

Schreiber and Sons CSA Update March 28, 2008

Planting: We have 86 different crops/varieties planted outside... this ranges from three different varieties of sweet corn, 6 different kinds of carrots, arugula, garlic, 5 kinds of radishes and on and on and on. We have about 125 different crop/varieties growing in the greenhouse; heirloom tomatoes, exotic eggplants, red cabbage, radicchio, endive, leeks, and more kinds of peppers than you can imagine. Those little cotyledons are popping up left and right. Our greenhouse looks like some kind of vegetative Noah's Ark....we have more than two of each, but it looks we have some of EVERYTHING.

I love going into the greenhouse. I have poor cell phone reception in my office so when calls come in at that number, I walk to the greenhouse and putz around there while I talk. Not just because it is warm; it is humid and there is this moist earthy smell. All of the plants growing show such promise for the summer. We literally have tens of thousands of plants (242 per flat) growing. I will see if we cannot get a picture and send it for you to see. The peppers look like tomatoes but they are a little darker green and the leaves are little more pointed. The red cabbage is, well, redder than the rest of the cabbage. The radicchio is yellow and red, sort of weird looking. The summer squash, particularly the patty pans are huge monsters. I realize this is anthropomorphizing at it is worst, and as a scientist, it is terrible of me, but I see human personalities in the greenhouse plants.

The huge hulking squash plants are bullies... taking up more than their fair share of space and hogging sunlight; their neighbors have to be protected. The tiny, slim little leeks with long cotyledons that are bent at 90 degree angles are little ballerinas practicing their bends; row after row of peppers are straight, uniform and perfectly aligned like platoons of soldiers ready to march onto the field and give up their peppers for our dinner plates. For reasons of chance, the red cabbage is located a few trays away from the green cabbage and the Savoy cabbage; I am wracked with guilt that they have been segregated. I fear that they feel it is due to the color of the leaves and do not realize it had to do to the too full fist of seed packets and the endive and escarole being slipped in between the cabbage packets. I could go on and on, like I said, it is a verdant little Noah's Ark with all the attendant social politics.... do not get me started on the goings on between the organic transplants and the conventional transplants. The short story is that the organic plants feel they are superior to the conventional transplants, but the conventionals take potshots at the weeds growing in the organic section. It is really getting to be a huge mess.

Weather Update: It is cold. The vegetables do not like it. Seven days ago, I would have said we were progressing normally on degree days, however, things have changed. It was 22 here Monday night. It has been in the high 20's each of the past evenings. In the last 7 days we have gone backwards in our weather. The five day forecasts indicates continued cool weather. If this continues, it threatens our early production. This poses two risks. First, some crops will be delayed and will not be available for our early deliveries. Second, we have a lot planted in the greenhouse, which is a temporary place until they get to a certain size and we can transplant them. If we have unseasonably cool, or heaven forbid, cold or freezing weather, it could kill our earliest plantings of our warm weather crops. On the other hand, it could warm up and we could be fine. For what it is worth, we have the first crop. The garlic-which we do not have a lot of- is planted rather shallowly, likes cool temperatures and grows from a clove rather than a seed, so it is jumping up. Our garlic is about 2 inches tall

Interesting note: Who would have ever thought that getting something as simple as organic potting soil mix would be such a trauma. If you go into Lowes, etc, you can find organic potting soil mix, no problem.... but it is not certified organic. So it is not really "organic" and we cannot use it. It turns out it is practically impossible to find certified potting soil mix in eastern Washington. We had to have a pallet of it shipped in from Western Washington (did I mention it was not cheap, either). So why do we need organic potting soil mix, you ask? You cannot use any substance for organic production until it is certified by the Washington State Department of Agriculture. We have been using the soil from our certified organic ground, which makes for lousy potting soil mix, it is loaded with weed seeds, which have to be pulled out when they are very small. When I get a cell phone call, I walk out and I pull the weeds out of the organic

transplants - but after having bitten the expensive bullet and having bought the *certified* organic potting soil, my weed pulling days are over, in the greenhouse that is, I am sure that there are still plenty of weeds in my future.

Pick Up Locations.

After much discussion and negotiation, we hope to have chosen pick up sites for the season. Stacey, my most able assistant, is sending a map showing the pickup locations.

Wednesday

Pasco - 2912 Road 48 3:30 to 5:30

South Richland - 176 Riverwood Drive 4:00 to 6:00

North Richland - 2129 Hamilton Court 4:30 to 6:30

Thursday

Kennewick - 4417 West 12th until June 5th 4:30 to 6:30
- starting June 5th @ the Kennewick Farmer's Market at Kennewick Avenue and Auburn Street (downtown)

Tuesday

West Richland - 4033 Van Giesen (at the Curves gym) 4:30 to 6:30

GOOGLE MAP:

<http://maps.google.com/maps/ms?client=firefox-a&hl=en&ie=UTF8&msa=0&ll=46.270088,-119.205093&spn=0.332255,0.725098&z=11&msid=104973808794430172196.0004498307f614a0e3e7c>

Stayed tuned for more information

Schreiber & Sons
2621 Ringold Road
Etopia WA 99330
509.266.4348
www.schreiberandsons.com