



The Organic Harvester

Farmer Andrew's Report on the Flood

A couple weeks ago, after transplanting our third succession of broccoli and cabbage, I looked at how dry the soil was and told the crew we should hope for rain. There had been almost no snow fall this past winter and spring had come very early. Our rain fed irrigation pond was only half full and given the previous season's drought, I was worried we'd be rationing water again this season. For the first time in my farming career, I was actually irrigating in April (usually irrigating doesn't begin until late June).

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Farm Happenings:

- Organic Plant Sale
May 27th and 28th
- CSA Orientation
and Pot Luck on
June 3rd

New Farmstand Hours:

Saturdays 9am–5pm

Sundays Noon–5pm

Tuesdays 2pm–7pm

Thursdays 2pm–7pm



Plains Meadow Field was literally part of the Ipswich River during the recent floods.



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Organic Plant Sale

Our third annual plant sale will be held over Memorial Day weekend. We'll open on Saturday, May 27 from 9am – 5pm and Sunday from Noon – 5pm. Certified organic seedlings will include heirloom tomatoes, peppers, squash, flowers and herbs. New this year, we will feature organic seed packets, fertilizer and potting soil.

The CSA is Full!

Thank you to all of you who have joined. We now have about 200 members and are sold out for the 2006 growing season!



The rain began on Tuesday the 9th. By Friday morning, according to our gauge, we received over 5 inches of rain. We were all happy with the rain. And then it kept on falling, between Friday and the following Tuesday we received an additional 10 inches. The Ipswich River spilled its banks and flowed through our main 10 acre growing field. Our main growing field had more than 3 acres already planted, was quickly drowned.

The river has receded mostly, but there are still some standing ponds. The dry and warm spring allowed us to plant early. The flood has wiped out all these plantings.

Part of joining a CSA is taking a risk along with the farmer. We've had three great seasons of bounty and we are going to experience a set back for the early part of this growing season. To our new members, I assure you that we are working more than overtime to get new seedlings planted and to have patience with our early distributions. For our dedicated returning members, I ask you to remember that we've had several great seasons of tremendous bounty and that the farm will be back on track as soon as nature allows.

Distribution will be small for the first couple weeks, but then the share size should normalize. I thought about backing up distribution until July, but I think some crops on higher land may be ready in time. We will also have lots of new products for sale in the farmstand, so please take this opportunity to support the farm by purchasing our fresh eggs, artisanal cheeses and other carefully selected items.



**Our Lambs and Piglets
Have Arrived!**

**The lambs are Suffolk,
Southdown and Dorset
Horned breeds. One
flock lives next to the
farmstand and the other s
live in the livestock barn.**

**Our seven piglets are
Berkshire crosses and
live in the woods, just next
to the farmstand parking
lot. Please stop by any
time to see them.**

Orientation and Pot Luck

Mark your calendar for Saturday, June 3rd. At 3:00pm, we will hold a new member orientation. Please meet at the farmstand for a tour and overview of how the CSA works. We will follow this with a pot luck at 5:00pm (open to old and new members). Bring your favorite dish to share. Please list ingredients as well, for vegetarians and those who are avoiding certain foods. Don't miss this great opportunity to learn important information about the CSA and to mingle with fellow members.



Farm Photo Contest

Amateur photographers are invited to enter the Massachusetts Agriculture Photo Contest sponsored by the Massachusetts Department of Agricultural Resources, the USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service and Massachusetts Agriculture in the Classroom, Inc. The 12 winning photos will be featured in the 2007 Massachusetts Agriculture Calendar. Photos will be selected that depict the diversity of agriculture, horticulture, and natural resources on the commonwealth's farms throughout the year. Winning photographers will be credited in the calendar, will be invited to attend a winner's ceremony at the Eastern States Exposition (The Big E) in Springfield in September and receive tickets to the fair and copies of the calendar.

The deadline for submissions is June 1. For details and an entry form, visit www.mass.gov/massgrowsn.