

Smith's Acres IIc

Volume V, Issue II

Summer 2009

## Farmer Joe's Dirt

### A big bunch of thanks from Teri & Joe

Joe and I would like to thank all of our loyal customers for giving us such a great spring season. It's always great fun seeing familiar faces after a long and dreary winter. I'd also like to thank all of you that found us for the first time this spring. Hopefully, we have helped to brighten your spring and summer with some colorful, healthy plants. Please stop in on a regular basis. We continue to bring in fresh plant material all season long, and Farmer Joe's veggies are starting to appear! Fresh-from-the-farm corn, tomatoes, squash, beans, and much more- it should be easy to eat healthy this summer!

We'd also like to thank our awesome staff, without whom, we never could have done it. Notice I didn't say "Veggie Girls"? Although most of the faces you see at the shop do belong to our Veggie Girls, there is a full crew that works at the farm planting and harvesting

and we give them a big thanks for all their hard work. Without Marta and the farm crew, we'd have a lot less flowers and produce to offer!

There have been some changes at the shop this year. Jen's working a few more hours a week (How much longer until Ewan goes to school?). Kara is working a few less hours - Mia is growing like a weed and she doesn't want to miss a minute of it. Debbe has taken a full time job over at the Old Lyme Country Club, but still pops in on Saturdays to get her plant and people "fix". Karen, although working fulltime in the ER at St. Raphael's, helps us a few days a week (and to help save for the down payment of her first house!). Emma is helping on the register a couple of days a week. Kathie is here a bit, too, in between having fun with her cute grandkids. Tracey is the new kid on the block. An avid gardener, and mother of three,

she has boundless energy and loves getting into projects with Robin "the Paint Queen". Christine finished her first year of college - and came home just in time for the Mother's Day rush! Kirsten is juggling a couple of shifts over at Dock & Dine, handling the bookkeeping for me, and helping around the shop. And some of you may have been lucky enough to see Danielle, Anita, and Linda who pitched in on a couple of the wicked busy weekends! And last but not least, TJ - well, it's not easy putting up with a gaggle of women, but he seems to manage it nicely, and he definitely moves his share of heavy stuff for us (with or without the purple forklift!).



*Farmer Joe & Teri are very pleased to announce the engagement of their daughter Kirsten to Alex Fatone (who made big points in asking Joe for his little girl's hand!). They are planning a fall 2010 wedding at the family farm.*

*Stop by and check out Kirsten's shiny engagement bauble and wish her congratulations!!!*



### Calling all Gardenaholics!

How would you like to meet P. Allen Smith - the renowned garden expert and TV personality? Well, we're planning a bus trip on August 7<sup>th</sup> up to Loudon New Hampshire

to visit Pleasant View Gardens. Pleasant View is the grower that we purchase most of our Proven Winner starter plants. They have an amazing facility and they have an open house for the public for one day only. I have been going up for the past 5 years with a group of "Garden Girls" and it's fantastic. There are guest speakers, trial gardens, and an awesome lunch. I get to see the new plants that will be introduced the next year, and sometimes get to vote on which plant I like better than another. It's a great time - and always seems to be great weather (I probably just jinxed this trip).

**Loads of info - beautiful plants - great food. What could be better than that?**

Linda Turner (former Veggie Girl and owner of Plantasia) and I will be taking a busload of *gardenaholics* up to New Hampshire for the day. Everyone will get a T-shirt and goody bag to bring home. There will be some raffle prizes on the bus. And time permitting, we will also stop at a great garden center not far from Pleasant View. Cole's Garden Center in Concord has been voted the best garden center in New Hampshire. All this for the bargain price of \$40 per person. Seats are limited, and **must be paid for in advance**. Please contact either myself at [Jsmith5@snet.net](mailto:Jsmith5@snet.net) or Linda at [www.plantasiact.com](http://www.plantasiact.com).

## Phytophthora Happens by TJ Sullivan

Truth is, I was supposed to turn in an article about composting. I claim "the dogs ate it". In the mean time, something else of important has come up. **Local extension services are warning that conditions are ripe for a severe outbreak of Late Blight**, a fungal disease (Phytophthora) that is highly infectious and devastating to tomato and potato crops both in the home garden, and on commercial farms. Late Blight was the cause of the infamous Irish Potato Famine in the

1840's.

When weather is wet and cold, as it has certainly been this year, conditions are right for spores to be produced rapidly, and are spread by wind and splashing. Be on the look out for brown lesions on stems, and white fungal growth as well as olive-green to brown spots on leaves.

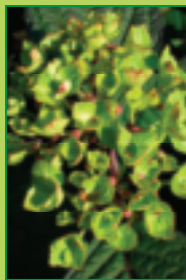
The bad news is that there aren't many good control measures. Gardeners and farmers alike can use a fungicide containing chlorothalonil BEFORE symptoms appear. Unfortunately, there

are no organic fungicides that are effective. Infected plants should be removed, put into sealed plastic bags and disposed of. This is not stuff to put in your compost pile!

*Time to so the "sunny-weather-dance"!!*

## Discover the new City Line Hydrangeas by Kirsten Smith

The entire Veggie Gang is in love with hydrangeas, and are excited about these new little cute European varieties called the City Line Series: Berlin, Paris, Vienna, and Venice. All grow to only about two feet so they're great for people with not a lot of room to garden. They are also great container plants (although they cannot be over-wintered that way). All sport large showy blooms, and are easy to grow. Another nice hy-



Smith's Acres 2009

**\$5 off  
any  
Hydrangea!**

(so many gorgeous varieties- which will you choose?)

Not to be combined with any other offer Valid July 2009 only

You are not alone if:

- Your butterfly bush is pitiful and weak this year.
  - Voles ate all your hostas. (They are the worst!)
- Your vegetable garden got off to a slow start (TOO cold this spring!)
- You had to replant your basil repeatedly!
- You're being grossed out by slugs (Try Sluggo!)
- You've noticed A LOT of rabbits & chipmunks! (Try Deer Solution!)

## Our Famous Truck: Before & After '09

**Speaking of which, don't forget to use your Truck Bucks the whole month of August for up to 50% off any \* purchase!**



**\*(excludes consignment items. In stock. Off regular price. Truck Bucks from previous years honored.)**



Smith's Acres 2009

## Make Your Own Coupon!

# 25% off any one regular price item

Offer good for July, 2009 only, not to be combined with any other offer. In stock items only. Excludes consignment items.

*Is summer here YET??!!! I don't know about this weather... but yes, cut flowers are coming soon to Smith's Acres!*

*My favorite cut flower is Celosia- huge and so colorful- they look great in any arrangement. This year, I've been busy at home with baby Mia, and my 7 year old son Houston, but I made sure to stick in some celosia in my pots. Houston likes the Celosias that "look like brains" - he loves to cut those and make arrangements for the living room.*

*I like the big ones Marta grows at the farm. They are great for drying, and work well in dried flower wreaths or any dried flower craft project. When you stop by the shop this summer, be sure to check out my bouquets that are perfect for dressing up the house for weekend company.*

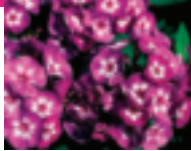
*Enjoy your summer and stay cool! -Kara McBride*

## The Gris. Bros. Favorite Summer Perennials

There really are an awful lot of fantastic plants for summer color- it is hard to say what we like best. So we asked our favorite perennial grower what they were excited about for this summer.

For sunny gardens, Matt and Martin recommend: 'Indian Summer' Black-eyed Susan, Tiger lilies (gorgeous orange really provides "pop" in the garden), 'Munstead' Sedum, a new dark red flowering variety, 'Fatal Attraction' and 'Harvest Moon' Purple coneflowers (can never have too many of these in the garden) 'Laura' garden Phlox (stunning!), and the late blooming and weird Blackberry lily.

For gardens with more shade, don't despair: there are some colorful perennials after all! Try 'Guacamole' Hosta- so gorgeous, one of the Veggie Gangs favorites, 'Mocha' Coralbells, 'Ghost' Lady Fern, and Aconitum. 'Jack Frost' Brunnera is a spring bloomer, but has stunning summer foliage.



We all have noticed color "holes" in our gardens, and summer is a fine time to make additions of color, just remember to give newly planted perennials extra water while they are establishing roots. And wait to divide things until the cooler weather of fall has returned.



*Perennial-Growing-Gurus Matt & Martin go GA-GA for these summer beauties!*



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## Maintenance Free Gardening by Jen McMahon

HAHAHA! Got you there. Here's the thing: we Americans kind of have this mind set that there's an "easy button" for everything- magic diet pills that make you look fabulous in a bikini with no real effort are just one example. **Deep down I think we all realize that everything in life worth having requires work:** great relationships, nice kids, pretty houses, enviable figures, and yes, gorgeous gardens. I will tell you that I've been gardening for too many years to admit too, but find that the routine maintenance that my garden needs really isn't that big of a deal. And I LIKE DOING IT! (Not that weird. Really.)

Here's some tips for keeping your garden looking great:

- 1) Every spring, do a clean up- trim browned foliage, prune things for shape, re-dig an edge to your beds, then add all this stuff to your compost pile. Apply some slow

release fertilizer- I like Plant tone.

Put down a fresh layer of compost

and mulch (mulch breaks down, which is good for your soil, but to keep weeds down and water in, this is an annual task).

This is an ideal time to divide things and move things around, especially if you're starting a new bed, or want to trade flowers with a friend.

- 2) During the growing season, I like to keep on top of things by checking the gardens for weeds, being careful to not pull up any free-bee seedlings. I also always cut off dead flowers because it promotes more blooms. Watering deeply during the hot months is also important, and is essential to newly planted plants to

get established.

3) When fall comes, I like to clean things up as they get tired looking and really add to my compost pile: composting is so important- it's a free source of nutrition for your gardens and a great way to waste less. This is a great time to add plants to any

holes you may have had, or divide and move things around (again).

Honestly, if I spend an hour a week on these tasks, it's a lot. Once you have down enough mulch and your plants start to mature, there really isn't that much to do but sit back and enjoy! I like to tell myself that if I work at it hard enough, someday it will count for enough exercise that I will be that annoying girl in the bikini (ok, maybe not). **GARDENING IS WORTH THE WORK!**

