



# DRIFTLESS ORGANICS CSA NEWSLETTER

News from the Fields of Driftless Organics • Issue 2 • June 12-15, 2019

**Week 2:** Week 2 and the weather has been so great for our crops. The plants are loving the combo of rain and sun. It seems like they shot up a few inches over the weekend! Happy plants give us SO much joy! It is so satisfying to walk the fields and see beautiful, healthy, dark green plants. It's exciting to see those plants put on buds/flowers and know what is soon to come. We are still so busy at the farm. Seeding, planting, cultivating, mulching, harvesting, washing, packing. We hope you enjoy all the wonderful things in your box. Happy Eating! ~Rachael

## Did you know: Feeding Plants?

Did you know that plants, especially the types that we grow here on the farm, need "food" to grow big and strong and produce nice looking vegetables? Around here, it's more than just sticking some plants in the ground and hoping for the best. It's a pretty simple concept: we feed the plants and then the plants feed us. What we feed each veggie crop and when we feed it not only depends on what it is, but also on its health at a given time in the season. If the tomatoes are looking wilted, or if the peppers have some yellow leaves, we will give them specific concoctions of minerals, amendments and other goodies. We work very closely with a plant and soils expert who takes samples, goes on field tours with Josh and gives us recommendations on what he thinks certain veggies need at certain times of their lives. And we rely on years of experience to help us along the way. We feed our plants all sorts of different concoctions with ingredients ranging from fish

emulsion, kelp, different minerals like boron, potassium, calcium, phosphorous and ocean minerals; and even molasses!

We feed our plants at many different stages of their growth. We give them food when the plants are seedlings in our greenhouse, we will feed them as we transplant them into the fields, and we will inject our mixtures into the different irrigation systems that we use so that they are fed AND watered at the same time. This year, we are even trying "foliar feeding", which basically means that we spray a "food" mixture onto the leaves of the adult plants with the idea that they will then suck up those goodies into their leaves.

In addition to all of this, we also feed the soil. We fertilize with different mixtures of composted animal manures and minerals (again, things like calcium, boron, etc). We'll also feed our soils with cover crops (or "green manures") like buckwheat, oats and field peas. We will plant these crops, let them grow and then till them back into the soil. All of this is close to the same idea as above: we feed the soil, the soil feeds the plants, the plants feed us...

All of this "feeding" results in higher quality vegetables that not only taste and look amazing, but also have more nutrients and are ultimately better for you. How cool is that?

## What the heck do I do with a Basil Plant?

This week you are getting a beautiful and little basil plant. Don't be fooled, this little plant will yield A LOT of basil over the summer if you care for it properly. I love fresh basil. So many of my favorite dishes have basil in them - Margherita pizza, appetizers and pesto. So fresh, so yum. Basil is an annual, it grows extremely well in containers, but it does need to be transplanted! The soil in that little

pot doesn't have enough nutrition for it to stay healthy. It needs some fresh soil. It compliments other herbs and tomatoes plants VERY nicely, you can plant these in the same container. Basil will last 5-8 months if cared for properly. Basil likes full sun (at least 6 hours). It likes moist soil, I make sure to water at least every few days. When you water it, water the base of the plant - avoid watering the leaves, as that could encourage disease. Your basil will need some pruning, which is fine if you are harvesting from your plant. To harvest: pinch off leaves near where the stems branch out. This will encourage your plant to become bushier. If you keep doing this, you should be able to pick from your basil plant for a number of months. Just don't forget that the leaves keep the plant alive, so don't pick TOO many. When it tries to flower, you can either let it go or you can cut off the flower to extend it's culinary life. If you leave it your basil will get tough and bitter.

WHAT'S IN THE BOX
Baby Bok Choy
Basil PLANT - yes, PLANT!
Green Garlic
Kale
Pea Tendrils
Potato: Red
Radish: Red Globe
Salad Mix
Spinach
Spring Onions

Crop	What's it look like?	Storage?	How do I use it?
Baby Bok Choy	Kind of like a head of lettuce, but little, with thick white stems.	Gently take your bok choy out of your box and place in a plastic bag.	Great addition to most asian stir-fry. Check out our website for more recipes.
Basil PLANT	It's a beautiful green plant in a small square pot	Check out the article on taking care of your basil plant.	Margherita pizza, pesto, pasta, so many wonderful way to use BASIL
Green Garlic	Look for a bunch of green leaves and white bottoms that sort of look like scallions (green onions).	Store in a plastic bag with your chives.	You can use all of the white and even some of the green that is closest to the white. Chop up and sauté in place of garlic.
Kale	A bunch of kale bound together	Store in a plastic bag in the fridge with a paper towel to preserve greens longer.	Check out this week's recipe: <i>Mega Greens Lasagna</i>
Pea Tendrils	Look for a bunch of crazy wispy leaves.	Store in a plastic bag in the fridge.	These pea tendrils are a super sweet and crunchy addition to a salad, sandwich or relish tray.
Potatoes: Red	Round, Red tubers	These potatoes were harvested last November and will want to sprout, so I would recommend keeping them in your fridge.	Mashed, Hashed, or fries!
Radish: Red Globe	Red Globe: Red sphere with green tops	Store (with the tops removed) in a plastic bag. *Don't forget, tops are edible!*	Appetizers, salads, sandwiches
Salad Mix	Mixed bag of salad greens.	Store in a plastic bag in the fridge with a paper towel to preserve greens longer.	So many uses: try tossing some into a veggie wrap this week..
Spinach	A bag of dark green, wrinkly leaves.	Store in a plastic bag in the fridge with a paper towel to preserve greens longer.	Check out this week's recipe: <i>Mega Greens Lasagna</i>
Spring Onions	A bunch of green onions (very similar to green garlic - give them a sniff and you'll tell the difference)	Store in a plastic bag in the fridge.	Use any way you would onions or as a nice fresh garnish to tacos, salads, etc.

## Mega Greens Lasagna

8 c. mixed greens (any mix of kale, spinach, swiss chard, radish tops, celeriac tops, etc...)

1 yellow onion

3 Tbsp. Driftless Sunflower Oil

4 garlic cloves, minced (you can use all your green garlic)

1 c. grated each of these cheeses: Mozzarella, Fontina, Monterey Jack

½ c. milk

1 Tbsp. Chopped Parsley

1 Tbsp. Chopped thyme

1 Tbsp. Chopped rosemary

1 ½ tsp. Red-pepper flakes

Salt and freshly ground black pepper

1 pkg no-boil lasagna noodles

½ c. grated mozzarella cheese for topping

Preheat the oven to 350 F. Lightly grease a large casserole dish with nonstick spray.

*Prepare* the filling: Heat 1 Tbsp. of oil in a large saute pan.

Add the onion and cook until translucent, 4-5 min. Now, add the garlic and cook until fragrant, 1 min more. Add the greens in batches, allowing it to cook down before adding more.

Cook until all the greens have wilted, 6-7 min. In a medium bowl, mix the cheeses with the milk, parsley, thyme, rosemary and red-pepper flakes to combine. Season with salt and pepper.

*Build* the Lasagna: Begin layering noodles in the base of the prepared casserole dish. Top with a quarter of the cheese mixture and gently spread it evenly. Drizzle the surface with 1 tsp of the oil, then sprinkle with salt and pepper. Top with a quarter of the spinach mixture. Repeat with another two sets of layers. Finish with a layer of noodles, cheese and final drizzle of oil. Top with the mozzarella cheese.

*Bake* in a preheated oven until the filling is bubbly and the mozzarella is golden brown, about 35-40 min. Let cool and set 15-20 min before serving.