



Rare Earth News

Winter Edition

Greetings everyone! Hope you're finding an interesting and creative way to pass the winter away. I was hoping to get a bit more skiing in by now, but with lack of snow the chances have been far and few between. Hope February yields a bit more snow than what January did. I think one of the best solutions to deal with Wisconsin winters is to take a vacation to a place where its warm and sunny. Unfortunately that's not in the cards for me & Debra Jo this winter but maybe it is for you. Tempting at times to hop on a plane and get the heck out of this icebox. How nice would that be for the off-season to include a vacation with every CSA subscription? Perhaps to a destination where the fresh market season was in progress. The idea may be a little far-fetched but it does capture everyone's attention. If there was a way I could work that one out I surely would!

Looking at our farm survey results from last summer it generally concludes that getting a surprise weekly assortment of fresh produce is losing it's favor to a whole new era of consumer purchasing. We know there's still many of our loyal and long time subscribers who like the element of surprise each week, but the local pool of potential new customers looking to join a CSA has become a bit shallow.

To meet the needs of a greater diverse consumer group we're taking our first baby steps towards a change to offer greater flexibility in what our customers receive in their weekly produce deliveries. This summer we're implementing these first few changes as we trial and transition to this whole new idea.

Here's what we have in the plans:

1. The 2018 vegetable share program detailed on our website is similar to what you've purchased in all past summers. A new feature this year will enable you to place orders for additional items from our web store and have it integrated into your weekly share box.

Our website currently is up to date with all program information for this years farm share.

2. Deliveries will once again be on Thursdays.

Note: There's changes pending with a few of our drop sites so check the web page before signing up. Please contact us with any concerns relative to a specific drop site.

3. An email will be sent out on each Friday morning before the upcoming scheduled delivery. The message will contain a list of what items will be included in the coming week's share. The message will contain a link and it will connect you with our online store where you'll have the option to purchase extra amounts of what you would like more of. If you don't order extra produce you'll receive the standard share as stated for the week. Store hours for placing extra produce orders will open Friday morning at 6:00 a.m. and will close Saturday evening at 10:00 P.M.



Inside my winter man-cave it's warm enough to make equipment repairs. The steady billowing sound of the propane space heater breaks the dead silence and provides a cozy companionship.

4. All additional purchased items will be packed along and in with your standard share. At that point your box will be considered customized. When going to pick up your share you'll need to look for a box labeled with your name. A packing slip itemizing the additional contents ordered will be fix to the outside of the shipping container. Payment for the additional purchases is by credit card only.

Ultimately this new plan will enable our members to experience greater free choice for the vegetables, herbs, and fruits they prefer. As more income is generated from our web store we're planning to restructure a share offering and foresee the possibility of being able to reduce the basic share cost.

Purchasing a basic vegetable share will be required to shop from our "private member" store department.

We realize this system won't give you a total free-choice but you'll now have a greater way to fill your share with more of the items you do want. The earlier advance weekly notices we hope will aid in your weekly meal planning.

More information to come about our new program as we get closer to our first delivery. Only 135 days until our first delivery. Stay warm!

Get a jump on the season and sign up for a CSA vegetable share today. Payment options available. Click on "Sign me up for 2018" and you'll be redirected to our online sign-up page.

Note: For renewals click on the "returning member" link in the green box at the top of the web page. **Sign me up for 2018!**

