



# Rare Earth News

Winter Edition



Warm winter greetings and wishing you all a new year filled with great prosperity, and good health. Heading into a new year there's much for us all to contemplate in what lies ahead for 2019. Many of us traditionally start the new year by making a resolution with the intention in mind to somehow better our lives. One resolution that I like to reinstate every year is to do everything possible to improve my ability to steward this small piece of land. Much of my life ambition has revolved around a determination to grow some portion of my own food. I'm deeply appreciative for the good fortune to have had access to enough land to achieve this goal. Likewise having a consumer audience to share the bounty with has been one of the most essential aspects in the whole concept of a working CSA farm. Looking back after almost thirty years into this endeavor there are times when I have to remind myself that all the work was worth while. I think of the great food we've eaten from here and then there's some peace of mind affirming the time spent was not in vain. Thank you for standing behind me all the way, and needless to say I aim to continue farming for a hopeful long time to come. Stubbornness at times can be an asset!

But what does the future hold for us and other small farms in America? As a vegetable grower operating on such a small scale I feel a pressure building reminiscent to the early seventies when farmers across the country were being forced by a commodity driven market to get big, or get out. It happened with conventionally grown crops back then, and today it's now happening to organically grown crops. So a question that often lingers in my mind is how can any small farm operation survive with the direction mainstream agriculture is headed? A major deciding factor for the success and future existence of small farms will depend simply on having an ample number of consumers who prefer to purchase their food from a smaller farm. It's no secret that much of a consumers need in acquiring food circles around convenience. If small farms are to survive there may have to be some acceptable compromise to convenience by consumers. Maybe you have heard the news how Amazon who now owns Whole Foods are putting up stores in locations around the country to eventually become a leader in the online food shopping market. Enabling a delivery within two hours of a placed order is their goal. It's going to take some time before they can achieve that nation wide but that's



where they're headed. Delivering food off the farm to locations near your home comes with a significant cost. To do that we just need to have the membership at a level that will enable us to provide and continue that service. A big reason why I've brought this up is our delivery van in use since 2001 is coming to its end of life and is needing to be replaced. Big bucks, so in order to continue delivering to our pickup locations we're going to need to begin the search for a new van. To cover the cost we'll need to step up our membership to pay for the upgrade.

One of the best ways proven over time to promote the farm is by having our members pass the word onto others. Our membership has dropped in half over the last five years. Help us bring those numbers back up so we can continue delivering to your neighborhood. Stay warm and keep the fire stoked in your oven. Take care!

**"In the depth of winter, I finally learned that there was in me an invincible summer."**

Albert Camus,  
-french philosopher, and author



Member Cindy Matthews pantry. Her grand daughter calls it "Nana's sunshine closet."

**Do you still have food from last summers harvest?**

Nothing is more satisfying than to see the effort our members take to preserve food from the farm deliveries for use during the winter. Send us your photos and we'll put them in an upcoming newsletter.

Members Kris & Jenni Herrick took time this past summer to preserve strawberries, pickles, herbs, and more for winter. They still have plenty of onions in good condition too!



Get a jump on the season and sign up for a CSA vegetable share today. Payment options available. Click on "Sign me up for 2019" 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 2019!**