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Dear Members

July-? 27 2011

How is the weather affecting the crops? Lots of folks asking that. Not going to do an itemized list, I'll just say that everything that likes hot weather is behind schedule. But not dead, which is good

OF SLIME AND OTHER THINGS.....

After a nice hot Sunday, Monday morning's gloom and drizzle is a shock. It's my day off (as was Sunday). I'm not sure what that means in farming terms, since there is no such thing. What it really means is that the rest of the crew is not working, and it's a great chance to play the martyr. I've shoved myself out of bed (anyone over 60 can identify), peered out the window, let in a confused wet cat, and encounter: **Slug Slime** --- It's in the cat dish, on the porch and EEW..... big ropes of it on the cedar siding of my trailer! Staring and pondering, I wonder - should I attempt to clean it off, or conduct an experiment to how long it will take to wear off on its own, (if ever)? Opting for the latter, I quickly turn the rug over, and bring in the cat dish to clean. With that breath of very cool air, I've already figured that it would be a great day to prune tomatoes, since it won't be over 100 in the hoopouses like it was yesterday when I had to bail after 2 hours. So it's already 6:30 AM, I need to figure out the fruit order and get it called in before they run out of everything I want to order. Zac at Charlies Produce says local fruit still slow coming in - no surprise there. I call Kurt Tonnemaker to see if his apricots are available yet - "not quite yet" he croaks out, which reminds me it's probably too early to call most folks, so call Zac back and order some from them. Still anxious to get to the tomatoes before they grow another foot, I got through the bill drawer, get that done, get bank deposits ready check email, write some emails, including one to my daughter (also a farmer) saying "call me - it's already almost August- my last visit was in June!", log in CSA payments, figure out the produce donations for Farms For Life, etc,etc,etc. Getting a vision of my mother, who, after retiring (with a pension) (younger than I am now), said "don't call before 10 AM - I like to have a quiet breakfast and read the paper...." I decide I will have eggs with chives and cheese for breakfast rather than the protein drink that only takes 20 seconds to consume. After slathering some Arnica cream on my shoulders in hopes that will make them up to the task, I put on a light sweatshirt, gather my "tomato can" which consists of a coffee can with 500 or so 6" twistems, water, my favorite scissors that are over 15 years old and have duct tape on the handles, and a sweat rag. Off I go.... Yikes! Go into the tom house I didn't get to last week, barely wedging into the path between the rows, and start snipping the bigger leaves off so we have a chance to see the tomatoes when and if they get ripe, and tying the vines to the strings. I work fast (faster than anyone else can do it... ..pride will kill you) hoping I can stay ahead of things before some of those vines wrap themselves around my ankles and they won't find me until tomorrow. After a couple of hours I realize I did not think about the humidity factor, and am sweating, resort to my sweat rag to keep it from running into my eyes, wipe my brow- EEW-**SlugSlime!** Well, H---- (heck). Continue undaunted until I see a human shadow through the plastic. Startled, barely avoiding cutting off my left thumb, I step out and encounter a large man and an even larger truck. Wondering who he is and HOW he got that big truck back here (and how is he going to get it out?) he announces "I have a delivery for you." It's our new DR Brush Mower (twothousandtwentytwodollarsplussshippingwhichwasnot in thebudget). OK, I say, "how are you going to unload it?" "You're supposed to have two people and a loading ramp available" he answers. "Your company was supposed to call me and make an appointment" I retort, noting that he and I total two people, but apparently he doesn't consider himself to be a person in this circumstance. I also notice that he keeps looking at my right eyebrow - I reach up - yep, **Slug Slime!** So it's off to call our Foreman Jeff, who lives next door and also is not real sure of the exact meaning of "day off", as he has already been over here twice this morning - "Can you come over and unload a "3oolbcratewithmower" I say? "Sure" he says with minor grumbling (I am "Mom" as well as "Boss" - that helps). So the day finally ends, I've done 1 hoopouse out of 7, my hand and arm still work. More later -

