



STONEY ACRES FARM
COMMUNITY SUPPORTED AGRICULTURE

**“Old MacDonald had a farm, and on his farm
he had a pizza.”**

- Silas the Bull from Merrill, Wisconsin

News from the Farm

Welcome to Stoney Acres CSA Week 3, 2018! Thanks to everyone who attended the pancake breakfast! It was a pleasant morning with good food and good berry picking.

I've been getting a little help from my friends and I want to acknowledge and celebrate that for a moment. I have some great worker shares this year. Two trusted Veterans and some fresh energy. Rachel Buttalla is new. She is a Marathon native who moved around the state and has come home with a focus on organic food especially anti-cancer varieties which I will write more about in another Broadcaster. Kyle Carnes is back drinking a beer at lunch. Kyle has been a worker share with his wife Jamie for the last three years, but over the course of the last year has become one of my best friends. He is the United Church of Christ Minister at St. Stephens in Merrill and my own personal theologian. We canoe, contemplate, and close down the Sawmill together. Love having him on the farm every week! My Favorite Worker Share of all time is Amber Krause. The Spanish teacher at Abbotsford High School is a childhood friend from way back and has been so supportive encouraging and helpful. She is an awesome gardener and loves diverse varieties, foods, and language. Worker Share Wednesday has morphed into feast day where we take the best food of the farm and do it right for lunch making Community Supported Agriculture a celebration! Thanks Worker Share Crew! Thanks friends!

Have a delicious week- Tony, Riley, Ted and Maple

In Your Box

Broccoli Leaves – Use like Kale

Carrots

Broccoli

Fennel – a member of the carrot family tastes like black licorice roast or sautee the bulb, use the fronds raw in salads. Great for flavoring pork

Green Garlic – like a mild garlicky version of a scallion. eat it all

Cucumbers – from our friends at Red Door

Strawberries

Kohlrabi

Peas

Next Week's best Guess:

Salad mix, scallions, carrots, strawberries, fennel, zucchini

Pizza specials of the week – Four Veggiesake-

Fennel, Green Garlic Pesto, kale, zucchini. **It's All Clover Now Baby Blue** – Stoney Sausage, Kale, Green Garlic Pesto, Carr Valley Blue Cheese, Marathon Red Clover In Post. **The Ann Perkins** – Bacon, Green garlic pesto, Microgreens and Shaved Parmesan from Harmony Dairy in Stratford added in post.

The Community Thresher

By Tony @ Stoney

I was born on this farm. My grandfather homesteaded it in the 1940s. Growing up we had a 50 cow conventional dairy like so many other farms in the state at the time and so many other of my neighbors. We had five neighbors on this road. One of them was my Grandparents. Two others were 50 cow dairy farmers like our selves; Linus Risch and Lenny Becker. Our farms were very similar in scale and acreage, but all slightly distinct with our own little honed skills, priorities and innovations. We observed each other and helped one another.

Our biggest tractor was a Deutz 8006. An 80 horse tractor that did the plowing, tillage, chopping and other heavy lifting. My dad liked Deutzs for their utility and fuel efficiency. With precise German engineering and the (oil crisis) inspired innovation of the air-cooled engine you could do all the work of a John Deere or a Ford with 2/3rds the fuel. It was also more affordable. Some people call it a poor man's John Deere, I call it a smart man's John Deere. A mile down the road Linus Risch had a big red International 966 that was the 84 hp beast of his farm. It was a more common tractor on the American Landscape with big rear tires and a powerful axel with a lot of torque and snort. Lenny had a 90 horse Ford. When it came time to pump our manure pits we would hire a local service to come around with their tankers and do the spreading in one clean day. The manure spreading service snorted in the yard with 1066 internationals with maybe even a 1466, which seemed like the biggest tractors around those days. To make the

job more efficient and be on the scene to make sure the manure was put where it was supposed to, My dad joined the spreading. Another neighbor, Tony Eckert, had his own smaller manure tanker 3 miles away. Tony would let us use the tanker which we would run with our big Deutz and Linus would let us use his big red international (not quite as big as the 1066s but big enough to run the pump with a six inch pipe that filled the tankers with liquid manure lickity shit.) That was my job, it was so interesting and empowering to be on another big tractor and see its features and how it worked. When Linus, or Lenny or Tony needed to pump their pits our Big Deutz when down the road to run the pump and save them some of the cost of the service and get the job done that much faster. (Linus' son Kenny and Tony's son Nathan were some of my boyhood friends.) If a tractor went down or was having issues on one farm the neighbor only had to come in the yard with a little small talk and a mild look of concern on their face and our tractor would be there to get their hay made. The Big Deutz always came back with a full tank of gas.

It was a community. One based on a common experience that cut across political and religious lines that reinforced itself with cooperation, empathy, and mutual support. In the 20s 30s and 40s my grandparents operated their 20 or 30 cow dairies with an even greater degree of cooperation. The neighborhood had but one or two tractors or one plow or one thresher (combine). Come harvest time the thresher would move around the neighborhood and a crew of able bodied men and boys would bring the neighborhood's harvest in together. As technological regimes have continued to scale up and capitalist consolidation sticks its tentacles into every crevice of every market on the planet, the farm crisis deepened, farms were lost and community's like ours have thinned and unraveled quite a bit. We sold our cows and rented the land. Linus and Lenny sold their farms to Amish Farmers one of which just bailed and sold out to the biggest farmer in Athens who just cash crops the land. Needless to say I have a bitter populist taste in my mouth for the domination of consolidation and the motives of an ever increasing scale of technology (I don't always think it is motivated by the lessening of human toil and suffering.) I wasn't rushing to sell any commodities, but I loved my farm, and the experience of the community thresher was one of the inspirations for that love.

When I came back to the farm in 2006 my parents had hung onto the land. They are and continue to be the main source of support I have on the farm. But when I needed to take some beef to the butcher Tony Eckert was there with his cattle trailer and my plain clothed neighbor Andrew Berry lets me use his manure spreader every spring to haul out my bedding pack (Manure). He's not interested in my rusty old Deutz but I always give him a ham. It would not be possible to have this farm without intergenerational and community support.

In 2013, we had just got pizza on the farm going and were a stop on a Slow Food Marathon County tour of local farms. A young couple came to the farm to check it out. I sat down to have a glass of wine with them and they told me that they were originally from Wausau, were moving back to the area, and wanted to start a CSA. Over the next couple of months Kat and I got to know Stacey and Tenzin Botsford and recruited them to buy land for their farm nearby. When Tenzin asked me, "Don't you think it would be awkward to have two farms of a very similar nature so close together?" I responded: "2 farms; One set of equipment; endless opportunities for cooperation and collaboration!" My mom and dad, personally aware of the potential of local food and seeing the promise in this young couple sold them a forty, Red Door Family Farm was born and the Community Thresher was reincarnated. They are more than neighbors, more than fellow farmers. They are some of our best friends. We borrow and lend equipment, commiserate and learn from each other's challenges, help out with projects, observe each other's innovations, and share in each other's joys. My daughter Maple is six months younger than their daughter Leona and 18 months older than their daughter Iris. "We're BFFs" according to Maple and just a stroll through the woods away. When their hoopouses blew down in heavy winds we helped mobilize the cleanup and drove posts for the new ones. They were there for us through the pain and messiness of our divorce. When they needed to buy their farm's tractor they asked us for input. It just so happened I found an 8006 Deutz for sale on Craigslist. The Big Deutz was coming home, this time with 4 wheel drive and a cab. Last night, after walking through the woods to watch our kids play and debrief our CSA boxes with a bottle of wine Stacy and Tenzin lamented that their big Deutz had finally died this past spring after 14,000 hours. I might miss it more than they do as I drove it half the time. When they expressed concern that they didn't have a production tractor I simply said, "We have tractors." When I whined about the pace of my cucumbers they sent me home with six bushels of theirs for the CSA box. I was again reminded of the value of cooperation, the meaning of friendship and the power of the community thresher. The family farm thrives because of it.