

Lone Willow Ranch  
June 19, 2008  
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Hi Everyone,

We welcomed 2 interns recently, Michelle from New York and Emily from Boston They are very nice young ladies. We all have a very strong common interest just as we do with you, our CSA members; it is that we care about the food they put in our bodies and care about the environment that we get our food from. We are going to have a great summer with them. Michelle is the first to arrive last week, she wrote a small article about her beginnings at the ranch.

Today marks the 1 week anniversary of beginning my internship here at Lone Willow Ranch. I came from New York City, a place wholly unacquainted with country life. As you could imagine, the initial adjustment to life in the Central Valley was rather hard. As a (mostly) life-long New Yorker, I'm always in a rush, running around from place to place without looking around me. But being here at Lone Willow already has taught me that on the farm, this mentality must change in order to be successful. I have had to slow my pace by an eighth; you see, if I keep moving so quickly, I may cut the squash too shallow and render it undeliverable. I've had to pay attention more closely to the things I interact with; if I leave a ripe apricot on the tree, it would likely be rotten in two days. A mere one week on the farm has turned a fast-paced crazywoman into a slower, more deliberate farmhand.

In addition to the life lessons I have learned, simply being present in the abundance of so much beautiful organic food has been truly refreshing. When I look out the window, I see squash flowers peeking out from underneath giant green leaves. I see cucumbers, right next to artichokes, right next to onions. When I walk in my backyard I pass through oregano and sage and parsley, and a little ways up the road are bushes upon bushes of lavender literally buzzing from the presence of bees hiding within. If I want to go for a little bit of a walk, I pass bright orange apricot trees with tender, juicy fruit weighing down their branches. And over my left-hand shoulder I see the very beginning an entire garden full of peppers. They haven't come in yet, but the little green leaves poking through the dirt flirt with us each and every day.

So far, the farm has been good to me. I look forward to what's in store for me for the rest of the summer. Not just the coming of melons and sweet corn, but the inevitable life lessons that this experience will provide.

#### This Week's Box

We have potatoes, red lettuce, carrots, apricots, artichokes, garlic, green onion, red onion, celery, squash, cucumbers, cabbage, herbs and lavender. The artichokes are getting a little tough, what we do is remove the outside leafs and eat the heart and the tender inside leafs. They do not require long cooking time. They are growing, and growing and growing! They will be gone soon so please enjoy.

#### Farm Report

It takes a lot of work and cooperation to be able to provide you with the large varieties of organic mixed fruits and vegetables. We have Jesus that is John right hand, Jesus has been with us for about 6 years. He knows it all, a really good hard working young man. Next we have Ivan. Ivan started with us about 3 years ago. He will be a senior at Firebaugh High this year, he works with us all summer long and part time when in school. He is active with sport and manages to get good grades. Great kid. Next, we have Laura; she is my daughter and will be a senior at Dos Palos High. Laura and her softball team won League championship this year. Right after softball ended she was ready to start making deliveries and has started learning the bookkeeping. A Big help for us. Laura wants to go to college in LA or SF once she graduates from High School majoring in business. Next we have Will. Will, is going to be a senior at San Joaquin Memorial in Fresno this year. Will is active in sports and is a big help on the farm with irrigation, tractor work, packing and delivering produce. Will takes care of Fresno and Madera orders. Will is a big help and we hope he will want to continue with his life lesson of farming once he enters into college. The youngest of all is Anna will be in 7<sup>th</sup> grade. Anna has not been put to specific task yet but she is a big help with almost everything. She is included in everything and is always willing to help, if it is planting seed or painting the intern house she is always there with a smile on her face This year we will have added 3 interns and by doing this we are hoping to stimulate and encourage all individual to be all that they can be and hopefully be able to use what we have taught.

We are looking forward to farm day July 20<sup>th</sup>. We are inviting everyone to come to the ranch to see where and how your produce is grown. We are planning on a simple pot luck lunch with some great fresh produce and burgers. If you would like to bring a dish please let us know. We are going to make ice cream, have a melon tasting, a tomato tasting, some wine. Just a nice relaxing day. We hope everyone comes out. More information will come later.

Until next week ,

Cheers,

Farmer John & Shelby