



January 2013 Newsletter



Happy New Year everybody! We'll be having a market this Saturday 1/19. It will be here at the farm from noon until about 3 p.m. We'll offer bagged cut lettuce and mesclun mix, garlic bulbs, and bagged dried beans, all grown here. The lettuce and mesclun had to be resown after the hurricane blew the cover off of the greenhouse, but it grew well in the mild temperatures we've experienced so far this winter and is ready for cutting. This will not be a regular weekly market but we'll hold one each time the greens regrow.

We've all enjoyed the break since the season ended in November. The seed order is done and waiting to be sent out. In just three weeks the 2013 season starts for us when we sow the onions in the first week of February. This is a good time for those of you who would like to renew your commitments for the 2013 season to do so.

Thanks very much to those who already have! If anyone has any questions about what's to come in 2013, or even questions about 2012, please feel free to email us at stevenzwier@yahoo.com or robyn7steve@aol.com or call us at 908-537-0777. We'll be glad to hear from you!

One change we've been considering for the farm in 2013 is to become Certified Naturally Grown (CNG). Their web address is <http://www.naturallygrown.org>. The CNG Standards and growing requirements are based on the USDA National Organic Program rules. To be granted the CNG certification, farmers don't use any synthetic herbicides, pesticides, fertilizers, antibiotics, hormones, or genetically modified organisms. They are no less strict - in fact, CNG farmers are constantly improving their soil and striving to increase the sustainability of their farming operations. The primary difference between Certified Naturally Grown and the USDA Organic program is cost to farmers and paperwork requirements. Additionally, like the Organic program before the USDA took over in 2002, the yearly farm inspections are carried out by other certified farmers. While the USDA program forbids farm inspectors from making suggestions to improve a farmer's situation, the Certified Naturally Grown program encourages sharing and advice between farmers. We feel that the National Organic Program is not sensitive to the needs of small, diverse farms and is geared more and more towards large monocrop farms. The "For farmers By Farmers" model that CNG follows is more in line with the mission of our CSA, bringing together a community of growers and members that help and feed each other. There are six other CNG farms in NJ, five of which are in northern NJ. We hope you will educate yourselves about CNG at their website and let us know what you think. We feel very good about the program.

Thanks, Steve

*Clockwise from top: Fresh bowls of salad mix (top); and mesclun mix (bottom);
"The Crew" preparing beans for market; mesclun and salad greens under cover in the greenhouse.*

