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# PLUM GRANNY

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Happy Friday, Farm Friends! Welcome February!



*Photo credit: Park Ridge Organics newsletter*

BOOM! And just like that, the first month of the year has whizzed by! And The Groundhogs are celebrating another 6 weeks of Winter -- more hibernation for them!

Even as the groundhogs are snoring away, we are now at the half-way point to the Spring Equinox. The days are longer, and the light is stronger. We are past the *Persephone Period*, that period of winter when there are 10 hours or less of sunlight and plants don't grow. This term was coined by Eliot Coleman, one of the heroes of the organic farming movement. He characterized this

concept of deep winter on Greek mythology and wrote about its impact in the classic book, [The Winter Harvest Handbook](#). If you are interested in seeing a great chart on daylength, sunrise, sunset and other interesting astronomical information by your location, this [website](#) is your source!

Deep Winter is when most farmers go into Deep Planning. Office work is a dominant feature of a farmer's life this time of year. We are planning our seed and equipment orders as well as making detailed crop plans by variety. The seed catalogs are spread out, seed packets are inventoried, and the dreaming begins -- tempered by reality of course!



One thing we've learned in our 13 years of farming is that we need to be very realistic. We have to rein in our enthusiasm for 20 varieties of lettuce and limit it to 5 or 6. And maybe we don't really need to try 10 totally new crops (how about 1 or 2?). These have been hard lessons -- but important ones, nonetheless.



Part of our planning process is setting our event calendar for the year. Having visitors come to the farm is one of our favorite things to do! We are blessed with a beautiful piece of land in a great location, and we love to share this with you. So grab your calendar and a pen and jot down some of the things we have planned in 2022:

- February 23      Blackberry Pruning Workshop (with Stokes Co. Cooperative Extension)
- March 25-26      Spring Plant Sale
- April 22-24      Summer Plant Sale
- May 8              2nd Chance Summer Plant Sale
- May 15             Growing Brambles at Home Workshop
- August 28         Fall Plant Sale and Growing Fall Veggies Workshop
- September 18    Ginger Harvest Festival and Farm Tour
- October 9         Garlic Growing Workshop

It's a mix of new things and old favorites! We'll definitely be adding in pick-your-own events along with some other new activities to check out on the farm. We will also be popping up at Cobblestone Farmers Market occasionally throughout the year. Watch this space for more information as we get closer to each event. It will be great to see you back on the farm again!



We haven't totally been chained to our desks. This week we drove down to see our friends, Susan and Howard Anderson of [East Branch Ginger Microgreens](#) and to pick up a pallet of fresh coconut coir. They have sourced some wonderful, high quality coir that has less salt than many varieties on the market. And besides, it's always great to see our buddies in Siler City! We learn so much from them and have such a great time doing it. This trip was

especially interesting because their road was blocked because of a house that was being moved. It got stuck in the mud in the ditch. Now that's something you won't see every day (we hope!).



And Jonny and Alex made a HUGE difference in the blackberries and raspberries. They got ALL of the field weeded and in great shape. Now we will be able to finish pruning and repair the trellis. Thanks so much, you two!



They also got the first round of onions planted and kept working on getting the greenhouse sanitized and ready for the season. Keep on rockin' it out, you

two! We are grateful!



That's all the news from the farm for this week. In closing, since February is [Black History month](#), we'd like to pay a tribute to one of the pioneers of sustainable agriculture -- [Dr. George Washington Carver](#). He is most noted for his popularization of peanuts, but did you know that he gave modern agriculture a roadmap for soil health and conservation? Dr. Carver was a visionary in promoting practices to improve the soil through using compost, adding organic matter through cover crops, and rotating crops from year to year -- all tenets of what we know as Organic Farming. We owe a debt to Dr. Carver and the black farmers across the South who worked with him to perfect these practices.



***Stay safe out there, Friends!***

**Until next Friday,**  
***Cheryl & Ray***