

# Pinehold Gardens *Field Notes*

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## **A DAY IN THE LIFE**

We are well and we are wishing the best for all of our extended Pinehold community. Also we want to thank everyone that has checked in with us.

We are so fortunate in so many ways. Obviously we are used to working from home and this time of year we rarely leave home so the rhythm of our lives has not changed much. We have a good supply of food that we have canned, froze or stored in our cooler, root cellar and freezers which is what we usually eat in winter. Also since we try to support as many local and family-owned businesses as possible we buy a lot of things in bulk, everything from fish to nuts to soap. Like I said we are so fortunate to live the life we have.

One of the funniest things I heard in the last week was a resident in the subdivision down the block telling a dog walker that it looks like working at home means dogs are going to loose weight. Yesterday I saw 20 dogs on my walk when the norm is one or two.

The saddest thing is that I can no longer visit my 91 year old mother. I fear that she will not hang in there for long without visits that include feeding her as many calories as I can. I used to joke that I was trying to fatten up the Christmas goose. Even sadder is if she dies we cannot have a funeral for her.

But it is with renewed spirit, after two disheartening weather related years, that David and I are moving forward to provide you with healthy food to help you stay healthy.

## **CSA UPDATE**

We are just over half full with the majority of the sign ups coming in from returning members. We have been warned to expect a sudden surge in demand. We will let you know if we are getting close to selling out as we

will not overcommitment and oversell just because the demand is there.

With your commitment to our CSA program we have not only been able to pay our regular bills, but we have also been able to buy all of our seeds and a full year's worth of our supplies just in case the supply chains fail.

Toilet paper and hand sanitizer aren't the only things people are buying. So many people are ordering seeds that the orders have overwhelmed many seed companies' websites and their ability to fill the orders.

## **PAYING FOR THE CSA**

We have always had a very flexible payment plan where people can send in as many post dated checks as they need to. We also have an Assistance Fund that provides up to \$100 towards the cost of the CSA. The funds have been provided by other CSA members and the use of it is self regulated.

## **COVID-19 PLANS**

Besides being prepared to operate our farm with all our supplies on hand, we are researching the best practices for staff and food safety. We have already been trained for food safety regulations for animal contamination through the Food Safety Modernization Act's Good Agricultural Practices training.

We are assuming that restrictions and safety practices will still be in place when our CSA starts in July so we plan on delivering initially in plastic bags instead of our reusable boxes. The workers will most likely be required to wear gloves. We already sanitize our wash water and as far as we know there has been

no transmittal of the virus via food. We have read that there is a different sanitizing agent for cleaning surfaces and will that in place. The local CSA farming community is a well connected group of helpful farmers as is the UW Extension agents.

And again, once again, we are fortunate in another way. All but one member of our crew is a returning member—people that we know well and can trust. So we are confident that if we ask them to stay at home if they are not feeling well, they will. We also trust that they will be diligent in following all hand washing and other safety guidelines.

## **CSA VS. FARMERS MARKETS**

Our CSA has always been the core of our farm business, both financially and with our commitment to the CSA. Since some of you are Market Share CSA members, we might have to ask that you preorder your Saturday market order in case demand at the market starts to exceed supply.

## **Summer Dreamin'**



Have you heard the spring peepers and seen the daffodils that will soon bloom? Soon it will be summer and we hopefully can put all the disruption, anxiety and chaos behind us.