



Happy Friday, Farm Friends!

Last week was rain, this week was cold. Next week will be in the 60s. Welcome to North Carolina weather!



Wednesday morning was definitely one of the coldest days we've had in a while. Shortly after this photo was taken, the "Feels Like" temp dropped to 3.

A lot of the week has been spent on getting ready for the Artic blast. Most of our irrigation lines had been taken care of several weeks ago but there were still a few tasks remaining.

One of the important winter tasks that we had not taken care of was installing the ceiling in the greenhouse. We suspend a couple of pieces of greenhouse plastic on wires that are about 7' off the ground. This plastic keeps a large

amount of the heat from rising up into the top of the greenhouse -- where it does no good for the plants -- or people. The only beneficiary is the propane company! Since we track how much propane we use each night, we can easily see the difference. This technique cuts 25-30% off our propane bill!

We've been doing this for several years now and the process has gotten much easier. We used to spend 3+ hours on the task, struggling to get numerous pieces of plastic hung and clipped together. Last year, we decided to use 2 large sheets of new greenhouse plastic instead of lots of used pieces. We reinforced the holes that we use to thread zip-ties through to attach to the greenhouse frame. And most importantly, we labeled the plastic with where it fits on the ceiling (SE corner, etc.) and folded it precisely so it could be unfolded and installed quite easily. It worked! The three of us got the job done in less an hour!





More seeds went into trays this week which means more watering. When we had fewer seed trays in the greenhouse during the past couple of months, watering wasn't nearly as important. Now it is -- especially since we have trays on heat mats.



But how do you water around a cat?



### **Just One More Week!**

As you are planning your 2024 garden and find that you need some supplies, you are in luck! We are now gathering orders as part of our first [Seven Springs](#) cooperative order of the year. By joining in with other farmers and gardeners, we can all save money on shipping! It's easy to put in your order -- just go to our [website](#) and you'll find a link to either a printable order form or an Excel version that can be emailed.

Don't miss out! Orders are due by **Tuesday, January 30** and pick-up is scheduled for **February 9th** here at the farm. Don't hesitate to contact us if you have questions! Email is the best way to reach us: [farm@plumgrannyfarm.com](mailto:farm@plumgrannyfarm.com)



**Time for a Field Walk**



Now that all of the blackberry plants have been pruned, it was time to burn the canes. Burning the pruned branches is a good way to ensure that we are not harboring pests or disease in the crop.

We've been doing some clearing in the greenhouse so that the fabric on the floor can be repaired. It's also a good time to sanitize the floors and pallets before we make grow bags for cucumbers. They will be planted in mid-February (cukes by the beginning of Cobblestone on April 6th!).





Breaking News! A dispatch from the field complete with blurry picture! (hey, it's a very windy day!)

The baseboards on Lil' Abner are done! Hooray! Covering day is getting closer!

That's all we've got for now. Did you know that today is [National Popcorn Day](#)? Yup! And with the weather starting to turn colder with bitter wind chills, it sounds like a great evening to stay in for a popcorn treat! We frequently break out the popcorn when we are working on crop planning or event planning. We call it "brain food"!



I think I know what I'm having for supper!

Be safe out there this weekend, Friends! Bundle up and make sure your critters are well-protected.

Let us all pray for peace across the world.

**Until next week,**

***Cheryl & Ray***

