



WEEKLY NOTE Week of July 4th, 2016

ANNOUNCEMENT:

- Final reminder... we are asking you to complete our 2016 Member Spring Share survey at this link:
<https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/DD5PMN8>

We are up to 43 responses. Way to go - thanks to all who have completed the survey! Now - one final push and I hope to share the results in next week's note.

Fresh from the Farm

We reveled in last week's weather as I believe just about everyone did! But today, July 5 - the first hot day of the change - we baled hay! Nice breeze as we went round and round the field. Just one flatrack load. Tonight the rack, stacked high with bales is sweetening our work shed. I love the smell of fresh hay! Tomorrow morning - when we have some extra hands available, we'll unload it into the barn and Sass can be assured of winter supply of feed.

More on last week...Wednesday we harvested all the garlic. We unfortunately planted in a field that held more water than we anticipated this spring and garlic doesn't like wet feet. So it's not a stellar crop, but it's hung and drying in our crib and our members will get to enjoy some fresh garlic during our Summer Share.



First green beans are sprouted. Tim cultivated them and they are coming along.



Last Thursday we hosted the Iowa State University Farm Food Safety workshop. Dr. Angela Shaw is pictured here reviewing the requirements and exemptions of the Food Safety Modernization Act. A rather complicated, flow chart that walks you through a series of questions about what you grow, what scale you grow at, who you sell to, etc. that helps producers determine if they are required to follow new rules.

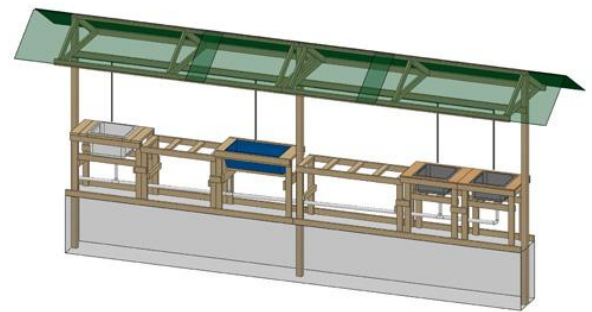


The law was prompted after many reported incidents of food borne illnesses in the first decade of the 2000s. Tainted food has cost the food industry billions of dollars in recalls, lost sales and legal expenses. This bill is similar to the Food Safety Enhancement Act which passed the House in 2009. It is considered the first major piece of federal legislation addressing food safety since 1938. The legislation was signed into law by President Obama in 2011, but final rules were just completed Fall 2015 and resource folks such as Iowa State University are providing trainings.

The meeting was held in front of our wash station. This station - designed by Tim after we visited a couple of farms back in 2003, was the subject of a Leopold Center vegetable wash station publication

(https://www.leopold.iastate.edu/cool_tools/wash_stations1)

. Our son Andrew, translated the design into a dimensional document that others could copy and build themselves. It's been fascinating as we still receive periodic inquiries about the design. It's a pretty simple design - no stainless steel, but sinks themselves and working surface is of washable materials, we have drop down hoses so we can let the sinks fill while we do some other tasks, we have covers over the sinks to keep water and sinks clean, and we have a dedicated handwash sink.



Tomato progress report:



Late May - Planting preparation & shortly after planting

after first full round of pruning and staking - June 21.

after the second full round of pruning and staking - just last weekend - tomatoes formed and sizing up. Plants look great! With this round, we added some of the second level twine - from T-post to overhead wires and truss supports. That's as high as we go!

We are proud "parents" of our biggest apple crop yet! The crop numbers 15 and is weighing down the branches.



July brings out the prairie flowers and they are now in full bloom. Beautiful - bergamont (in the mint family), purple coneflowers, yellow gray heads, black eyed susans! That's the tomato high tunnel in the background, sporting it's shade cloth (much appreciated this week).

And finally, we are seeing BLUE...blueberries that is. Our July 4 fun was going to The Berry Patch, near Nevada and picking blueberries. The trip was so enticing, we got Jess and Katrina to join us! What an extra special treat!

