

**Pesky Squirrels**

Words from the Farmers

The month of June

Welcome to June and what we hope will be the summer of 2011 since we all know spring certainly never showed up.

June is a month filled with many small but important gardening tasks. Some of these are:

- 1) If you have squirrels digging, looking for that nut they thought they planted last year, cover the bed with bird netting and clip it to the sides. It won't stop them completely but it will deter them.
- 2) Begin a vigilant check for insects. You need to look on the soil and the under side of the leaves of your plants. You are looking for little tiny eggs, caterpillars or green worms, tiny little squiggly dots which are aphids, or mature insects themselves. Watch for signs you are having insect issues such as round holes in the leaves. If you need organic pest control, give us a call. Remember quick action is essential.

- 3) As soon as the temperature rises, watch your spring crops of lettuce, arugula, mizuna and spinach for "bolting". This is when the plant sends up its seed stalk and the plant quickly loses its quality, so harvest these vegetables as soon as you notice the slightest sign of bolting.
- 4) As your plants mature some of them will become quite tall and tippy. A good investment is a pack of thin bamboo poles which you can use to prop up the plants. This will keep the stems from cracking and the larger plants from invading the square next to them.
- 5) Weed, weed, weed!! Do not let those pesky weeds get ahead of you. Weed a little every day and it won't feel like such a daunting task.

We are looking forward to a summer of farming and can't wait to see your gardens grow!

**Good ants eating aphids****Mizuna "Bolting"**



What's Growing



Tip of the Month:

Here is the best way to store your fresh leafy greens.

Bring them in the house and wash them in a sink full of water and ice cubes. The cold water will revive them from their trip inside. Then the best investment you could ever make is to purchase a salad spinner. Place the greens inside, give the spinner a couple of pumps to dry the greens. Store them in a reusable green "Forever Bag" in your refrigerator. - Or just eat them immediately!

Cooper's Corner

My intensive plant supervision and squirrel patrol this spring has taken its toll on me as I execute my work very diligently. However, as Executive Officer in Charge of whatever I want to be in charge of, I insisted that a daily nap be written into my job description. And as you know, what Mr. Cooper wants, Mr. Cooper gets.



Meet your Farmer

ABYF says goodbye to Farmer Mike (who got his dream job with the railroad) and hello to Farmer Leslie Ostrander. Some of you may have met Leslie this spring installation season. She has been a critical team member with the growing of the babies in the Nursery with Pat and Coleen as well as making sure they have been planted in your garden beds. She hails from a small farming community in southern Wisconsin and previously worked on an organic farm out east. Leslie brings to the table a wonderful attitude, extensive plant and pest knowledge, a work ethic unmet by many (except maybe Coleen), and the ability to teach and share with joy all that she knows.

Leslie is an artist and freelance photographer in her spare time. She loves dogs as well as knitting. She enjoys cooking and watching "Glee".

We welcome Leslie and know all the plants and our customers will thrive under her care!



Kid's Corner

"Plants vs. Zombies"

We were introduced to a game called "Plants vs. Zombies" by one of our farm families. It is a surreal, fun game where plants which need sun and water battle to protect the homestead from slow moving zombies. We have enjoyed playing it with the kids we know and we think you might like it too.

The zombies can be a little scary at first but once the plants start protecting the house they lose a bit of their fierceness. You can check it out on line and now PopCap has it as an app for your phones.



Recipes of the Month

Basic Salad Dressing Recipe

Add 3 parts: olive, sesame, flax, or gourmet oils

Plus 1 part: lemon or lime juice, or balsamic, champagne, wine or brown rice vinegar

Plus 1 part water

Plus your choice of seasonings: Garlic, ginger, fresh herbs, dried herbs, maple syrup, honey, agave syrup, mustard, or spices

Plus salt and pepper to taste

Shake in a jar or salad cruet and if extra, store in the refrigerator.

(1 Teaspoon of dry herbs = 1 Tbsp. fresh herbs)

Be creative. Don't be afraid to try some variations. Below are some examples.

Dressing 1:

3 Tbsp. Olive Oil

1 Tbsp. Apple Cider Vinegar

1 Tbsp. Water

1 Tbsp. Fresh Pesto

Dressing 2:

3 Tbsp. Olive Oil

1 Tbsp. Balsamic Vinegar- Reduced

1 Tbsp. Water

1 Garlic Glove- Crushed

1 Teaspoon Parsley- Chopped, Fresh

Dressing 3:

3 Tbsp. Sesame Oil

1 Tbsp. Brown Rice Vinegar

1 Tbsp. Water

¼ Teaspoon Ginger dried

Reducing Balsamic Vinegar by ½ to 2/3 makes a great glaze for egg dishes and is great to use in salad dressing. Keeps a long time in airtight container in the refrigerator. Simply boil in a small saucepan over low to medium heat. Best done outside on a grill burner if possible as fumes are intense. Homemade salad dressing is easy, economical, healthy and fresh.

Apple and Fennel Slaw

2 Tbsp. Fresh Lemon Juice

3 Tart Apples

2 Small to medium heads Fennel, cut into matchsticks

1/2 Small Red onion, cut in half and thinly sliced or 1/2 cup of Chives

1/4 Cup Extra Virgin Olive Oil

2 Tbsp. Fresh Flat-Leaf Parsley-Chopped

Salt and Ground Pepper to taste

Garnish with chopped Fennel Fronds

Put the lemon juice in a large bowl. Cut one of the apples in half, core it, and julienne it. Put the cut apple in the bowl and toss with lemon juice to keep from browning. Repeat with other apples. Toss in all of the remaining ingredients. Let stand for at least 20 minutes at room temperature. Taste for seasoning and serve. Yields 8 cups.

Chinese Chicken and Napa Cabbage Salad

1 (3 oz.) Package chicken or oriental flavored Ramen Noodles

2 Tbsp. Butter

½ Cup Sesame seeds, toasted

¾ Cup Blanched slivered almonds

1 large head Napa cabbage, shredded

1/2 – 1 Cup Green onions or chives, chopped

3 Tbsp. Vegetable oil

¼ Cup Rice vinegar

1 Tbsp. Soy sauce or Tamari Sauce

1 Tbsp. Sesame oil

1 Tbsp. White sugar

¼ Cup Sunflower seeds

3 Chicken breasts, sliced into thin strips

1. Pan fry chicken breasts in medium skillet. When cooked, remove from pan and drain the drippings out.
2. Add butter to pan, crush noodles, brown in butter/drippings over medium heat. Add almonds, sunflower seeds and sesame seeds. Stir often to prevent burning. Add seasoning mix from noodles and cool. Toss in a large bowl with cabbage, onions and chicken.
3. Prepare the dressing by whisking together the vegetable oil, rice vinegar, soy sauce, sesame oil and sugar. Pour over salad, toss and serve.

Serves 6

