

Pinehold Gardens *Field Notes*

Vol. 24, Issue 1

Winter, 2018

A Day In This Life

If you don't like this weather, just wait a minute. That old saw sure seems fitting for this winter. It seems we've had a little bit of every season but summer so far.

Well, calendar-wise we still have a bit of winter to go but the days are getting longer and spring is creeping ever slowly back again.

So we thought now would be a good time to thank you for your support last year. We know that you have a lot of other sources of produce for your dinner table and that is why we are especially grateful that you turned to us last year. Your support allows us to continue to grow healthy food and build up a sustainable farm.

By turning to us, you have also flaunted your interest in making home cooked meals in the face of current trends. Believe or not, you are being radical. According to a trade publication, only 10 percent of Americans say they love to cook at home. And for the first time ever, the percent of food dollars spent on food for the home has been surpassed by the percent spent on eating out, according to the USDA. The lures drawing you away from the kitchen are plentiful—from food trucks to grocerants to fast casual eateries as well as restaurants.

But you have decided to buck the trend. You have recognized that there is nothing better for your family's health and your household's pocketbook than a home-cooked meal. Kudos to you.

So what have we been up to? We have had the pleasure of spending a day with our two year old grandniece, Piper, most weeks. We've pretty much memorized Frozen, one of Piper's way of slipping into a nap. We've also read a good deal and seen a few movies.

Other than that there is the winter prep work — ordering seeds, logging receipts and invoices into a spreadsheet for our tax accountant and seeing to other preparations for the coming season. Sandy is still heavily involved with everything related to the care of her elderly parents, both of whom are now in Hospice Care and she thanks everyone for their thoughts and kind words during this very difficult time of life.

What's New and Old?

This is an Open House year and it will be held in early fall. We are going to fulfill our original intention of alternating years of our adults only On-Farm Dinner with our family oriented fabulous pot luck Open House. We will also repeat our successful chili and cider pumpkin upick family day (and we plan on planting more pumpkins for all the kids at heart).

And fingers crossed that no flooding waters or disease cripples our CSA member tomato upick.

Flour CSA

Once again we will be offering local Racine grown old-world heritage wheat varieties through our partnership with our long-time friend Charlie Tennessen, owner of Anarchy Acres. The cost is \$32.50 for five deliveries of a four pound bag of flour that has been hand milled the week before you receive it. Please enclose a separate check made out to Anarchy Acres if you would like to join the flour CSA.



It's hard to believe that the fields even in November were still green. We were still digging carrots out of that greenhouse into February when things weren't so green.

CSA Open House

Where does the time go? We were one of three farmers at the first CSA Open House when the Urban Ecology Center was housed in a double wide trailer in Riverside Park. We spoke to about a dozen people, mainly educating them about the new concept called CSAs. Now in its 16th year the event is attended by almost 1,000 people who are mostly familiar with CSAs and are shopping for the CSA that fits their needs the best.

The interest in CSAs peaked about seven years ago and farms that operate CSAs have seen an annual 10% decline over the past few years. We had been fortunate to have not experienced a decline as we have been able to count on at least 90 returning members. And we have been able to reach our minimum goal of 150 members by attracting 60 new members. Unfortunately that was not the case last year as only we only had 43 new members. So please spread the word about our CSA and the Open House at the UEC on March 10, 11am-3pm. We are currently at 37 returning and 7 new members.