



## SWEET PRIORITIES

While we'd love to dwell on the overwhelming amount of precipitation we've been hammered with this month and the oddly cold weather we've been experiencing, we are focusing on the positive. That said, you should be made aware that there are some crops that are not exactly growing as well as normal and we are feeling a bit pinched as we roll into week five. Thank you for bearing with us as we stumble through some of the strangest weather we've ever had to deal with as farmers. Keep your expectations in check when it comes to heat-loving crops like sweet corn and watermelons. They probably aren't going to come to fruition in 2017 at We Grow with this cool June.

Most of you know that we keep bees at our farm and this week we experienced our first swarm of the season. While it was a pretty standard swarm that was identified, captured and transported without incident, the fact that our intern Racheal got to assist on the capture made it quite exciting. Giving someone a tour of a beehive humbly reminds us of the complex biology of honeybees and how fortunate we are to have them helping us pollinate our crops. Especially with summer squash and cucumbers in blossom right now.

Every week, we open the hives and look over every frame to check for the various stages of larvae or new queen cells. We also monitor for problems like mites or foul brood. We decide if the bees need more space and we add colony boxes or super boxes depending on what the bees are doing inside. Each year, our overwintering success improves. This spring we came thru with a little better than half of our hives surviving, which is an improvement but it could be better. Just maybe, the changes on our farm are helping.

Planting the seed of information about the struggle for today's pollinators is important and significant. It isn't just the non-native honeybee that is having a hard time surviving in modern times. Aside from the obvious lawn and garden chemicals, crop monocultures and mites, pollinators are struggling with reduced gene pools and climate inconsistency. Mason bees, bumble bees, hover flies and many more count on us humans to make bee-friendly decisions. Education is key. Learn more at [xerces.org](http://xerces.org).

Learning every day,

*Eric & Rebecca*

## IN THE CRATE

Celery

Carrots

Scallions

Merlox Oakleaf Lettuce

Chard or Beet Greens

Napa Cabbage

Garlic Scapes

Radishes

Parsley

Broccoli *family shares*

**Want to be healthy.**

**Cook.** The food industry has done a great job of convincing eaters that corporations can cook better than we can. The problem is it's not true.

- Michael Pollan

## BE SOCIAL



Member Lisa has recently challenged other members to finding creative ways to use more We Grow veggies in everyday meals. Check out her pictures and ideas on Facebook. Share a recipe you've tried, along with your tips and photos on We Grow's Facebook page. After all, you're part of our local eating collective!

**YOU'RE INVITED:**  
**FARM-TO-TABLE DINNER**  
**ON THE FARM**  
**FRIDAY, JULY 14**  
**APPETIZERS 5:30**  
**DINNER 6:30**

Featuring our pasture-raised smoked pork, local micro-brews, and wine, and fresh from the farm veggies. Meet our family and members. Check out the gardens and meet the animals. Meal prepared by professional chef, Jay Lucey of Forest Springs.

## CELERY

Fresh, locally grown celery has an incredibly strong flavor. You should use it differently than store bought celery and take this into account. If using as a flavoring, figure you will only need about 1/4 the amount in your recipe. Add a ton of flavor to your salad with just a few small leaves. The stems can be eaten as a snack, but prepare yourself for an indescribable burst of flavor!

Celery will keep for weeks in a jar of water in the fridge with a bag over or just in a bag in the crisper. In our kitchen, we dry the leaves in a dehydrator to use in soups and casseroles all winter long. The stems don't dry as well, but you could dry them separately (longer) from the leaves if desired.

## CHARD OR BEET GREENS

We know greens in the beet family are a super food, but no one in our house was crazy about the flavor. That all changed the day we mixed up some hot bacon dressing. The resulting wilted beet green salad was amazing! The sweet -bacon flavor cut the oxalic beet flavor perfectly and made a flavor not highly regarded, quite delicious. You can also use these greens on your sandwiches for a change up. We also load up our orzo pasta mash-up with chard throughout the summer for added nutrition. Get creative in the kitchen!

## MERLOX LETTUCE

The lettuce this week is called Merlox Oakleaf. This is another lettuce coming from the field and it is very dirty. Ironically, the field lettuce is doing quite well in this cool weather and we've been planting a lot more the past two weeks. This is one easy item for our wholesale accounts. Before eating, please take your lettuce apart by separating the leaves from the stem and wash well. Stores well in the fridge right in your greens spinner.

## PARSLEY

Chopped fresh or dried and combined with thyme and bay leaves, parsley is included in the French combination of herbs called bouquet garni, used to season stock, stews, and soups. It can be added to sandwiches, any type of casserole and adds a fresh, spring-like flavor to dips and cheese. The best way to keep fresh parsley sprigs is to wrap them in damp paper towels, place in a sealed zip-lock baggie, and keep refrigerated. Dried parsley flakes are useful for several months when stored in a tightly sealed glass container and stored in cool, dark, and dry place.

*Adapted from [mercola.com](http://mercola.com):* If you want to be impressed by parsley, take a look at its vitamin K content – a whopping 574% of the daily recommended value in a 3.5 ounce serving. This promotes bone strength, but it also

has a role in the treatment and possible prevention of Alzheimer's disease by limiting neuronal damage in the brain. The vitamin K dominance is enough to make the 62% daily value of vitamin C and the 47% DV in vitamin A look meager, but the "C" content is 3 times more than in oranges, and the "A" augments the carotenes lutein and zeaxanthin, helping to prevent eye diseases like cataracts and macular degeneration.

The iron in parsley (twice as much as in spinach) is essential for the production of an important oxygen-carrying component in the red blood cells called heme. Copper is important because it's required by the body for normal metabolic processes, but must be supplied through outside sources. The manganese in parsley contains super-antioxidant superoxide dismutase, and the folate helps form red blood cells and make up our genetic material.

Parsley is useful as a digestive aid with its high fiber content. This helps move foods through the digestive tract and controls blood-cholesterol levels, but has a diuretic effect as well. A tea made from parsley is a traditional remedy for colic, indigestion, and intestinal gas. As an herb sprinkled in food, it actually helps purify the blood and fight cancer. Eating parsley is now thought to be a way to detoxify the system of harmful compounds like mercury. Now you know!

## HOT BACON DRESSING

### Ingredients

- 6 slices bacon, diced
- 1/2 cup finely chopped onion
- vegetable oil (or favorite substitute)
- 2 teaspoons cornstarch, mixed with
  - --- 2 teaspoons water
- 1/2 cup white vinegar
- 1/2 cup water
- 1/4 cup sugar
- salt and pepper

### Directions

Fry bacon until crisp. Remove bacon from pan leaving fat. Set bacon aside.

Add onion to bacon fat in pan and cook until onion is soft. Remove onion from pan leaving fat. Set onion aside with bacon.

Pour bacon fat into measuring cup and add enough vegetable oil to equal 1/2 cup. Add fat/oil to cornstarch water mixture and set aside.

Combine vinegar, water, sugar, salt and pepper in small saucepan and heat to a boil. Add cornstarch mixture and cook until thickened about 1-2 minutes.

Remove from heat and add bacon and onion. Serve while warm.