field fence.

A farmer doesn't just need to know how to grow food. A farmer also needs to be a decent mechanic, among many other things. As with the growing of food, the best way to learn is to simply do it. To practice, to make the repairs. This is a weak area of mine, having gotten into farming only 6 or 7 years ago. I've spent most of this time learning about soils, crops, weather, etc. It takes time and patience to learn how to diagnose a tractor failure.

That's where this CSA shines. Tony Norman has been a huge help in keeping the farm running from the beginning. He's out at the farm at a moments notice to fix (or diagnose) every problem as it arises. Father Maurice has organized two key infrastructure work-days to rebuild the fence and maintain the appearance of the barn area. Ed Reed and Mike Reese have been invaluable in making timely repairs to the tractors. Juan Craff, Cliff Ohlson, and Jim Hanlon were key to getting the electricity up and running at the barn in a way that should last for many, many years to come.

Behind the scenes, the farm has come a long way through thick and thin, in more ways than one, thanks to the talent and experience among us. I thank everyone for making this work.

Volunteer Opportunities:

Next Workday is this Saturday, September 9, 9 to 12... Your extra help works wonders!

I need help for some big final pushes in the weed department... The weeds have been bad this year, but we can get on top of it with your help...

What's in Your Share

Cucumbers

Sweet Peppers

Scallions

Garlic

Potatoes

Fresh Onion

Salad Mix

Basil (see Pesto recipe in the June 13 newsletter)

Pick-your-own Cherry Tomatoes

What's For Dinner: Roasted Red Pepper Dressing

1 red bell pepper
1/3 cup balsamic vinegar
1/4 cup white wine or cider vinegar
2 cloves garlic, minced
1 tablespoon chopped fresh basil*
1 teaspoon chopped fresh rosemary*
1 teaspoon sugar

Place whole bell pepper under preheated broiler; broil under high heat until charred on all sides, turning frequently with tongs. Carefully remove from oven with tongs; place in a paper bag for 15 minutes to steam skin. Carefully remove pepper from bag; remove seeds and ribs. Strip off skin; slice pepper into strips.

In blender or food processor container, place bell pepper, vinegars, garlic, basil, rosemary and sugar. Cover and process until well blended and nearly smooth.

New Crops coming up...

We will have many new crops in the near future. The fields look great after this difficult summer. It's now a matter of good sun and good temperatures...