

My MN Farmer

Our Family Blessed
To Feed Yours

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Busy week at the farm: Rain, Mosquitoes, Saving the Planet

It's been a busy and somewhat unusual week at the farm! With the WOOFer volunteers all gone for the season and the seven children away at camp and grandma's house, Farmers Dean and Jean and been working hard to keep their heads above water (pun intended). Here are some of the highlights:

- Monday's **rainstorm delivered 2.5 inches of rain**. Rain is often a blessing, but this year there's been so much it's created some challenges. Rainy, muddy fields make it impossible to weed with our cultivating tractor because it would get stuck. Thankfully, your beautiful, organic produce still grows in weedy fields, but weeds do make it more challenging to harvest.
- We have been fighting a lot of **mosquitoes** the last two weeks. Unfortunately, so much rain and so many mosquitoes have the potential to make even MORE mosquitoes. To outsmart the pesky bugs, we keep the lawn around the high tunnels mown short so the mosquitoes don't have so many places to hide. We use an organic bug repellent made of peppermint, lavender and citronella oils that is somewhat effective, but when we work in the tunnels, where there is little breeze, we need to keep all exposed skin covered. That means it may be 90 degrees, but we're still working in long jeans, long sleeves, boots and maybe a hoodie. We love breezes because when they blow they help keep the mosquitos away. ***If any members have a suggestion for a good organic bug repellent for humans, please let us know!***



Mosquitoes are plentiful in our high tunnels. We've begun calling them the "mosquito tunnels," and we have to wear long sleeves and pants for protection.

- Last week's kale and lettuce were not put in plastic bags before they went into the share boxes. This was done intentionally, and is something we've been thinking a lot about: Though we already make an effort, **how can we use even fewer one-use plastics at our home and farm?** I sent an email to members requesting feedback, and your responses were overwhelmingly positive! There are some crops that we will still need to continue putting in plastic, but we are making an effort to bag as few as possible. So, thank you for your feedback! Here are a few other suggestions for reducing use of one-use plastics: use metal or acrylic drinking straws at home; bring reusable bags when shopping; always choose paper instead of plastic. *We'll put a post on the My Minnesota Farmer facebook page inviting you to add comments regarding how you reduce your use of one-use plastics.* We'd love to hear what you do to help save the planet! Together, we can make a difference!
- On Tuesday, for the first time in the 10 year history of the My Minnesota Farmer CSA, **Farmer Jean went on the delivery run with Farmer Dean!** It was fun for her to visit all the dropsites she's coordinated over the years. She usually has to be back on the farm directing the kids' and crews' work in the high tunnels and the fields, so it was a treat for her to make the deliveries with Dean.



