

APRIL 6 - 7, 2022

BAYFIELD FOODS CSA

Community Supported Agriculture



Spring Sprouts

BRIAN CLEMENTS - NORTHCROFT FARM

I know it's hard to believe with the recent weather but spring is finally upon us. Things at Northcroft Farm are getting into gear for the season and I should be going full steam ahead in the next couple weeks.

Spring began on March 15th for me when I cleaned up the greenhouse, made some improvements to reduce drafts of cold air and added dividers to the greenhouse. I took this step so I can reduce the space I am heating to just the area I need for the plants I have started.

The first seeds to get started in the greenhouse are the scallions, parsley, bok choy and arugula. All 4 of these should be ready for transplant by the 2nd week of April. At the same time, I did my first direct seeding in one of the hoop houses (an unheated greenhouse). Radishes, arugula and spinach went in on March 15th and had sprouted by the 25th of the month.

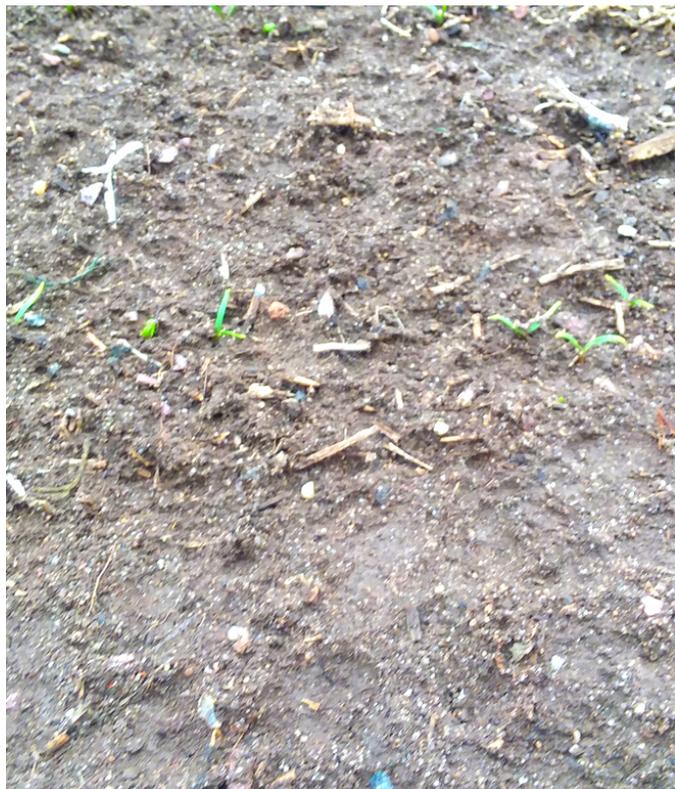
Arugula will be the first one ready, about the 3rd week of April, with the spinach and radishes

coming at the end of the month. Great Oak Farm overwintered spinach that was planted in the fall and that is ready for this week's delivery.

Last week I started my second round of starts in the greenhouse; adding beets, kale, chard, salad greens, tomatoes, peppers, and eggplants. It will take until the beginning of July before we get any tomatoes but the lettuce, kale and chard will be ready in early May.

While starting plants is always the highlight of the spring, there are a few other exciting things happening here. After a few delays I will be constructing a new greenhouse as soon as the ground thaws. The new one will have a concrete floor that will help to keep things tidy and help to retain some heat at night. The new greenhouse will also have some personalized modifications including higher walls to combat drifting snow and extra supports to increase the amount of snow the roof can hold.

In other news I am excited to say that after 12 months on back order the power harrow attachment for the BCS garden tractor finally arrived. The power harrow will replace the rototiller in a lot of situations and will help preserve the soil health. Similar to a rototiller, the power harrow will make a light fluffy soil for transplanting into, but will do so by stirring the soil (similar to an eggbeater) rather than flipping the soil like the rototiller. By stirring the soil, the soil structure and fungal communities will be disturbed less - and less oxygen will be introduced which encourages the breakdown of organic matter in the soil.



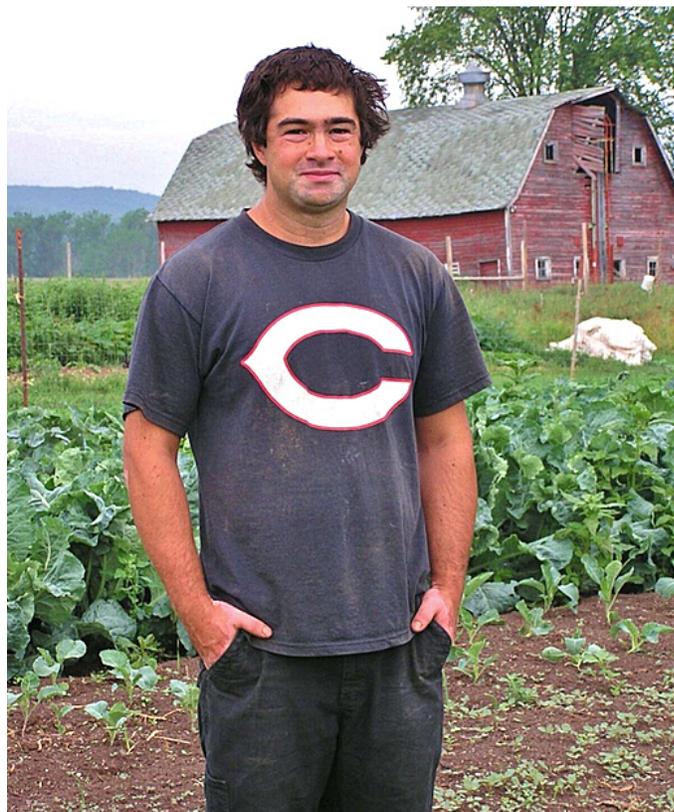
Tiny spinach plants have begun to germinate at Northcroft Farm.



After being backordered for 12 months, the power harrow tractor attachment has arrived! This instrument will help to preserve the health of the soil at Northcroft.

The final piece of big news is that after 2 years as the president of Bayfield Foods and 14 months as the first general manager, we are hiring one of our current employees, Laura Ashenbrenner, as our new general manager. This will allow me to step back from running Bayfield Foods and focus on the farm. Laura started as our delivery driver for the Chequamegon Bay area and took over our Farm to Doorstep program and the back end of our wholesale program a year ago. Laura has proven herself to be organized and efficient and has done a lot to work out the kinks in our other programs. I believe she will make an excellent general manager.

From all of us at Bayfield Foods - thank you all for joining us this spring.



The face behind the veggies - Brian poses in front of his barn in summer 2021.

Baked Spinach Artichoke Dip

INGREDIENTS:

INSTRUCTIONS:

- 1 - 8-oz. Ewe Rascal Ewe sheep cheese, softened
- 3/4 c. mayonnaise
- 3/4 c. sour cream
- 1 c. freshly grated Parmesan
- 1 c. shredded white cheddar, plus more for topping
- 1/2 c. shredded Gruyère
- 1 (14-oz.) can artichoke hearts, drained and chopped
- 10 oz. fresh Great Oak Farm spinach
- 2 cloves garlic, minced
- 1 tsp. lemon zest
- 1/2 tsp. red pepper flakes
- Kosher salt
- Freshly ground black pepper
- Your favorite bread, for serving

- Preheat oven to 350°.
- Cook spinach down in large skillet after heating 1 T. of olive oil. Drain all excess moisture from spinach by squeezing in towel or cheesecloth.
- In a large bowl, combine all ingredients (except bread). Mix until fully combined and season with salt and pepper.
- Transfer to a baking dish and smooth top with a spatula. Top with more shredded white cheddar.
- Bake until bubbly and slightly golden, 30 minutes. If you'd like the dip to develop a more golden top, broil on high for 2 minutes.
- Serve with bread on the side, for dipping.

