

THE ROOT CONNECTION PO Box 267 Woodinville Wa 98072

www.rootconnection.com

(425) 881 1006

August 24, 2011

SAFETY ISSUES: Please read! There have been some serious incidents involving children lately, so we are reviewing the following rules:

PLAY AREA IN THE STORE: No children can be left unattended. What this means is that the parent needs to be IN THE STORE if the child is there. Store personnel cannot take responsibility for your child! Have had scary incidents where kids have run into the parking lot with cars coming in, backing up, etc. One child avoided potentially serious injury when the parent left the store to go to her car, and her child ran after her – fortunately, another member grabbed the child.

GOING OUT OF THE STORE: Absolutely no children allowed out the side door (including the area right outside the door) without their parent. I have had to move children who are sitting in the glass (where the driver of a backing vehicle would not be able to see them!) We use that area for loading, so our farm vehicles use that driveway constantly.

PARKING ON THE BACK DRIVEWAYS OR BY THE GAZEBO: There is one parking spot available for handicapped parking. Otherwise, farm vehicles only. Vehicles parked there create a hazard as this is an area where there are a lot of kids running around.

DRIVEWAYS IN GENERAL: They also serve as walking paths, but remember, they are driveways, meaning a moving vehicle can appear at any time. Parents tend to walk their kids down the driveway behind the store, and then about half way down, let them run or walk alone to the chickens. When they do this, they are walking across the road that goes N/S across the property. I had a near miss when I was driving in and a child appeared right in front of my car.

SCISSORS: If you allow your children to carry their own scissors, you are putting them at risk. Occasionally, I see a child that has been taught the correct way to carry – hand around the scissor end, pointed down. But that is rare - typically, children are running with the scissors pointed up or ahead. One trip, and there goes an eye, or worse. Please share your scissors with your child, or if they must have their own pair, you carry them until they get to where they are going to pick something.

IN THE FIELD: No children allowed to run around in the fields or driveways where they are not supervised. Lots of hazards – bee hives, ground bee nests, deep drainage ditches (sometimes with 2-3 ft of water) storage areas with hazards like nails, gasoline, antifreeze, etc. And the worst kind – human predators – can be here like anywhere else. Just because this is our farm, does not mean we know who everyone is.

PARKING LOT: Never leave any kids in the car, even older ones – many times they decide they want to come in after all, and will run right between parked cars.

That's all I can think of for now – I wouldn't have wasted so much space on this if I wasn't concerned – seems like there have been lots of near misses lately, so it's time for a review. Members need to remember that this farm is no different than being in the grocery store – don't get complacent.

If you see a hazardous condition, or something that could have been one, please report it to farm personnel, even if it isn't your child.

We love all our youngest members! Seeing the children enjoying themselves and learning about farming and vegetables is one of the highlights of running a CSA – so we want them to be safe.

See reverse for the regular newsletter-----

Beans: we are picking the Dragon Tongue beans now. These are fun to use raw (so they keep their color) – you can french cut them thinly and add to salads, or marinate them in whatever you like for a few hours or overnight. They are great cooked too..

Tomatoes: there may be bags of Sungold cherry tomatoes with your share this week. We sometimes have to alternate – one week for Wed members, next week for Fri members – until heavy picking starts which should be in a couple of weeks.

When will the Fall U-pick greens be ready? Won't be long – a couple of weeks, I think. Details later.

LABOR DAY WEEKEND: coming up – remember, if you are a Fri/Sat pickup, and you will be gone that weekend, **call us** by Sun August 28th and arrange to pick up your produce early that week on Wed Aug 31st or Thurs Sept 1st instead. Then you can wash and put away everything and have it when you get back. **Bags are not available behind the store on Mondays. The food bank picks up everything early Monday morning.**

Last week I wrote about **Roots of Our Times Co-Op**. If you want more information about purchasing stock, leave me a message. Or we have some summary flyers in the farmstore now. By-Laws are bulky, so I usually just mail those to people after I have had a chance to talk to them and answer questions.

HISTORY CONTINUES: Starting the CSA appealed to me because it seemed like a structure of sharing- similar to what I did when I had a home garden. Sharing not just the food, but the land itself. Somehow we humans seem to feel that the air and water belongs to everyone, and everyone should have access, but don't always look at land the same way. But if we need water, air and food as the basic three things to survive, why do we abuse and disregard the land, sometimes thinking of it as not just something to own, but to figure out how much profit we can make off it. (Basically I am talking about food producing types of land) I don't think anyone would say that we should deny people air or water because of what country they HAPPEN to be born in, or children denied air because of what type of family (educated / not educated, healthy/not healthy, abusive/not abusive, etc.) they HAPPEN to be born into. So if we are fortunate to be born into certain circumstances, have a certain set of genes and environment (none of which was under our control) and we find ourselves in a place where we have access and can afford to avail ourselves of healthy food, then why shouldn't we think that everyone should have food security? I know farmers need to sell their products, since they need an income like everyone else, but most of them that I know always have wished there was a way that they could also provide food to those who cannot afford to be their customers, or to children who have not had benefit of a family that understands the importance of a good diet. As a farmer, it is frustrating to read of the rising diabetes and heart disease rates among children, while we farmers could grow more for these people if there were only a way to cover the production costs (IRS won't even allow farmers to deduct food donations). There also needs to be a way to cover the costs of getting the food to where it is needed. Many small farmers in our area have stopped farming because of reduced income. And those of us left are operating in the red the past couple of years. But we can grow food – if someone could pay us the production costs, help to balance the budget, while also being able to give more to our fellow humans.

Some of us decided to form a charity called Farms For Life to help with these issues. We obtained our 501c3 status in 2010, and beginning that year started delivering fresh local organic produce to 7 agencies and food banks that distribute the food to their clients. Here are some of their comments:

The Farms for Life program has greatly enriched the Casa kitchen, and we thank you. I cook for kids who have hardly touched a vegetable in their lives. The kids are now eating swiss chard! This is a huge feat. Thank you for helping us expose our youth to healthy, fresh, and beautiful food. - Mia, Case Manager, Casa de Los Amigo

Whether it's chomping down the farm fresh carrots while playing a game of rummy or helping youth navigate the epicurean adventure that is home made borscht, the Farms for Life Veggies always bring smiles and excitement to all of us here at Youthcare's Isis House. -Noah, YouthCare's ISIS House

I really appreciate our amazing local produce and what I have found for Passages is that if we cook it and it looks good our kiddos they will eat it. I made beet lemonade and beet brownies, there were no leftovers. – Heather

Farms for Life's goal this year is to raise enough awareness and money to finance a big expansion in outreach next year. We have farmers willing to sell to us at reduced prices, and many agencies needing the food. We greatly appreciate any donations, no matter what amount.

NEXT WEEK, look for news on FFL's fabulous upcoming Raffle which includes prizes such as Dinner for Two at the famous HerbFarm Restaurant and lots more.

We must
have rules,
boys and girls!