



Happy New Year, Farm Friends! Happy Friday!



Thanks to Chatham County Cooperative Extension Office for use of this image

We hope your Holidays were as much fun as the critters seem to be having in this illustration! Ours was a bit more like the farmer in the wheelbarrow -- although we did make it to midnight on 1/1/2024 but not very much past the chime of the mantel clock.

We had a special surprise this Holiday season -- our dear friends from Issaquah, Washington paid us a visit during their East Coast vacation. Robin and Oscar go w-a-a-a-y back to our days in Northern Virginia. They were river

rafting buddies and even part of our wedding shenanigans in 1984. The last time Cheryl saw them was in 2004. And Ray hasn't seen them since we visited with Cheryl's parents in 2002. It's been a few years! But one of the beautiful things about good friends is that you can pick up with each other without missing a beat. We had such a wonderful time showing them the farm and taking in the [Winter Wonderlights at the Greensboro Science Center](#). What a wonderful Christmas gift!



The past couple of weeks have been nice. Lots of movies, cooking and more than one nap! But it wasn't all relaxation. The unplanted garlic kept calling our names...

Garlic? Done! Finally!

Our last planned task before the Christmas break was to get the garlic planted. And while we came close, there were still over half the beds that needed to be covered with soil and the Elephant garlic had yet to be planted. So, on Christmas Day (and the day after in the rain), Ray and Cheryl covered almost all of the remaining holes. The task oozed into 2024, with Jonny and Elise getting the last partial bed covered and the Elephant planted on Wednesday. Hoorah!

The final count was 7,805. We have a few hundred cloves of spring garlic to pop in another field, but the "real" crop is in! Hallelujah!



Lil' Abner Update!

Work on our "big dog" high tunnel continues. This week's goal is to get all of the purlins and wind braces up before the deluge and heavy winds (current forecast shows about 4.5 inches between Saturday and Tuesday's rain/snow events!).

This morning's 18-degree start made for some mighty frosty steel. But the show must go on, right?



We are on a path to get this tunnel ready to cover by the 1st of February -- gotta make it happen because tomatoes are going in there by March 1st!

And to get tomatoes in the ground by March 1st, they have to get seeded NOW. Mission accomplished! And the seedlings are already beginning to pop!



Next up, onions!

I'm not sure why one of the first crops we seed each year has tiny black seeds which are placed on dark seed starting mix. I always start getting a bit cross-eyed by the end of the first day.



And with all these seed trays and plants, we need to make sure we have lots of seed starting mix. Santa contracted with Ray to bring in a 2 cubic yard bag of Purple Cow Seed Starter mix to make sure we didn't run out. Thanks, Santa!



That's the news for now. We've got LOTS more news to share with you in the coming weeks. Many projects are underway (including volunteer opportunities), events are planned, and so much more. Our first [Seven Springs](#) Co-op Order will be at the end of this month and our first plant sale is on March 22 and 23!

Wishing you a Healthy and Abundant 2024! Did you eat your collards and blackeyes? We had the sweetest and most tender collards ever! And they were picked fresh from our field New Years Day. A fringe benefit of being a farmer.



We are SO very grateful that you take the time to read about our little slice of the world each week.

**Until next week,
Cheryl & Ray**

