

**DIVERSITY IS KEY:
WHOLE FARM
PLANNING FOR THE
SEASONS**

JULIE VAUGHN—ROCKY GLADE FARM





DIVERSITY:

- *State of being diverse
- *Unlikeness
- *Variety
- *Multiformity
- *Variation
- *Contrast
- *Assortment
- *Mixed Bag
- *Various





ROCKY GLADE FARM TEAM





WHO'S ON YOUR TEAM?

What do you want? Who do you have to help you? What skills/needs does your team have? What are your bottlenecks? What are your goals short term? What are your long term goals? Why do you get up in the morning?



GETTING THE MOST OUT OF YOUR TEAM



- Recognize skills/weaknesses/interests
- Realize that new skills will come with increased age/experience
- YOU Don't have to do EVERYTHING (I'm talking to myself)
- *Jim: Materials Handling*
- *Julie: Marketing Division*
- Somebody has to be in CHARGE of the job!!



WHY WE CHOOSE DIVERSITY ON OUR FARM...

Pros

- We can be more responsive to weather/timing/illnesses—it's like a built in back up plan.
- Various jobs for all skills and ages (OLD and young)
- Different crops do better with different growing methods.
- Makes the most of every plant, in every season—at least that's the goal.
- Balances income year round
- Disaster protection
- Allows us to dream/try new techniques

Cons

- Takes management to put in place
- Not everything will be “uniform”
- Takes energy to put in motion.
- Possibly takes capital to invest/get started
- Won't be perfect. Realize now perfection is not the goal.
- Must follow the “RULES” or diversity won't work for you.



GROWING FACTS AT RGF

- Limited time and labor
- Healthy crops essential
- No spray if possible
- Cover crops used for weed control and to feed soil
- Mix of direct seeded and hand transplanted crops
- Grass-fed Beef
- Bees for Honey Production/pollination



- **Covered growing:**
- 4 season unheated greenhouse structures 3 (30x145) plus 8 Caterpillar tunnels 100ft each
- **Uncovered growing:**
- Mechanically transplanted field crops (tractor single cultivated rows)
- Permanent Raised beds, Tarps for weed control and bed prep



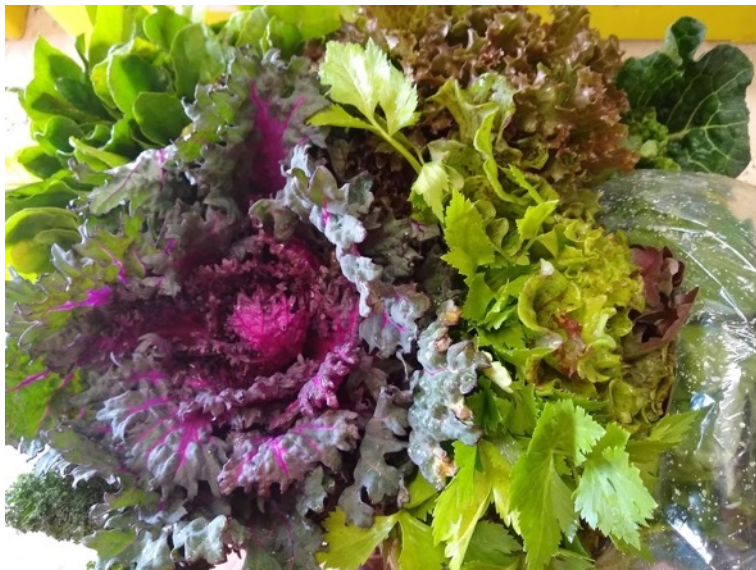






RGF MARKETING DIVERSITY

- Year round sales to restaurants
- Year round CSA (Fall, FULL, Summer)
- Custom Grass-fed Freezer Beef
- Strawberries in Spring
- Online Store Sales with pickup on farm same day as CSA pickups.



Tips:

Think about your income streams and make sure there are no feast or famine points.

Try to keep people interested in your farm from one part of the season to the next.

Realize that somewhere in there you have to take a break. You can't grow everything everyone wants you to grow.



GETTING THE MOST OUT OF YOUR CROPS

- Think about unique ways to use the whole plant from beginning to end of life.
 - Realize not always possible to maximize each part—selling one way may take away from later sales
 - Realize could be way to salvage a crop that isn't going to “make”
 - Be ready to do research in order to sell it. Subscribe to a cheffy/upscale magazine (ugh...I know)
- Broccoli
 - Sell “leaves” as “broccoli greens” as it is maturing
 - Full size heads
 - Side shoots after heading (pick right varieties)
 - Rapini in spring?
 - Choose wide range of maturity dates so you can plant once and keep harvesting “broccoli” for multiple weeks/months
 - Push the seasons. We plant broccoli when planting broccoli isn't cool.
 - Realize many things will pass as “broccoli” to multiple customers.



**Stem Broccoli, Side shoots
Can bunch or sell by the pound**



Gailan/Chinese Broccoli



Sprouting Broccoli



Broccoli leaf bunches



**Happy Rich
Gailan x kale
Can bunch florets
with leaves**





GETTING THE MOST OUT OF YOUR CROPS

▪ Peppers

- This is our summer cash flow crop
 - Push them early and late
- Grow variety, but keep in mind your harvesting team
- Ask chefs what they want...they will tell you...beware of “we’ll buy all you can grow”
- Think about drying peppers for winter sales
- Green Peppers for CSA on both ends?
- Pepper leaves/Flowers?/whole plant at ripping?
- Make your own mixes/custom mixes for chefs





Fresh Chimayo



Dried Chimayo

Pepperonata Mix for Restaurant



Jimmy Nardello



Numex Suave Orange



All the marconis



GETTING THE MOST OUT OF YOUR CROPS

▪ Winter Squash

- We don't do summer squash
- Grow for NOW sales as well as later—blossoms/spaghetti/delicata/stems?
- Disease package is how I choose what's possible
 - Plant in maturity date groupings
- For us sales from August to February
 - CSA insurance crop
 - Look for “excellent storage”
 - Lots of variety within the variety.
- Allows flexible marketing for when customers are “ready” for it.





GETTING THE MOST OUT OF YOUR CROP

▪ Radishes

- Cha-ching
 - Easy to replant small beds and spaces. Very quick crops for CSA.
- Multiple plantings of daikon/storage radishes in fall/winter. Store well in cooler.
- Crop to sell even on land you are trying to improve
- Still haven't found a use for the greens...

▪ Lettuces/Greens

- We don't grow mixes, but we sell mixes
- ask chefs, but grow what works for you
 - I'm a sucker for pelleted
- Can tuck in beside almost anything and extend season/bring value to bed space
- Excellent demand 365 days a year for all of our marketing plans.





DARE TO BE DIFFERENT



Grow out of season

Grow weird things

Plan to have things when no one else does

Realize that means you may have to sacrifice another season (when do I have the least competition?)

You will fail.

You will succeed—celebrate!

If you don't try, you'll never know.

Look for easy (er) ways to have the HOT items. (days to maturity, variety within same crop)



WHAT IF...

Today is the best it gets?
Today matters you don't get it back

Don't live for...when I _____
then I'll _____.

Take care of the little things and the
big things will take care of
themselves...

*Give thanks to the Lord for He is good. His
faithful love endures forever. 1 Chronicles
16:34*



- *Although most of us are not inclined to share our stories by putting pen to paper...doing what we do, doing what we can is ENOUGH. Because if we are doing the right thing, even in a small way, we are making things BETTER, as we live our own adventures and create our own stories. English Horse Farmer*



