



Rare Earth News

Winter Edition

Spinach Seeding on March 29th



Field covered in snow covered on April 4th

It's alive! The earth once again is alive! The ground has thawed from our first spring rain and the daily work routines are ramping up. It feels great to be finally back in full contact with the soil. A great sensational, or should I say a sensory experience is that smell in the air from the first spring rain. That pleasant smell created by rain wetting organic matter and soil bacteria after a long dry period is something no man-made aerosol can hold a candle to. That smell of spring

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Tending to young onion, leek, and scallion seedlings inside cold frames. They'll be the first to be transplanted outside hopefully by the end of April.

rain on soil high in organic matter is one of life's simple pleasures. Indeed!

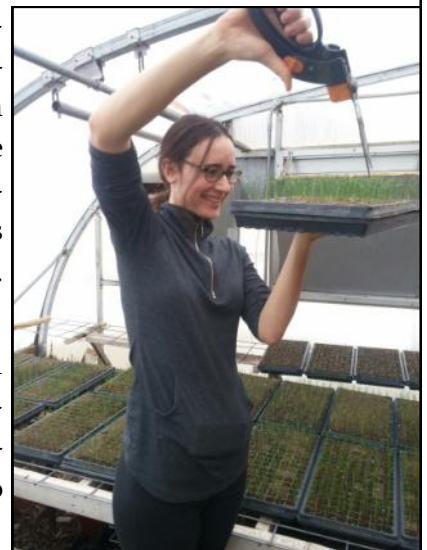
It's been dry enough outdoors to start seeding some crops like our spinach, carrots, and beets. It's still a little cold for a lot of veggies but some do well and can survive the chill of our spring weather. Getting an early start on the season is refreshing. It doesn't happen like this every year but when it does it's nice to have a little more time to comfortably get everything planted. Better not say much more. I don't want to scare this beautiful weather away.

Oh man! I spoke to soon! Got off to an early start and then we get hit with a blast of snow. The first week in April was a little harsh with chilly night time temperatures and snow. Five days after I was celebrating my first outdoor seeding we got a blast of cold weather and now it feels like winter again. Disappointing but still pretty confident what was planted should survive the inclement conditions we're having now. Hope the rest of April plays out to be a bit warmer.

Anyone who cares to acquire a greater appreciation for the food they eat has to begin with taking a closer look at the way it was grown. That's not always obvious to the consumer. Unfortunately there's nothing listed on any retail food packaging that provides consumers with a more detailed look on how it was grown. The USDA label gives us some idea and confidence with what we're buying. Because we're not "Certified Organic" we make an honest effort to openly share our growing practices and procedures with the intent to further your education on what's truly involved with sustainable food production. We hope it will result in a greater awareness and realization that there is a difference with food grown on a smaller scale, and also on healthy soils. You may not see it with the naked eye, and it may cost a little more but there is a distinct difference. If you find the science part of our business fascinating and want to engage with it further you're always welcome to contact us with any technical questions you might have about the vegetables we grow. Backyard gardener questions always welcome too!

A great emphasis in our growing practice is focused around achieving optimum soil health. When working with nature the best thing we found as a land steward is to fully cooperate and only use methods complimentary to the natural biological process. Especially when it comes to soil. Assisting without trying to control what nature can do on its own is one of our self-taught cardinal rules.

My sole intent as a farmer has been to simply assist what occurs in nature



Onion Trimming Season

and not to take to big of lead in command. Embracing that philosophy certainly has reduced the consequence of setting myself up for total disappointment. I use to get upset often when nature wasn't cooperating with my agenda. Mother nature seems to have an agenda of her own and in most cases it's often best not to interfere. I think of a classic proverbial phrase my mother burned into my head as a child with her fifties parenting style by saying: "Children should be seen and not heard". I now apply my mothers great wisdom to my style of farming—to be seen by mother nature, but not saying a word, or telling to her what to do. Ah! Now I get it mom! I'm finding myself more these days smiling at nature even when she's pissed. Often there's times when she's smiles back. A smile perhaps in the form of a calm spring rain. How perfect!

Hope you'll continue to read our newsletters throughout the season. At times when I have people tell me they read my newsletters I wonder if they just found themselves a cure for insomnia. Thank you to those who find it otherwise mildly entertaining even late at night. Take care everyone and eat well!



Beehives prepped and readied in time for occupancy when the queens and their crew arrive on April 12th.

Spring Maintenance Time!

Every spring there's always a number of maintenance projects required to get everything back in working order and ready for production. Some are annual tasks, while others are periodic. One of the more difficult projects is about every five years the plastic on our greenhouses needs replacing. The tricky part of the recovering process is scheduling a crew for the work on a morning when the wind is calm and below 10mph.

We have another greenhouse due for a full recovering and with our staff we hope to find a few extra people to help with the project. If there's anyone interested in being put on a call list for greenhouse recovering let us know. Weather permitting the covering will take place in the early morning. We'll get started between 5:30 and 6:00am. The project usually takes the whole morning, and finishes up by around 10:30—11:00am. We realize that attending a recovering is probably not feasible for most of you, but if there's even just a few of you with schedules to match up let us know. The work does require a certain level of agility and physical conditioning. We are planning to do a recovering within the next two weeks.

Click here ["Green House Recovering Crew"](#) to get on the call list for an early morning greenhouse recovering.



Taking down the old sidewall plastic and preparing for the new.