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# BURR OAK GARDENS, LLC

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To forget how to dig the earth and to tend the soil is to forget ourselves- Mohondas Gandhi

## This Week on the Farm

We would like to give a big thank you to the Crawford Family, the Vega Family, and Mike Groendyk who came out to the farm on Saturday to dig potatoes. We got three rows of potatoes dug and ate some delicious food. I have attached a copy of the Zucchini Dessert Squares that Kay and I cooked for the potluck. We fooled multiple people with this dessert. They thought they were eating an apple crisp and were shocked when they found out it was actually zucchini. We did reduce the amount of sugar by about half because it seemed like a lot of sugar!

Onto box news. This will be the last week for scallions and cipollini onions. It will also be the last week for our spring planted collards and depending how much we have to harvest this week, possibly for the kale as well. The deer have been out munching again.

The zucchini and cucumber plants have started to slow down a little from their peak performance the last few weeks. We should still have those items for the next couple of weeks, but not at the same levels as before.

This is the second week for the Dark Red Norland potatoes. They have sized up really well this year and we are pretty pleased with the yields, especially considering the moderate germination rate this spring. We have two more rows of Dark Red Norlands to harvest and then all of the reds will be harvested for this year. We have a russet and our favorite Peter Wilcox to harvest still.

This is the first week for garlic. The bulbs this year are tending to be smaller. They were planted (based on our crop rotation) on a sandy knoll. We had some winter kill where the straw mulch blew off this winter and we were not able to get our last fertilizer application done due to all of the wet weather this spring. We should still have plenty of garlic for this year, I am just a little concerned about the size of our seed garlic for our planting this fall. Thankfully the hardneck garlic seemed to size up better than the softnecks.

This is also the first week for bell peppers. The plants are looking really healthy and there are a lot of smaller bells out there, so we should have a nice harvest in the weeks to come. I have seen very little sun-scald because the canopies are so healthy they are able to provide enough shading for the fruits.

Onto field news. The first planting of sweet corn was a bust. The plants started tasseling and releasing pollen during all of the wet weather, so they did not pollinate well. The planting is very uneven and we won't have enough to go in everyone's box. The second planting is looking promising, but it is several weeks away at this point. I am hoping because the planting is later that we might have missed the stage at which the European Corn Borer's lay their eggs. Last year our later plantings of sweet corn were infested with the borers, something that is difficult to screen for when we are packing boxes. We will see. It all depends on rain and warmth.

Tyler and I have made the decision that we are going to mow off the rest of our spring planted cabbage family field. The only thing remaining that we could potentially have harvested were the

Brussels sprouts and the kale and collards. Between the plants lost to flooding this spring, the resulting weed pressure from not being able to get into the field to cultivate because it was so wet, and the deer damage, it is not worth our time and effort to try to save those crops.



We got the field worked on Monday to start transplanting the fall kale, collards, and lettuce. We are going to have to install row covers right away on those crops because I do not want to feed the deer! We have both our regular

head lettuce and we have the Salanova type lettuce from Johnny's Selected Seeds. This lettuce is able to be grown as heads, but then harvested and cored to become baby leaf lettuce. The green varieties germinated really well, but all of our red varieties did not. They were in different spots in the greenhouse so the levels of moisture/sunlight may have caused the red flats to dry out at the critical stages before germination.

We got our last greenhouse seeding done last Friday. We planted the baby pac choy for the fall and our last planting of looseleaf lettuce. For our first five or six years farming we always direct seeded our looseleaf lettuce mix. Weed pressure was always terrible, which made harvesting and washing the lettuce an even bigger pain than normal. A couple of years ago we got a tip from a fellow grower who seeded four to five lettuce seeds per cell in a 200 cell tray. This made the cells fill quickly and gave each plug a combination of lettuce varieties. We then transplant the plugs by hand in a twelve inch block with each plug two inches apart in a grid pattern. The plants are large enough that they quickly fill in the gaps and smother any weeds. It was a fabulous tip that has saved us a lot of man hours on the backend of production.

We have more direct seeding to do this week. We have a planting of beets, market turnips, daikon radishes, and our big fall planting of carrots. Tyler and I both love direct seeding in the fall. There is so much less weed and pest pressure (although that might be different with all of the deer this year!). We can go through the plantings once with our wheel hoes and they are set for the season. If only the spring plantings were as easy to keep clean!!

## Your Box This Week

**Scallions or Cippolini Onions-** Place in a jar with one inch of water on the bottom. Place in fridge.

**Zucchini-** Wrap zucchini in a dry paper towel and place in a plastic bag in the fridge.

**Cucumber-** Same as zucchini.

**Dark Red Norland Potatoes-** Store in a cool, dark place.

**Garlic-** Same as potatoes.

**Jalapeño Peppers-** Store in a paper bag in the fridge.

**Bell Pepper-** Same as jalapenos.

**Basil/Parsley-** Place in a jar with an inch of water on the bottom. Store on the counter.

**Collards/Kale-** Wash the greens and spin or pat dry with paper towel. Spread evenly on a paper towel and loosely roll the paper towel. Place rolled towel in a plastic bag and place in the fridge.

## Zucchini Dessert Squares

**4 cups all-purpose flour**  
**2 cups sugar**  
**1/2 teaspoon ground cinnamon**  
**1/2 teaspoon salt**  
**1-1/2 cups cold butter**

### **FILLING:**

**8 to 10 cups cubed seeded peeled zucchini**  
**2/3 cup lemon juice**  
**1 cup sugar**  
**1 teaspoon ground cinnamon**  
**1/2 teaspoon ground nutmeg**

In a large bowl, combine the flour, sugar, cinnamon and salt. Cut in butter until crumbly; reserve 3 cups. Pat remaining crumb mixture into a greased 13-in. x 9-in. baking pan. Bake at 375° for 12 minutes.

Meanwhile, for filling, place zucchini and lemon juice in a large saucepan; bring to a boil. Reduce heat; cover and cook for 6-8 minutes or until zucchini is crisp-tender. Stir in the sugar, cinnamon and nutmeg; cover and simmer for 5 minutes (mixture will be thin).

Spoon over crust; sprinkle with the reserved crumb mixture. Bake at 375° until golden, 40-45 minutes. (From [www.tasteofhome.com](http://www.tasteofhome.com))

## Homemade Refrigerator Pickles

**1 cup distilled white vinegar**  
**1 tablespoon salt**  
**2 cups white sugar**  
**6 cups sliced cucumbers**  
**1 cup sliced onions**

In a medium saucepan over medium heat, bring vinegar, salt and sugar to a boil. Boil until the sugar has dissolved, about 10 minutes.

Place the cucumbers, onions in a large bowl. Pour the vinegar mixture over the vegetables. Transfer to sterile containers and store in the refrigerator. (From [www.allrecipes.com](http://www.allrecipes.com))

## Potato Hash with Bell Peppers and Onions

**2 Tbsp. olive oil**  
**1 Tbsp. unsalted butter**  
**4 large or 6 medium potatoes, peeled and cut into 1/2" cubes**  
**1 onion, diced**  
**1 red bell pepper, diced**  
**2 tsp. fresh parsley, chopped**  
**3 garlic cloves, minced**  
**Salt and pepper, to taste**

**1/4 cup freshly grated Parmesan cheese**

Preheat the oil and butter in a large nonstick skillet over medium heat. Add potatoes, toss to coat with oil, and place a lid on the pan. Allow the potatoes to cook covered for 10 minutes.

Remove the lid and increase the heat to medium high. Add onion and bell pepper. Cook for 15 minutes, stirring occasionally, until the potatoes and vegetables turn golden brown.

Add the parsley and garlic; cook for 2 minutes. Season with salt and pepper. Sprinkle with Parmesan and serve immediately. (From [www.thecomfortofcooking.com](http://www.thecomfortofcooking.com))

## Sautéed Collard Greens with Garlic, Peppers and Onions

**1 bunch collard greens**  
**2 tablespoons olive oil**  
**1/2 medium onion, sliced**  
**1/2 red or green bell pepper, sliced**  
**1 teaspoon minced garlic**

### **Salt and pepper**

Remove and discard all but 1 inch of the collard stems. Cut the remaining stems out of the leaves, separating the leaves and stems. Cut the leaves into 2-inch squares. Slice the stems into thin slices.

Wash the leaves in a big basin of water. Leave the water in the basin or sink and use a strainer to dip the leaves out of the water. Don't wash the leaves inside a colander or pour the water off the container with the leaves inside; this would allow any sand to stay with the greens. Wash the stems separately in the same basin of water, using the same method as the leaves.

Bring a large pot of water to a boil and add 2 tablespoons salt. Have a colander ready in the sink to drain the greens and a bowl of water with ice cubes in it to chill the greens. Cook the stems for 1 minute. Add the leaves, and once they turn bright green, fish out a small leaf to taste it. The greens are done when they taste tender. You can't really tell whether the greens are done without tasting them.

Pour the cooked greens into the colander to drain. Once the hot water has drained off, carefully put the hot greens into the ice water. Once the greens feel cool to the touch, drain them in a colander again. Drain for about 10 to 15 minutes so that they are quite dry. (At this point, the greens may be stored in the refrigerator for up to 3 days.)

Put the olive oil in a large skillet over medium heat. Sauté the onions gently in the oil. Raise the heat and add the peppers, and then the garlic. Add the blanched greens and sauté until heated through. Season with salt and pepper. (From [www.foodnetwork.com](http://www.foodnetwork.com))

## Cucumber Salad with Pineapple and Jalapeño

**3/4 cup sugar**  
**2/3 cup white vinegar**  
**2 tablespoons water**  
**1/2 teaspoon salt**  
**1 cup 1/3-inch pieces peeled cored fresh pineapple**  
**1 English hothouse cucumber, cut into 1/3-inch pieces**  
**1 carrot, peeled, cut into matchstick-size strips**  
**1/3 cup thinly sliced red onion**  
**1 tablespoon minced seeded jalapeño chili**  
**1 head green leaf lettuce, leaves separated**  
**1 tablespoon sesame seeds, toasted**

Bring first 4 ingredients to boil in heavy small saucepan, stirring until sugar dissolves. Simmer until reduced to 2/3 cup, about 4 minutes. Transfer syrup to large bowl and refrigerate until cold.

Add pineapple to syrup. Cover and refrigerate 1 hour. Add cucumber and next 3 ingredients to pineapple mixture; stir to coat. Line plates with lettuce leaves. Spoon salad atop lettuce. Sprinkle with sesame seeds and serve. (From [www.epicurious.com](http://www.epicurious.com))