



Happy Friday, Farm Friends!

It's a foggy morn here at the farm! Our garlic looks like it came right out of Transylvania!



And while we're talking about garlic, see how big it's getting?



We've been having one of those mish-mosh weeks -- a bit of this and a bit of

that. As the year draws to a close, we are trying to get this year's crops cleared and out of the fields so that we will be ready to plant next year. There are always lots of bits and pieces of things to take care of -- remove any large plants in the field, pull out irrigation lines and staples, remove stakes and tags, and fencing -- so many things to remember! And then you have to put everything up in the right place clean and ready to use next year. That's one of the most important steps. The natural inclination at the end of the season is to just be done with the whole thing. You want to yank it all out and throw everything in a pile -- but you pay dearly for that haste come spring.

Clearing out also applies to the greenhouse. Jonny and Amanda got the cucumber plants out this week -- this was our third planting of the season and was our most productive and least insect-plagued. We harvested over 2000 cucumbers from these 68 plants!



While we are clearing the decks in some fields, we are getting others ready for planting -- both now and in late Winter. One of our main fields that was fallow this year has been set up with permanent deer fencing and landscape fabric over the beds and aisles. This will be our brassica field this year along with some bulb onions. Some collards and kale will get planted this afternoon once the fencing is complete. This field has a 6' outer fence along with an angled inner fence. The good news is that we won't have to re-establish this fence

every year -- which will be a great time-saver.



Another field we are readying is one of our hay fields. We noticed when we were mowing hay this fall that there was a lot more broomstraw in the field. [Broomstraw \(aka broomsedge\) is a weed that is not palatable or nutritious for livestock once it is mature.](#) Our hay bales were filled with it this fall and you could watch the cows pull it out and just drop it on ground.



The good news is that the emergence of broomstraw is an indicator of low pH in a field. The solution to that is to apply lime -- simple! So we got our friends at [LTD Farm and Garden](#) in King to bring their spreader over and put out 4 tons of lime on this one section of hay fields. Now sure how long it will take to

eliminate the broomstraw but this should help do the trick!



And speaking of getting crops ready for planting, the first seeds of the 2022 season went into seed trays yesterday! Three thousand onions and 500 collards -- grow, little seeds, grow!



Welcome Amanda!

Say hello to our newest Plum Granny Farm Team member, **Amanda Lanier**! Amanda comes to us from Reynolda Gardens where she managed all of the Gardens' educational programs. In fact, we first met Amanda in 2014 when she organized a talk that we did at the Gardens on growing garlic -- it's a small world!

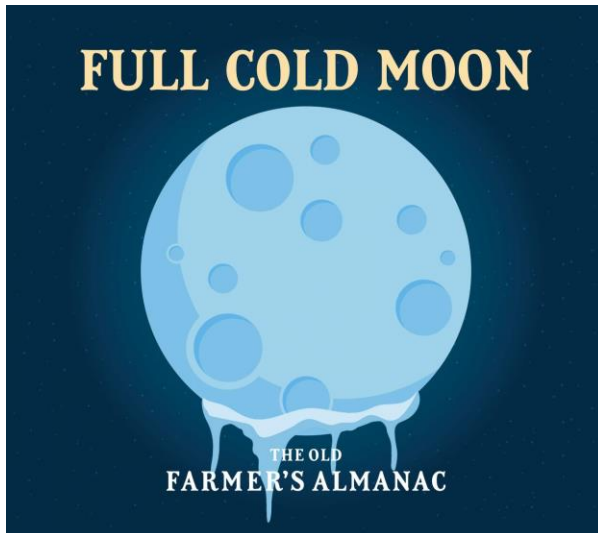
Amanda brings a strong background in environmental science and education (a

bachelor's and master's degree, respectively) along with a deep interest in soil and the natural world. She is passionate about food -- and how food builds community and brings people together. She believes in the importance of organic agriculture and how it sustains the soil. And besides, she's a lot of fun to have around! We're so glad that our paths crossed again and that you are here, Amanda!



That's all the news for this week. We hope you made it to [Mitchell's Greenhouse and Nursery](#) to vote on your favorite poinsettias. They [announced the winners](#) yesterday -- see if your favorites won!

Lots going on in astronomy this coming week. On Saturday, the last full moon of the year will light the night sky. The [Full Cold Moon](#) rises at 11:37 p.m. tomorrow night. This moon goes by many names including the "Long Night Moon" and the "Moon Before Yule."



Also happening this week will be the [Winter Solstice](#) on Tuesday, December 21 at 10:59 a.m. This marks the shortest day of the year -- we'll have only 9 hours and 41 minutes of daylight! But the good news is that we will start gaining about another minute of daylight every day until the Summer Solstice in June.

Happy Full Moon, Happy Solstice!

Take the time to make your own Holiday Magic.

**Until next Friday,
Cheryl & Ray**

