

June 15, 2005

Country Supported Agriculture

Please pickup and checkoff your share at 714 W Iowa in Urbana or 701 W Washington in Champaign between 4 and 7 pm today (use the garage service doors). Please remember, eggs are not part of produce shares and must be prepaid. Please take only the quantity of eggs you have reserved so that no one gets shorted. And, please keep the cooler lids tightly closed during hot weather. You can verify your quantity on the egg checkoff list. To order eggs, please call the Moores at 815.432.6238.

From the Farm

I am sending this week's newsletter from Switzerland. As we tour this country, which has taken great pains to protect its small farms in recent decades, it occurs to me what a different landscape we would have, literally, if the U.S. had done the same thing. Both the Swiss farmers and their government understand that the country's long-run ability to produce and market food and food products is tied to preserving farm diversity and the environment today. Large factory-type livestock farms are prohibited by environmental and animal welfare regulations. Growth hormones and carcinogenic pesticides like atrazine, which are common in the U.S., are banned here. As a new Swiss agriculture promotional DVD states, "To be a farmer is not just a profession, but a vocation and an important integral part of Swiss culture."

Since the U.S. government doesn't foster agriculture aimed at long-term viability, we find ourselves taking on the task. In the absence of significant research and vocational support, farmers like the Moores have largely had to teach themselves and each other how to sustainably raise crops and livestock. As many of you know, the Moore's farm was featured as part of a permaculture certification workshop held in northern Illinois last year. Permaculture systems are self-reliant, producing their own food, fiber, fertilizer, shelter, and fuel needs through synergistic, interdependent processes. Each year, the Moore farm edges closer to the goal of a closed loop. The long rotations of crops and animals, and the specific ordering of these animal rotations allows the Moores to conserve energy and labor while simultaneously breaking weed and insect pest cycles. This has been key for their incredible productivity on such a small acreage using only their own family's labor. The Moore farm is truly an amazing place, unlike any other in East Central Illinois. If you have not done so already, do take the Moores up on their invitation to see it first hand for yourself. Call 815.432.6238 to schedule an individual or group visit, or sign up for the Dining on Pasture event on October 2.

In Your Share Today

While Diann could not confirm what would be in the shares before I left, she did say that it would be produce that we had already had at least once during the season.

T-Shirt Orders Due

If you have not reserved a T-shirt, please do so ASAP as we are getting close to making the order. Ts are \$14.80 each--an incredible deal for a 6-color design. Design is the same as the totebag only smaller to fit on shirts (see <http://www.prairienet.org/pcsa/totebag.html> for reference). Sizes are XS to 3XL in white 50/50 cotton/poly. If you are interested, email info@prairielandcsa.org or call 355-6279. I will send payment details closer to the time of the order.

Storage and Recipe Suggestions

Please refer to vegetable-specific storage tips from previous newsletters at <http://www.prairielandcsa.org/newsletters.html> Some recipes are on the PCSA site at <http://www.prairienet.org/pcsa/recipes.htm>. You can also reference Recipes from America's Small Farms.