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We will still be harvesting next week – (which will be the last week)

Still time to get your Preseason signup in for 2014. We are still short about 60 signups from what we usually have, so if you want to do it, now's the time! We use that money to buy supplies for next season, and I start spending money in November already. What happens if you don't sign up now? We will be sending out both an e-letter and a postal letter during the months of Jan-Feb to coax people to start signing up. It is important that I have a pretty clear idea of how many people we need to grow for, as we start planting flats of seedlings in the greenhouse the first week of March.

Winter share signups for November going on now. Please try your best to get me your signup form by Oct 22nd. Postdated checks are fine if you need to- I have to get the form though, as there is a lot of planning that has to happen between then and the first week of November.

Another update on the credit card issue as affects farmers. Other farmers and I are discussing the new problem involving credit – we are discovering that suppliers that we use for farm supplies, fertilizers, seeds, etc, etc, are no longer taking credit cards in payment of their wholesale accounts as they are trying desperately to cut expenses. So farmers now have to have a large amount of cash on hand to pay for everything they will need for next season. Fortunately, our farm has always done that, as I mentioned in the budget report in last week's newsletter.

Leeks and potatoes! Wonderful combination – thinking it's time to make some leek and potato soup. If you want "my" recipe, it is on the website recipe file. Simply click on "recipes" page, then choose "Leeks" from the drop-down menu.

Farms for Life news: first, we want to thank everyone who has supported this great non-profit. 2013 was a record year, distributing free fresh produce from 5 local farms to over 13 local agencies that help kids and families. How much? Picture around 20 tons for this year! (to visualize, it would take 40 half-ton pickup trucks to move all that food.) That's enough for vegetables in meals to over 75,000 people. If you wish to make a year- end donation, that would be great, as we are building our budget for next year. To donate, go to www.farms4life.org or drop off at the farm. Farms for Life is registered with **Microsoft Gift Match Fund**.

Board members needed for both Roots of Our Times and Farms for Life. If you want more info, email me at the address on the newsletter heading.

The fields are looking pretty empty now – but are they? Ah-ha! We can't see it, but there is an army at work for us. How do plants take up nutrients from the soil? They require the help of creatures like bacteria, fungi, worms and insects to break down the soil so that plants can use the nutrients. Basically like our own digestive system does. Estimates say there is an average of 50 **million** of things like worms and insects, and 50 **billion** bacteria per **teaspoon!** (Unfortunately, chemical farming destroys most of these helpful creatures)

They are working hard to process the soil, make it healthy, and enable the plants that we use to feed ourselves to thrive. **And guess what?** As long as I've been digging around in the soil, I have never noticed armies of nematodes doing battle with the earthworms, territorial disputes between centipedes and beetles, or little puffs of soil bombs coming up from the soil. The nightcrawlers do not feel they should "own" more territory or have more status because they are "management", nor do they withhold their work for the common good to gain political power, and the bacterias do not try to overrun the earthworms because they outnumber them. They also do not withhold the bounty that they have helped to create from those who are impoverished.

My human self, looking at all that from my human instinct that I can control what happens, becomes humbled. Because my higher-life-form self cannot do what they do, and without them, could not live. More later-