

# Hello From Your Farmer

June 12-13, 2019



Summer has a funny way of sneaking up on us here in the Northland, doesn't it? Whispering it's arrival with the promise of warm sunshine and flower blossoms, then disappearing in 3 inches of snow. Ruffling our hair with a warm breeze, then hours later sending us looking for our Winter hats again. After the long Winter, we hurry off on a wild goose chase in search of Spring, only to realize that while we were out looking, Summer sneaked in the back door. This year was no exception, but despite late snows on the forsythia blossoms and cool temps lingering for most of the month of May, we have somehow managed to keep our planting schedule!

Working and planning a farm around the steady stream of false starts and curve balls that Spring throws our way is probably one of the most challenging parts of farming. The month of May is usually downright dizzying. In the same way that a pilot flying an airplane through a storm has to rely on the readings of many different instruments to navigate safely to a destination, so too a farmer needs to monitor many variables in order to get seeds in the ground and crops harvested on time. Farming in the springtime goes something like this: Check variables, recalculate trajectory. Repeat every 4 hours.



One important variable that we monitor is soil temperature, as some seeds like sweet corn or green beans will just rot in cool soil (when grown organically as we do without fungicides to protect them!) while other seeds such as spinach or lettuce will germinate poorly in soil that is too warm. As the soil warms, the billions of microbes (over 1 TON of microbes in a single acre of living topsoil!) laying dormant over the winter begin to awaken. These microbes create symbiotic relationships with the roots of plants, literally an underground barter system where microbes break down minerals from the soil into forms that are usable by the plants in exchange for sugars produced by the plants. Without warm soil temps, most seeds can't get the nutrients they need from the soil.

Nighttime lows are another critical variable - how cold will it be? 35 degrees seems to be the magic number I watch for. Hoophouses (unheated tunnels of clear plastic in which tender



tomatoes and cucumbers were transplanted back in April) give us SOME additional protection from the elements, but if the temps drop too close to 35 degrees outside we need to cover these crops overnight with frost blankets and/or bring in portable heaters to keep these plants from being damaged (or even destroyed!) by the cold. These cold-sensitive crops were seeded in a heated greenhouse way back in March, so if the crop is lost, there is no easy “do-over.” If the tomatoes were destroyed in May, replacement tomatoes planted from seed would not be ready to transplant until sometime in late June, and then wouldn’t start to ripen until September (just in time for the first fall frost!) No, failure is not an option. So: check variables, recalculate trajectory. Repeat every 4 hours.

Just when it seems that my mind is about to blow a fuse from all this checking and recalculating, SOMEHOW we’ve gotten to the second week of June! The variables are stabilizing, the storm that is Spring has passed, and Summer has arrived. The cucumbers need trellising, and the tomatoes are waist high, loaded with flowers and in need of pruning. I breathe a sigh of relief - I’ll take the Work of Summer to the Worry of Spring any day. Here’s to a bountiful summer harvest! Yours in community  
- Chris Duke, Great Oak Farm

# Tips and Tricks

## CSA Hacks 101

### Tips and Reminders:

- Please remember to return your wax-lined boxes to your pick-up location on each week.
- Our pick-up locations (what we call drop-sites) are key to making Community Supported Agriculture (CSA) work. Please help us in keeping them happy by arriving during the pick-up time and, of course, rewarding them with smiles and thank yous.
- Have a party or event coming up where you’d like to feature local foods, or just need something extra?
- Be sure to check out our Special Order program at: [www.bayfieldfoods.org/special-order](http://www.bayfieldfoods.org/special-order). Order what you’d like and we’ll bring it to your next pick up.
- If you have a vacation coming up and will be missing a pick up, be sure to login into your account (the same one you created when you signed up) and place a vacation on hold.

# Bayfield Foods CSA

Week of June 12-13, 2019

## What's in the Box?

### Family Veggie Box

**Great Oak Farm-** spinach, swiss chard

**Raspotnik Farm-** rhubarb

**Yoman Farm-** head lettuce, tomato plant, radishes

**Twisting Twig Farm-** green garlic

**Bayfield Apple Company-** Blueberries

### Small Veggie

**Great Oak Farm-** spinach, swiss chard.

**Raspotnik Farm-** rhubarb

**Yoman Farm-** head lettuce, radishes

**Twisting Twig-** green garlic

### Family Meat Box

**Maple Hill Farm-** bacon

**Griggs Cattle Company-** stir fry meat, summer sausage, ground beef

**Bodin's Fisheries-** whitefish

### Small Meat Box

**Maple Hill Farm-** bacon

**Griggs Cattle Company-** stir fry meat, steak, ground beef

### Plus item

**Heritage Acres-** honey

### Flowers

**Wild Hollow-** anemone, stock ranunculus



## Recipes

### Basic Marinade for Stir-Fried Meats

<https://www.serious-eats.com/recipes/2014/04/basic-marinade-for-stir-fried-meats-recipe.html>

½ pound sliced or diced chicken, pork, or beef

¼ tsp salt

¼ tsp sugar

⅛ tsp ground white or black pepper

½ tsp Shaoxing wine (rice wine-substitute is pale dry sherry, dry white vermouth, dry white wine)

½ tsp soy sauce

1 tsp vegetable, peanut, or canola oil

½ tsp cornstarch.

Combine all ingredients in a large bowl and mix with hands to coat meat thoroughly.

Cover and refrigerate for 30 minutes before cooking.

Editor note: you can use lots of vegetables in stir-fry. I even use turnips cooked before everything else to soften a bit and add spinach when everything is almost cooked.)

### Salad

Make a salad with a mixture of mixed greens and head lettuce. Slice scallions, radishes and add to salad. Sprinkle with defrosted blueberries. Serve with oil and vinegar salad dressing.

# More Recipes

## Maximize your CSA Box



### Simple Baked Whitefish (Lake Superior CSA Newsletter 5/30/18)

Preheat oven to 450\*and place a heavy baking sheet in oven to preheat as well.

Combine 2 cloves of minced garlic, 1 tsp of rosemary, ½ tsp of salt and pepper, and Tbsp of olive oil together into a mixing bowl.

Place fillet on a piece of tin foil and drizzle the mixture evenly over fish, scatter lemon slices on top and then fold the foil over the fillet, making sure to crimp the edges to keep the oily mixture in.

Place fish on baking sheet and bake for roughly 13-15 minutes, or until fish is cooked through.

### Greens Pesto (Sara Gulan on the Lake Superior CSA Recipe Page)

This is like any other pesto, but with greens. I've done spinach and radish greens and both worked great.

Put ½ the bunch of greens in the food processor, drizzle in olive oil until it gets blendy, add the rest of the greens, toss in some toasted nuts (pine or sesame), garlic, parmesan, and salt and pepper to taste. This is a tasty magic sauce to smother on any and everything. (pork chops, pasta, rice, whatever).

