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**Dear Members: Reminder: CSA and Fruit share payments were due on the 15<sup>th</sup> July 23 '14**

**ALERT:** No picking squash or pumpkin blossoms allowed for any reason. Adults do not pick out of kids garden! (unless you have kids with you and are helping them)

**SECURITY: There has been three car thefts in our parking lot recently.** Two were from unlocked cars, the last one late Saturday afternoon we from a locked car, person broke in through a window and stole a woman's purse. Do not leave valuables in plain view, and keep your vehicle locked.

**CHILD SAFETY:** Several times we have seen children left either in the store or out in the gazebo play area while their parents are elsewhere. Fortunately, we have never had incidents of molestation or kidnapping, but it can happen in a few seconds! Keep your kids in sight at all times and be aware of your surroundings.

**BASIL! Second basil house is open** and the first one still has lots of basil. **Time to make pesto! Please pick only up to 4 cups at a time in any given week, and pick the larger quantities from the older basil house.** This is the best time of the year for that as basil is in its best flavor. Lots of folks wait till end of Aug or Sept and then are disappointed when the basil gets hit by powdery mildew. This is a normal occurrence, and **happens suddenly without warning.** Last year it came early around the third week of August and so many members were very disappointed – **so take warning** – make plans to make a batch of two each week for your freezer. **Drop site folks-** this is a good time to come to the farm – your own private park just 30 minutes away!

**FLOWERS: Zinnias** are blooming like mad now, and the sunflowers are starting. You can pick up to 20 stems of zinnias now (will let you know if that changes) **Hint:** if you walk a little further up the zinnia beds, you will see the "Zowie" zinnias, a new variety this year. Bright orange variegated colors, they are beautiful and almost glow when in a vase. Partner with the yellow ones that are next to them. Thanks to all members for such careful picking which has resulted in lots of secondary blossoms! For the **Sunflowers**, since there are not as many, just take 2 or three stems.

**IN THE SHARES: Beans-** yay! This week are wax beans, next week green beans. We should get 2 weeks' worth off the bush beans, then it'll be a little wait for the pole beans to kick in. As it seems like it always does at bean picking time, it's rainy. So please excuse any dirt on the beans – wash and pat dry when you get them home. (as you should do with any produce anyway)

**Walking the Farm:** Try to spend some time exploring. Crops in various stages of growth are interesting. It seems like another world when you get towards the back of the property- spend some time looking and breathing! There is a path up to the Burke Gilman trail back there too. If you haven't been over to crops on the other side of the ditch, check it out. All of the winter squash (4 varieties) is over there, as well as the corn. **Corn--you gotta go look at it!**

See reverse side for interesting verbiage and pictures of corn development!

More later-

I think that the growth process of corn is my favorite of all the crops, because what happens to produce that ear of corn is so visible and dramatic. First there is just the stalk and leaves, then another stem starts growing up from the middle, called a tassel (see picture on the left). At the same time, a little whorl of leaves starts forming midway up the stalk (see picture on the right).



Inside is the beginning of the cob. Those leaves end up forming the "husk" around the corn. The cob sends up shiny threads called "silks", as the cob enlarges and forms the "ear". These silks grow until they stick up through the top of the ear. Each place where a silk develops from the cob is a place where there will be a kernel of corn. So each potential kernel has its own silk. **Each silk must be pollinated** to form that corn kernel! That's where the tassel comes in. As the tassel develops at the top of the corn stalk, it forms little things that look sort of like seeds, but are really filled with pollen. The pollen is released at just the right time to fall on the silks. (The pollen is the sweet smell you will notice.) If one silk does not get pollinated, there will be an empty spot on the cob with no kernel.

The following pictures were taken just 10 days after the first ones. See how in just that short time, the tassel is starting to shed pollen and the corn ears are developing with silks coming out of the top to receive the pollen. **Go look at it!**



To find the corn, walk past the flowers on the north driveway to our work area, walk a right turn over to the other fields. You will see the corn back by the white fencing. Also in those fields are the summer squash and all the winter squash. Some of the winter squash is setting little squashes now, if you peer into the plants you can see that. So no picking of blossoms – even the male ones (hey- the guys count too!) Bees need all the pollen load they can carry to fertilize the female blossoms, and any farmer will tell you that not having enough male flowers will cut down on the number of squash or pumpkins in a patch.

The other plants in some of the fields is buckwheat, used as a cover crop to enrich the soil. Soon it will have beautiful blue blossoms.