

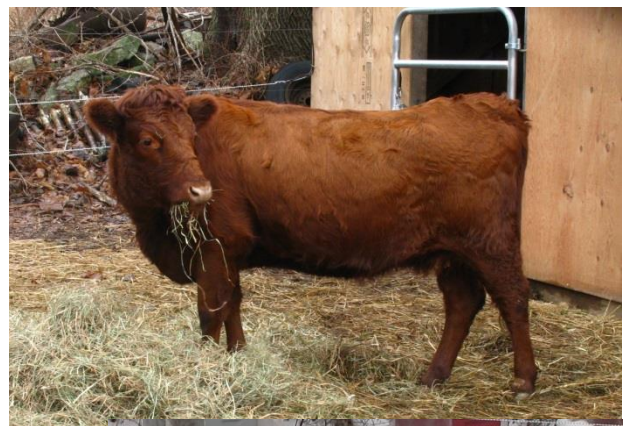
Report from the Farm

We may seem to be in the throes of winter, but the imminence of spring is palpable, even when shoveling snow. It is now obvious that longer days are upon us and, when sunny, they are quite rejuvenating. We are especially attuned to this when we are in our unheated greenhouses that are 75 degrees (when it is 25 outside), even in the late afternoon.

We have a number of greens growing in the greenhouse – claytonia, spinach, arugula, mustard, mizuna, tatsoi – some of which are experiments, some tried and true from the past few years. A week or two more of nice sunshine and we should be selling these. We are also experimenting with getting other greens, such as chard and kale, in the ground much earlier. We've started these in blocks and will transplant them into the ground sometime in late February. Beets and carrots have also been planted this week.



The big news on the farm is the arrival of our cows on January 12th, after a much-needed outpouring of help from our CSA members to prepare their new home. We bought a 2-year-old cow, Opal, and an 8-month-old heifer (female) calf, Jasmine. They are Dexters, a heritage breed known for being tri-purpose: meat, milk, and draft animals. Our choice was based on their size and their milk's butterfat content. They are the smallest dairy cattle, cows weighing around 700 pounds. Smaller animals eat less, and with our



small farm this is an important consideration. Also, a family portion of milk is nice, instead of too many gallons each day, which would soon become burdensome. Their milk is considerably higher in butterfat than conventional milk from Holstein herds (the black and white cows we all tend to think of as dairy cows), which is important to us so that we can easily make butter and certain cheeses.

None of the cows are lactating now, although Opal is pregnant and due to birth somewhere between April and July. In the last four weeks since getting them, Opal is noticeably wider, her calf obviously growing inside.



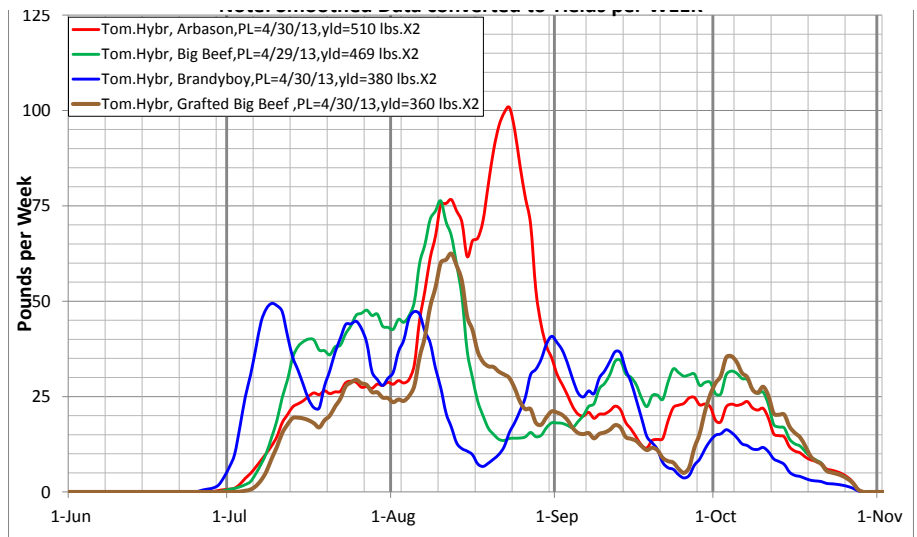
Right now they are in a relatively small paddock, about 50X100 feet. The deep snow threw a wrench in our plans to start rotating them through a pasture. The pastures would not be for feed at this point, but the intent would be to spread the manure and urine around the pasture. We've built a movable shelter / milking parlor in order to avoid having areas of muck and filth.

This is Opal staring down one of our cats. The farm they came from didn't have cats, so this was a new creature that Opal wasn't very sure of. She eventually charged at the cat, which bolted, and then Opal turned and ran away as well. After that, the cats felt they needed to take a break from the stresses of farm life. They have obviously been very tense (photos next page).





The major jobs at this time of year are: CSA planning, soil fertility plans, soil amenities order, planting plan and seed orders. In order to have a continuous abundance of veggies, we painstakingly choose varieties, plant dates, and quantity of each variety to be planted. We look at past data to optimize our plan (this example is of tomatoes in our greenhouse last year). This allows us to have as great a variety as possible, with as even a distribution as possible during the season. Our data collection and analysis also allows us to optimize production and grow significant amounts of food on our small parcel of land.



We are also working on a plan to have continuous fruit production throughout the CSA season (it will take 5-10 years, however, before the fruit trees reach maturity), and that plan dictates varieties of blueberry plants, Asian pears, and peaches to order now. This will be in addition to our raspberries, apples, pears, and Asian pears already in the ground.

Welcome back to the CSA and we hope (and work and plan) for a bountiful season!