

THE RHETORICAL ROOT

A monthly farm newsletter



CSA SIGN UP OPEN!

A NEW SEASON BEGINS:
Changes coming in 2020

WINTER IS FOR...

**THE NO-TILL FARMING
REVOLUTION**

Dear Followers,

It has been a while since we last released one of our "monthly newsletters." The August frenzy got to us and it simply slipped through the cracks. So here's a quick recap:

Autumn offered a wealth of abundance that carried our CSA through October. After a successful season, the Freeman Farmer's Market also slowly wound down and after we froze through some chilly Wednesdays in October, we began putting the garden to bed. Garlic went in and irrigation lines came out. Several plots got cover-cropped or mulched. Our high tunnels did a commendable job at keeping cold-hearted greens alive, and we enjoyed spinach for Thanksgiving.

While Andre switched gears in the winter to helping his dad on the dairy, I have been enjoying more time at home. I help coach girls high school basketball on the side. We also take plenty of time to plan for the spring. We have been pouring over seed catalogs and mapping out the garden plots. I updated our website, tried new bread recipes, and caught up on my reading.



And now the time has come once again to sign up CSA members and get the seedling room back in working order. We were so pleased with the response from customers last year that we are coming into 2020 full of excitement and anticipation, and we want to share with you all the new things we have planned for this year.

WHAT'S NEW IN 2020?

1. **New Varieties.** We are excited to trial some new crop varieties this year, like specialty radishes, heat tolerant lettuce, sprouting broccoli, brussel sprouts, lunchbox peppers, and microgreens. There will also be new varieties of melons, tomatoes, and squash that we can't wait for you to try.
2. **Online Payment.** Now you have the convenient option of signing up and paying for your CSA share through our website, which has a new look!
3. **Streamlined ordering for CSA Plus.** We've created a form to make ordering your CSA Plus items easier.
4. **Grass-fed Lamb.** We will be offering different cuts of lamb on our CSA Plus this year in addition to more pastured chicken.
5. **Thanksgiving Boxes.** If all goes according to plan, we will be selling a holiday CSA box filled with Thanksgiving staples like potatoes, onion, garlic, herbs, carrots, and more. Stay tuned for more info!
6. **We're hiring!** We've added another plot and are upping our number of CSA shares this year. That means we will be needing a bit of extra help and will be looking to hire a high school student or two for the summer.
7. **Additional Sales Outlet.** Nothing has been finalized, but we are hoping to either attend the Farmers Market in Yankton or find another outlet for our produce, such as a restaurant or the Dakota Fresh Food Hub.

SIGN UP
TODAY!

FOR A HALF OR
FULL SHARE

www.prairierootsfarm.com

EAT LOCAL



WINTER IS FOR...

What do a couple of veggie growers do during a South Dakota winter, when winds rage and temperatures plummet and snow drifts 8 feet over the garden? As much as we would like to be a 4-season farm, that is just not feasible at the time. So this is what we do while dreaming of juicy heirloom tomatoes and buttery new potatoes.

- attempting new breads
- making soap
- building a garden cart
- making a greens spinner
- tending the sheep & chickens
- making wood chips
- buying seed & garden mapping
- reading
- painting
- going on vacation!

NO-TILL MARKET GARDENING GROWS IN POPULARITY

Carbon is the single most essential element in soil fertility. It aids water and nutrient retention, soil structure, and biological processes. Yet 50-70% of the world's carbon in farmland soil is released into the atmosphere as a gas due to tillage. If we hope to continue producing food in an age of climate change, when having resilient plants that can withstand erratic weather patterns will be paramount to feeding a growing population, we need to find ways to preserve and increase our soil fertility.

Enter no-till farming systems. The practice of leaving the soil layers undisturbed by not tilling has become widely adopted in conventional row-cropping systems. But how can it translate to organic market garden systems, where there are many small plantings of varying species and you don't have the option of using herbicides to terminate cover crops or old plantings?

Well, Andre & I intend to find out! Follow us on our journey as we incorporate more no-till practices into our operation. Learn about "occultation" and different mulching techniques, all designed to reduce weed pressure, increase fertility, feed the microbiome, and improve soil structure by not disturbing the soil.

We have been gathering ideas from no-till growers through the No-Till Market Garden Podcast and The No-Till Farming Revolution by Andrew Mefferd

A WARMING WINTER-TIME SOUP CREAMY CHICKEN TORTILLA

This soup provides a great opportunity for us to use up whole chickens, canned tomatoes, and corn from the freezer

- 1 med onion, chopped 1 Tbsp finely minced 1 jalapeño , seeded and chopped
- 1 (32 oz) carton low-sodium chicken broth
- 1 tsp of each chili powder , cumin, and paprika
- Salt and freshly ground black pepper , to taste
- 1 1/4 lbs boneless skinless chicken breasts
- 1 (15 oz) can diced tomatoes
1/3 cups milk
- 1/3 cup masa harina
- 1 (15 oz) can black beans
- 1 (15 oz) can pinto beans, 1 cup frozen corn
- 2/3 cup heavy cream
- 1/4 cup sour cream

Heat canola oil in a large pot over medium heat. Once hot, add onion and jalapeño and saute 3 minutes, adding garlic during last 30 seconds of sauteing.

Add chicken broth, chili powder, cumin, paprika and season with salt and pepper to taste. Add chicken breasts and bring mixture to a boil, then reduce heat to medium, cover pot with lid and gently boil until chicken has cooked through, about 15 minutes.

Remove chicken and allow to rest 5 minutes. Meanwhile, add diced tomatoes with green chilies to pot. Then, in the 2-cup liquid measuring cup used to measure milk (or a bowl), whisk together milk and masa harina until well blended.

Pour mixture into pot and cook, stirring frequently, until mixture boils and thickens slightly (it won't thicken much). Dice chicken and add to pot, then add black beans, pinto beans and corn. Then stir in cream and sour cream and cook until heated through.



PUPPY LOVE!

Some church friends of ours had a litter of 9 pups just before Christmas. They are half Great Pyrenees and half German Shepherd/Lab mix. We were not anticipating getting a replacement for Luka yet, but these little ones needed homes! We brought her home earlier this week, and she is slowly acclimating to the new animals and new environment. We finally settled on the name Greta, after Greta Thunberg. We hope she will provide some protection for the animals when they are out on pasture this summer.

PLANTING SEASON 2020

The very first crop of 2020 is out of the gate! It's quick, it's tender, it's full of nutrients, and it doesn't even have to leave the house. It's microgreens! We are trialing our first planting of High Mowing's mild brassica micro mix, assessing weather or not it could provide a new early-season item for us to market.



Microgreens are packed with nutrients. They are used widely as a garnish, but can also be put in salads, sandwiches, wraps, and stir-fries. They are delicate but full of flavor.

