



# The Farm at Miller's Crossing

Week of August 3rd 2009

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## **Farm Report August 2009—**

As I'm sure you all know, last week we received a lot of rain. Over the course of a week the farm had over 8 inches of rain fall, most came on Wednesday night and Friday afternoon.

We have fields on our farm which lie right next to the Ockawamack Creek. Because of its water retention qualities and close proximity to the stream, we often focus our summer crops in this ground. In a "normal" year when the summer is hot and dry, potatoes, celery, celeriac, leeks, brussel sprouts and cabbage would thrive in this soil, this year they have not.

After two months of frequent rains and the final 8 inches last week, this field went under water completely. In a neighboring farmer's 87 years this had never happened. Our lovely stream turned into a powerful brown river, broke its' banks, and did major damage. Because the ground was so saturated, the water had nowhere to go, so it just sat there...

Plants need air to breathe. By Monday the worst of the standing water had retreated, but not before it drowned about 15% of this field. All of the crops in the low points of our field perished, and those parts that were actually flooded by the moving water of the stream are covered with debris and still too wet to work.

Mourning any loss is a procession of emotions; first there is shock and disbelief, followed by despair and anger, and then hopefully acceptance and moving on.

The crops in those sections of the field that were under water for 24 hours or more are gone. Those parts that drained more quickly can recover, assuming that we do not continue to receive more rain. A big part of the acceptance of these facts is that there is simply nothing you can do about this problem. Many farmers around us were hit by this flooding, and we will all suffer financially from it.

At least we are not alone...

The majority of our cropland is not near the stream, and has done fine throughout this weather.

Between the early attack of late blight which destroyed our precious tomato crop and now this flooding, you would think that we would be really hurting. However, growing food for people means that we grow a great diversity of crops. Though you will miss our typical quantities of tomatoes, brussel sprouts celery and celeriac crops this year; you can be assured that you will receive the full value of your investment in our farm

We benefit in many ways from this diversity. Beets, carrots, kale, peppers, eggplant, potatoes, strawberries, and onions among others look great. We are in the process of planting and sowing our fall crops such as napa cabbage, bok choy, radish, turnips, spinach, and all sorts of interesting cooking greens. So, not all is lost, in fact, in moments like these we truly appreciate the diversity of our farming enterprise, and of course you, our members.

Sincerely, Chris & Katie

PS. To check out some photos and a short video of the flooding, go check out our blog.

