



Happy Friday, Farm Friends!

I guess we pulled one over on you! It was great to hear from so many of our loyal readers about last week's April Fool's edition. We didn't mean to startle you too much but we're glad that you chuckled at the joke! And we truly appreciate you reading our news each week.



There was definitely no foolin' around this week at the farm! It was plant, plant, plant and weed, weed, weed. Oh, and seed, seed, seed! Spring on a farm is no time for dilly-dally, as my Mom would say.

That weeding thing was pretty important. We seeded carrots in one of our tunnels back in February and it was a disaster! The carrots emerged well enough, but they were being smothered by weeds. Unfortunately, carrots look

like grass weeds when they emerge, so we have to wait until they grow a bit to tell the difference. This time the weeds grew faster and thicker!

After a few starts at weeding, we were going to abandon the crop and turn it under. But we really needed those carrots....



Everyone jumped in and got it done! So now we have a beautiful crop of carrots and a sense of satisfaction that even in the face of overwhelming odds, Team Plum Granny can make it happen! Way to go, Team!



We learned a great lesson in this process. When it comes to direct seeding things that have tiny seedlings and don't compete well with weeds, make sure that you have a seedbed that is weed-free. And think about what was in the bed before. The beds were in great shape when the seeds went in; however, we did not take into account that there were probably billions of weed seeds

from last year's crop of tomatoes (and sedge and timothy and....). We flame-weeded twice before the carrots emerged but that was not enough to reduce the weed pressure. The hard lessons continue at the University of Farm.

LOTS of plants went into the ground this week. Our Brassica field is completely filled with Asian Greens, kohlrabi, collards, mini-broccoli and so much more! Swiss Chard and more peas went into another field -- we're growing some serious food here, folks!

To keep all this stuff healthy and growing, we need to make sure that our irrigation systems are in place and working properly. And when is the best time to do that? When it's raining of course! While the rain fell on Thursday, Jonny was making sure that everything was installed in each of the fields. Although we have had fairly regular rainfall so far, we need to be ready to give these baby plants what they need when they need it.



And FENCES!

Even if you weed and seed and plant and irrigate properly, you can't farm without a fence -- at least not here. We spent MORE time (and money) on installing a permanent fence around the field with peas and chard. We are moving away from temporary fencing and installing more substantial enclosures in our main fields. Every year we learn a little bit more....



Time for a quick walk around to see what else is going on...



The strawberry field is looking great! The plants are covered with flowers and lots of green berries. Since we have no fence around these yet, we keep covering and uncovering the plants every day. Strawberries are the original deer candy.



Oh, and there's an occasional ripe berry, too! Don't forget -- the only way that our delicious Organic berries will be available this year is through [PlumFresh!](#) Registration ends April 18.



LOTS of plants were potted up this week. Can you say 674 tomato plants? Things are coming together for our HUGE Summer Plant Sale on April 22-24. Stay tuned for more information!



Another star of our Plant Sale will be these gorgeous Everbearing Strawberry Pots! The plants have really taken off and are starting to fruit! We'll have these and strawberry hanging baskets as well.

Say "Hello!" to Sophie

We want to welcome a new addition to our farm team, Sophie Jennings!



Sophie joined our team back in March and has been jumping in to do a wide variety of tasks ever since. We've known Sophie for a long time. She and her family have helped with garlic harvests and garlic cracking as well as picking oodles of pounds of blackberries at our pick-your-owns.

She has an interest in agriculture -- especially urban agriculture and wants to pursue a degree in engineering and math. Sophie is taking a break from college for a semester to get her hands dirty and will be returning to school this fall. We are delighted to have her as part of our team!

When asked about her favorite things to do on the farm so far, she replied with two unusual responses: shoveling and washing plant trays. She definitely got her share of tray washing this week as she tackled a tower of them! And her love of shoveling came in handy to get compost into the tomato tunnel. Look at that smile!



In her spare time, Sophie enjoys playing the drums -- she brings some serious chops to this pursuit from her drum line days at West Stokes High School (she was even the Drum Major!) Thanks for being part of our team, Sophie! Can we talk you into starting a Plum Granny Farm Drum Line?

Cukes at Cobblestone!

Mark your calendar for NEXT Saturday (April 16)! We'll be at Cobblestone Farmers Market with some fresh spring veggies including our Famous Snacking Cucumbers!



The cukes have just started to come in (Ray is holding the box of our first harvest) and we'll have some to share next Saturday. We'll have a full list of what we'll have on our tables in next week's newsletter.

That's all we've got for this week, Friends! We'll close with some photos of our Relaxers in Chief.





Remember to be kind, love your neighbor and pray for Peace.

**Until next week,
*Cheryl & Ray***

