

Riverbend Farm Newsletter July 6, 2008

The big event for this week was on Monday. People from Birchwood Cafe, Common Roots and the Local Fair Trade Network came out and weeded onions and picked peas.

The 40,000 onions that were planted earlier needed to be weeded. We had cultivated them several times with the basket weeder and hoed them a few times, but there were still weeds in the rows. This was set up on short notice. Two weeks ago the weeds were only 1½ - 2" tall. On Monday they 6" tall. Today The survivors are 18". There are not too many of them, but they have been growing.

About 20 people showed up. Some of them had helped with the planting. Some were new. Some were community members who heard about the field day through the cafe's newsletters and wanted to help out. There were several people who biked out, worked all day, and biked back.

Getting that much done in one day was great. It would have taken us several days to get that much done, if we worked on it exclusively. We can't devote a week to weeding onions. There are harvest days, planting, hoeing, watering, all the other things that need to be done. Besides, it is hard to keep your enthusiasm up when weeding onions for days at a time.

After lunch, which the cafes brought, everyone picked peas. I tried an new variety of shell pea and it turned out to be fairly productive and very early. Picking peas is another job that seems endless. It takes a lot of peas to fill a bucket. With 20 pickers, we were done is less than an hour.

Thanks everyone for coming and helping out. Having a big group plant and weed the onions has made it possible to produce this crop. Without the volunteers we would not have been able to get the work done on time. A special thank you has to go to Tracy and Danny for not only helping plant and weed, but also for organizing and promoting these field days.

In addition to the onions and peas, Monday was one of our regular harvest days. Tuesday was CSA harvest and watering. We have had only about ¼" of rain since June 12th. The work is shifting from planting to watering. Harvesting and hoeing always need to be done. Wednesday was disking the soon to be planted green manure field, direct seeding greens and radishes, more watering, and transplanting the fall cabbage crops. Thursday was a small harvest day since our delivery day fell on the 4th. That left time for more weeding, watering and disking. On Friday Angelica did deliveries and Bex and I started installing drip irrigation in the peppers, eggplant, and winter squash. Shortly, the melons, pumpkins, tomatoes, and summer squash will get it too. On Saturday I finished disking the green manure field and started planting soybeans.

Greg