

FRIENDSHIP FARMS AND FARE
CSA REPORT & NEWSLETTER
OCTOBER 21, 2013 - 3RD CSA REPORT

REPORT

73 degrees at 4:00 AM October 19, 2013

Historical Average: 84 HIGH, 67 LOW – Weather Underground- <http://www.wunderground.com/>

The historical average is dropping each week, and will continue to until January. In late January it will begin to rise again. The lowest average high is 70 degrees, throughout most of January. The lowest average low is 51 degrees, occurring for about a week in early January.

Report, Missive, and Share List for 2013-2014

We will update the farm report each week and publish the report on weekends before the first and third Mondays of each month. The full text of each weekly missive is archived. The twice-monthly report will let you know what we are planting and harvesting, and special updates on the progress of crops. We will also include seasonal images, our popular wildlife segment, notes on climate and weather, reflections on urban farming, and our seasonal market reports.

Available share items will continue to be posted each week in the usual location on the site: <http://www.fffsite.org/#!fff-share/c3y2>

October Heat Wave

The cooler temperatures of last week have been followed by well above average heat this week. Here at First Farm, we were in the upper 80s all week, and not below 70 at night. Local weather prophets predict the first significant cool front of the season in the coming week. Interestingly, if the forecasts are correct, this cool front will bring temperatures "down" to their historical average.

Fall Planting

The fall gardens continue to take shape, with tomatoes and cucumbers flourishing, and broccoli continuing to grow and strengthen. Finally, some of the peppers are beginning to grow.

New Fruit Trees for the South Grove

We planted our new fruit trees earlier this month -- one fig tree and two persimmons in the south garden. The second fig will likely go on the north property. We enjoyed a few figs from our first tree.

Broccoli Seedlings, Woodlice, and Nocturnal Spiders

Broccoli seedlings are only now beginning to grow. The cooler temperatures earlier in the month made a great difference, but this week's heat slowed them up again. Many of the seedlings have doubled in size from the 11/7 report. The woodlice have declined. This is due to the lower temperatures two weeks ago and the arrival of a regular fall visitor, a nocturnal ground spider. We are still trying to identify this spider, but they appear regularly each fall, after the first cool spell, when temperatures get below 70 degrees.

The eyes of these spiders have reflect light brilliantly. Late night, when strolling in the garden, dozens of tiny pairs of eyes shine back from the ground, like the eyes of so many tiny cats, or constellations in the earth.

Cauliflower

We planted about 100 cauliflower seeds, and had about 100% germination. Our brother-grower, RH, has been extremely successful with cauliflower, and we'll share most of our seedlings with him. We'll try a few here at First Farm. In the past, we have not been very successful with Cauliflower. The variety we are planting is "Early Snowball," an heirloom variety we acquired from Southern Exposure Seed Exchange.

Peppers

The Carolina Wonder seeds have sprouted. They needed cooler temperatures. The other peppers (Charleston Belles) are beginning to look like peppers plants – albeit very small ones. We had our first peppers this week, and we'll include those with the samples from Cadle's Cove Farm (see report on CCF, below).

Tomato Seedlings

The tomatoes continue to flourish. We now have buds on many of the early plantings. The Eva Purple Ball and Arkansas Traveler seedlings are doing well. The Tropics in the garden are also doing well, and now have their first flowers.

The John Baers are the champions so far. They are now 4 feet high, with some over 5 feet. The Baers are flowering, and producing fruit, some the size of tennis balls. It will be a while before they ripen, but they are now at their mature size. It will be wonderful, if we are able to get a nice tomato harvest this year. We are using an organic (OMRI certified) fungicide to inhibit the septoria and early blight. The treatment is slowing the spread of these fungi that have been with us for the past two years.

Arugula

As expected, some of the arugula now have enough leaves to harvest. We'll include a few samples in your share, if you desire. Our success with arugula and its popularity with shares inspired us to go a little heavier this year. We seeded over 100 cells, with close to 100% germination, and have about a dozen healthy plants in the garden and planters. Seeds from last Spring are sprouting throughout the garden, so it is not too early for this zesty green.

Remember, like other organic produce, our arugula will have a little more zip than commercial varieties – even the commercial organics. Just be prepared for a spicier taste than what you might be used to.

Cucumbers

No pickle worms to report. We persist in our commitment to cucumbers. Most of the Straight 8 cucumbers are maturing and most starting to vine, but some have just given up, most likely too much sun. Some have produced flowers, and we'll be looking for bees to pollinate. We are using marigolds and habanero peppers to discourage the worms.

All the Asian Climbing cucumbers have sprouted. These prefer slightly cooler nights.

Sweet Potatoes

The sweet potato harvest is nearly over. We might have sweet potatoes for two more weeks. All told, we should come in around 170 lbs this year. Nearly all have been distributed to shares, with a few enjoyed by the Farmer and the Chef.

Sweet Potato Leaves

We should have SP leaves for a few more weeks. These are second growth leaves from taters missed in the harvest and residual roots. These are small, but very tasty. If you like SP leaves, these are recommended.

Cadle's Cove Farm

Peppers, Shiitake Mushrooms, Persimmons, and Chestnuts

We are happy to report that our friendship farm in north Florida (Cadle's Cove Farm) is again offering a nice assortment of organic samples for us: This week, look for peppers and Shiitake Mushrooms – see <http://www.whfoods.com/genpage.php?dbid=122&tname=foodspice>

We'll also have our first fruits and nuts of the season, thanks to Cadle's Cove: persimmons and chestnuts. Just let us know if you'd like those in your share.

Mushrooms, persimmons, and chestnuts available after Tuesday.

Habanero Peppers

The Habanero saga continues. Like the Postal Service, nothing deters these remarkable plants. They are still producing.. Most are being used for insect and snail control, but they are certainly available for shares. Be advised, **these peppers are very very hot**. They are so hot, that handling them after slicing can burn your fingers – as some of us have learned.

Okra

Okra season is now officially closed. Only the seeding plants remain.

Next year, we will plant even more.

Eggs: We have increased the cost of the eggs to \$5.00 (\$4.00 per share). Our supplier has now gone to a certified non-GMO scratch for his chickens, which is significantly more expensive than the uncertified scratch. As you know, we work with a humane farmer, practicing compassionate farming methods. Even better, now the eggs will be free of GMOs – at least we can affirm they are being produced by chickens that are consuming non-GMO scratch.

We have seen no eggs on the market that are certified non-GMO. Our eggs do not have the certification, but we are trusting our famer's affirmation that he is using non-GMO scratch.

Herbs: Consult the share list for available items.

Honey: Sorry to say, we have no honey. Hopefully our friend the beekeeper will have more soon. The loss of half his hives was a serious set back for him and for us – and most of all the bees, whose loss we grieve.

Tampa deliveries will be Thursday this week. West Pasco deliveries will be determined on the basis of share request and distance.

Anyone in the New Port Richey area can stop by on Sunday between 2:00 and 3:00 PM. Please call before coming by – 849-1626.

For this week, here is what we have (FCFS, as always):

THE SHARE

October 21, 2013 (3)

(* larger quantity available if desired)

Vegetables

Arugula – First leaves (small quantities)

Peppers – Habanero* – very hot

Peppers – Bell – Assorted Sweet Mini-bells (special from Cadle's Cove Farms and some from our New Port Richey farm (First Farm)

Sweet Potatoes – various sizes and shapes (Firsts, Seconds, and Thirds).
- Nearing the end of the harvest.

Sweet Potato Leaves – second growth vines (young, tender, succulent)

Fruit

Persimmons (sample to gauge interest)

Fungus (Mushrooms)

Shiitake Mushrooms: <http://www.whfoods.com/genpage.php?dbid=122&tname=foodspice>

Herbs (* larger quantity available if desired)

Basil -- Traditional Basil

Basil -- Mrs. Burns' Lemon Basil (small quantities)

Basil – Globe (Greek) Basil

Basil – Cinnamon (small quantities)

Chives

Cilantro (none at present)

Culantro – (none at present)

Mint -- Citrus (Orange) Mint

Oregano (medium quantity)

Parsley (light at present)

Purslane (medium quantities)

Rosemary*

Smilax (Cat Briar) (none at present)

Tarragon*

Thyme

Seasonings

Bay Leaves – fresh leaves

Nuts

Chestnuts (sample to gauge interest)

Medicinal

Aloe*

Complementary Sample(s) from Friendship Farms & Fare

OCTOBER Sample: **TBA.**

COMPANION FAUNA

Bat update: The bats emerge earlier each week. Yesterday (10/18), they left at 7:15.

Big Brown Bat: The brown bat was not seen this week.

Swifts: Swifts remain abundant, filling the sky at the same time as the bats. They also have been very active since the rains passed. They are very active in their lodge throughout the night.

Tree Frogs: Very little activity, despite the warmer temperatures. They are beginning to hibernate. No egg clusters, and no songs.

Leopard Frogs: The large female leopard frog was seen several times this week – due to the above average temperatures. She is quite a hunter, snatching several crickets that had entered her lair.

The little male was also observed in the south pond. We disturbed him when replenishing the pond with fresh water.

It appears that the leopards do not share the same pond, except during mating season – at least this pair does not. There may or may not be a lesson in this.

Greenhouse Frogs: The greenhouse frogs are now routine in the nursery area. These small frogs live in protected spaces – like greenhouses. Our colony lives in our seeding nursery. The greenhouse frog is the only North American frog that lays its eggs on land. They will be abundant later in the year. Unlike the tree frogs and the leopard frogs, greenhouse frogs can tolerate cooler temperatures.

Southern Toad: No toads.

Woodlouse – See report on the woodlouse (rolly polly, pill bug) in the broccoli section of the last report (10/7). There are still a few of these beneficial creatures. Slowed by the cool weather two weeks ago, they have become a bit more active with this week's heat.

Nocturnal Garden Spider – This is most likely not the correct name for these small spiders that proliferate in the fall. They are found throughout the garden, usually near the base of plants. Most likely their fare are the woodlice, which are also nocturnal.

Bees: Several domestic (European) bees were observed this week. They were collecting nectar from the flowering fall plants. Although their numbers are greatly reduced from previous years, at least some are still with us.

Black Swallowtail Caterpillar: A local supporter of 3F reported a large number of caterpillars enjoying the last of her dill. Investigation suggests they are larva of the Black Swallowtail butterfly.

Cat: Mr. Goldie continues to enjoy the grounds.

3F Stories, Events, and Policy Updates

Planting & Harvest Notes

Seeds: broccoli, cauliflower, cucumbers, lettuces.

Garden Starts: tomatoes, broccoli, cucumbers, arugula.

Harvest Notes: sweet potato leaves, assorted herbs, sweet potatoes, one bell pepper, arugula.

Vermipost: 21 lbs.

Pasco EcoFest and EcoMart

Friendship Farms and Fare is again a sponsor for the Pasco EcoFest. We will have a table at the EcoMart at Sims Park in New Port Richey. This is an all-day event on November 9. We look forward to seeing you there.

Friendship Farms and Fare Pursues Non-GMO Certification

As noted in our first report of the Garden Year (10/7) Friendship Farms and Fare has established a policy opposing the use of GMOs in food. Acting on our policy, we are exploring Non-GMO certification of some of our vegetables and prepared foods. We have the application in hand, and will be submitting it in the near future. Of course, we have never used GMO seeds or products containing GMOs, so you can rest assured that even without the certification, everything we share is free of GMOs.

Farm and Fare Tours (Local Urban Gardens and Organic Kitchen)

If you would like to schedule a tour local urban gardens in New Port Richey and/or the FFF Kitchens, please let us know, and we can make arrangements. Tours are experiential, informational, educational, and fun.

On Saturday, September 21, we had just such a tour, hosting students from USF with an interest in organic farming, urban agriculture, local wide life, and vegan food preparation.

Typically, and depending on the season, participants visit several urban farms, learn about and organic farming in an urban environment using permaculture philosophies and practices, observe and learn about urban wildlife and helpful plants, enjoy samples of live produce, and share in the preparation of the vegan cuisine. Tours are structured on the basis of participants' interests and background. We can also arrange focused learning sessions at the Gardens and/or the Kitchens.

Please note that an appropriate contribution for the tours and learning sessions will be suggested when tours are scheduled.

There are four categories of tours:

- * Urban Farming, Gardening and Soil development
- * Urban wildlife and helpful plants (note if you desire a bat observation, which requires special scheduling)
- * Vegan, Organic food preparation
- * General (including two or more categories)

Please note that an appropriate contribution for the tours and learning sessions will be suggested when tours are scheduled.

Next Workday

Informal discussions suggest that the next workday is best scheduled for November or December. We welcome assistance when convenient for you.

Loquat Festival Next Year

Our CSA community and volunteers have begun initial planning for the area's first Loquat Festival. If you'd like to be part of the planning team, please let us know. The tentative date for the festival is March 29, 2014. It is time (and well past time) that this hearty, healthy, delicious, and **abundant** fruit receive full recognition for the contribution it can make to the diet of Floridians – especially urbanites. As far as we can tell there are no Loquat Festivals. With your help, G&G will launch the first one – March 29, 2014. In meantime, add loquats to your CSA Share request.

FF&F: A Florida Friendly Farm

The 3 F gardens are certified as a "Florida Friendly" environment – a certification we have held for over a decade.

Florida Friendly recognition is given to environments (typically residential yards) that support and enhance natural ecosystems. Certification is given in three categories (bronze, silver, and gold) based on a point system rating various features of the property and practices followed by the property owner. We received a high score but only a silver rating because of some changes in the program of which we were unaware.

Attention is given to features such as water-retention, native and drought tolerant plants, diversity in plant species, responsible irrigation systems, and amenities for native pollinators. Positive practices include minimal use of fertilizers (with organic preferred) and little or no use of poisons, groundcovers rather than turf, composting, and rainwater collection systems.

We encourage all our members and friends to pursue Florida Friendly designation for their properties. It is a wonderful way to learn more about Florida's natural ecology and what you can do to create a healthy environment right where you live. It is also a great way to go green.

Folks who wonder what they can do be more environmentally responsible are encouraged to review the Florida Friendly checklist. If you can change even one thing about your yard or your landscape practices to bring it into agreement with the guidelines, you will have made a difference. Even if you do not apply for the designation, reviewing the criteria will be an enriching educational experience. Putting the guidelines into practice will make a definite difference. Here is the website for the program:

<http://fyn.ifas.ufl.edu/homeowners/recognitions.htm>

Seed Dealer License

3 F is now a licensed Seed Dealer. The Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services issues these licenses, which are required to sell seeds to the public. Through our friendship with Ecology Florida, we applied for the license as a subsidiary of Ecology Florida – a federally sanctioned Not For Profit organization. Want to buy some seeds? To explore the Ecology Florida project, see: <http://www.ecologyflorida.org/>

3F Produce for non-shareholders (if available): As always, non-CSA Members may request produce from the share list for \$5 per item. If requested items remain after shares have been distributed, they may be acquired by non-members. Just reply to this email if you desire anything on the list. We suggest non-shareholders start an account to cover costs of items.

Website Link: Please visit our website < <http://www.ffffsite.org> > for weekly newsletters, share details, and community growing information.

Other News and Reports

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Commercial Produce News Report

No report this week (sorry)

Reprint of September 4, 2013 report

This column reports on seasonal Florida produce and other popular produce items as they appear at local corporate grocery stores. The report includes the source of the produce, the cost, and estimated food miles. Readers will note that although seasonal Florida produce is available from local growers (including our CSA), the actual fruits and vegetables are often being shipped great distances to reach the corporate grocery stores in our area. If we are growing the vegetables, and we find it in stores, we'll include it on this list. We'll also include seasonal crops not being

grown at our farm. **Please send us reports on any seasonal items you find at markets where you shop, and include the source and cost. We'll research the food miles. Items in red are available through the CSA or other local growers.**

OR = organic.

Market Report - Major Market

Okra absent from commercial markets for two weeks

Broccoli still coming in from California (organic and industrial varieties)

New Listings September 4, 2013

Aloe Leaves, \$2.49 each – (no location, probably Florida) (est. 150 miles)

Sweet Potatoes, .99 lb. – (no location, probably Georgia or middle south) (est.350 miles/300 air)

Bell Peppers, OR, 2.99 each – Sarasota (Global Organics) (to Tampa, 61 miles land, 42 air)

Dill, Thyme, Basil, \$1.99 oz. – Miami (Rock Garden South)(to Tampa, 280 miles land, 203 air)

Mint, Oregano, Tarragon, \$1.99 oz. – Miami (Rock Garden South)(to Tampa, 280 miles land, 203 air)

Broccoli, OR, \$4.99 head – Watsonville ,CA (Lakeside) (Watsonville to Tampa: 2850 land, 2358 air)

Broccoli, \$1.99 head – Salinas,CA (Andy Boy) (Salinas to Tampa: 2826 land, 2352 air)

Strawberries, OR, \$5.99 ½ lb - Watsonville ,CA (Driscoll) (Watsonville to Tampa: 2850 land, 2358 air)

Blueberries, \$4.99, 12 oz. – Washington state (Driscoll) (Seattle to Tampa: 3093 land, 2528 air)

From August Report

Eggplant, OR – \$3.99 each, Pero, Delray Beach, FL (est. to Tampa: 222 land, 179 air)

Eggplant, \$1.99 lb –Thomasville, GA (est. to Tampa: 271 land, 219 air)

Okra, \$3.99 lb, USA – none available at location checked (end of season)

Peanuts (green), \$2.99 lb, USA (no location given, probably Florida) (est. 150 miles)

Onions (Vidalia), \$4.99/3lbs – Reidsville, GA (Shuman Produce) (to Tampa, 324 miles land, 286 air)

Onions (Vidalia), \$4.99/3lbs – Lyons, GA (Herndon Family Farms) (to Tampa, 337 miles land, 293 air)

- note: onions are being harvested in Florida, but they are not "Vidalias"

Tomaotes (grape) OR -- \$3.99 ¾ lb. – Delray Beach, FL (Pero) (est. to Tampa: 222 land, 179 air) -

although organic, it is hard to imagine growing tomatoes this far south at this time of the year

in a conventional manner – these are probably hydroponics grown in a controlled environment

Figs, \$5.99 lb. – Madera, CA (Western Fresh) (Madera to Tampa: 2763 land, 2265 air)

Total Food-miles for a meal featuring a salad of peppers, onions, and tomatoes; steamed broccoli and sweet potato soup; and Blueberries for desert = 5407 miles by air

OTHER PRODUCTS FOR THE CSA FAMILY

Non-Members may order items on the list for \$5 per item. Items remaining after shares have been distributed, may be acquired by non-members for \$5.00 per item.

Diatomaceous Earth: We now have access to a diatomaceous earth, a real “up-and-comer” in the organic farming community. It is also getting good press in healthy living communities -- even among many “foodies.” If you know about this mineral, and would like to acquire it from your CSA, just let us know.

EGGS. Prices are \$5.00 a dozen (\$4.00 for shares), and \$3.00 a half-dozen (\$2.50 for shares). These prices are competitive with prices for organic eggs at commercial grocers. As required by our policies, our supplier is local, follows organic principles, practices compassionate husbandry,

and allows chickens free range. If you would like to be included on the egg list, please start an account (\$20 suggested), and make requests accordingly.

Eggs are from humanely treated chickens, and fed non-GMO feed.

Honey: Honey is in hiatus for now.

Seeds: If you would like organic vegetable seeds for your garden, we will order them for you. Seed packs are \$4.00 each, 2 for \$7.00, and 5 for \$14.00.

Seedlings: We are also happy to start plants for you. Just give us the word on the plants you want us to start, and we'll do the rest. Starter plants in cow pot cells are \$1.50 per plant (\$1, for shares), \$5.00 (\$4) for four, \$8.00 (\$7.00) for nine. When available, small plants are \$3.00 (\$2.40) each, and medium plants are \$5.00 (\$4).

Let us know if you want to acquire seeds or starts.

We have tomatoes, cucumbers, peppers, and some lettuces.

Cow Pots: Twelve packs of “cow pots” starter cells now available -- \$5.00 (\$4). These organic cells are made from cured and compressed cow manure and supply young plants with a natural fertilizer. In our tests, we found the cow pots superior to other “natural” cells on the market in promoting root growth and plant development. They are also a sustainable product (so long as we have cows), as opposed to the other “natural” cells that typically are made from peat, which is mined in bogs and wetland ecosystems in the north, usually destroying the bogs and ecosystems in the process. We are also supplying cow pots in retail display boxes to local retailers.

Trees: Young Loquat trees are available in small (half-gallon) and medium (gallon) pots - \$5.00 (\$4.00 for shareholders). \$10.00 (\$8.00) for two-gallon pots.

Vermipost and Worms: For folks interested in organic gardening, we have the best all-natural soil amenities you can find: Vermipost and Worms! Vermipost is compost that has been broken down and enriched by Red Worms. We also have the worms themselves. **Vermipost** is available in 32 oz containers for \$2.50 each (\$2.00 for shareholders), with discounts for orders of five or more. Vermipost containers will most likely have some worms in the mix. We recommend mixing the vermipost 1 to 1 with regular soil, and 1 to 3 or 4 with organic soil. Remember, if you use synthetic chemicals (such as fertilizers or pesticides), the vermipost will be compromised. Pesticides will kill the worms and synthetic fertilizers will kill the worms or drive them away.

Worms are available in 32 oz containers for \$7.50 (\$6 for shareholders). We cannot specify the exact number of worms in a container, but there should be 30-50. By the way, if you are developing an organic garden, always look for the OMRI seal of approval on fertilizers, soils, and insect deterrents.

Seeds: Shareholders are entitled to seeds from our seed bank – three types of okra and our famous Calabrese broccoli. Our seeds are organic and derived from heirloom stock. They are listed with Seed Savers Exchange, and also available at the New Port Richey Library Seed Exchange. Let us know if you are interested. Additional packages of seeds for \$4.00 (\$3.20) a packet (of 30).

Florida Central West Coast acclimated Okra Seeds offered by 3F are: Silver Queen, Star of David, and Hill Country Red.

Market Off Main: We encourage members of the TBN G&G CSA to patronize the Market Off Main in New Port Richey, and other local produce markets. They often have organics, usually have local produce, are locally owned, and are now a distributor of Cow Pots. Here is their website: <http://www.marketoffmain.com/>

Tasty Tuesdays: Visit the New Port Richey Library Tuesday (10:00 AM – 1:00 PM) for a good selection of locally grown organic vegetables. [New Port Richey Public Library, 5939 Main St, New Port Richey, FL](#)

Suncoast Co-Op Market: On Saturday mornings, visit the Suncoast Co-Op locally-grown organic produce. See the Market in New Port Richey at the West Pasco Habitat for Humanity: Saturdays Noon- 2pm 4131 Madison Street New Port Richey, FL 34652.

To Return to our website, go to: < <http://www.ffffsite.org> >

Friendship Farms & Fare
An Urban Farm Community, CSA, and Organic Wholefoods Kitchen
October 21, 2013
3rd report for the 2013-2014 Garden Year

Friendship Farms & Fare Community

Cadle's Cove Farm
Freedom House Farm
3F First Farm
Seeds of Love Organic Farm
Tarry Lane Tasting Station

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