



Happy Friday, Farm Friends!

He's baaaaack!



Greetings from the Puddles the Mud Man!

December (and November) in North Carolina can sometimes feel like one rain event after another. Beyond the gloom and desire to curl up for a v-e-r-y long nap, all this rain is really getting in the way of planting in our key crop -- Garlic!

Every year we try our best to get garlic planted by Thanksgiving -- last year it actually happened. What usually happens is that we are delayed by rain -- er, MUD. It is impossible to get fields prepared when the soil is soggy. Even when the soil is just a bit wet, working it creates clumps and clods that make shaping beds, planting, and tending dreadful.



Ray had made a lot of progress in getting the fields ready for garlic until he started shaping beds. Giant clods started forming as he moved through the field -- that sense of dread moved in as well. And then the rains came. It was time to abandon that plan.



Plan B

We knew we needed to move to a field that was fairly ready for planting -- at least one with beds already shaped and covered in landscape fabric. Fortunately we had 2 fields that we could call on for this task. They definitely weren't slated for garlic (and shallot) production for 2023 but you have to take what you are given.

Despite meeting two of the criteria, the fields had one problem. Weeds. That one we could deal with thanks to the dynamic duo of Jonny and Elise. They got in there and got 'er done!



BEFORE



AFTER

The holes had to be weeded and the aisles had to be swept. Done!



So now we are cracking garlic and getting it ready to go into the ground on Monday. We've scaled back our quantities for 2023 so we only have about 8,000 cloves to plant. Slam dunk! (Well, we may need an extra cup of coffee!)



This will be a new method of growing garlic for us. We've never planted into landscape fabric before but lots of farms do and we always have to keep trying new things! Wish us luck!

Seed Saving Update!

Our tomato seeds got all nice and fermented over the past week, so we were able to wash them off and spread them out to dry. After they are thoroughly dry, they will be placed into an envelope and stored in a cool location until next February and March. Then they will start their journey to become seedlings and plants in our fields! And just think, you may be growing one of these varieties if you purchase plants at our Summer Plant Sale next year!



That's all we've got for this week, Friends! We did make it to Tuba Christmas last Friday and had a wonderful time! If you'd like to experience the joy of this concert, click [here](#) and [here](#).



Another special Holiday event is the performance of Lessons and Carols by the King Moravian Church Adult Choir. They do an amazing job blending beautiful voices along with instrumental accompaniment (their pipe organ is magnificent!) Performances of [Lessons and Carols](#) will be on **Sunday, December 11** at 11 am and 4 pm. Make sure you are there early because the church is always packed!

Let's keep getting in the Spirit of the Season!

**Until next week,
Cheryl & Ray**

