



# *Spruce Cottage Farm's*

## *Periodic Newsletter*

*January 25<sup>th</sup>, 2016*

*Greetings Gardeners,*

A very Happy New Year to all of you! May the coming year be blessed with the perfect amount of sunshine, rain and ripe tomatoes. Our lovely mild winter this year has been wonderful for skiing and our snow level is satisfactory too - all in all a good omen of the season to come.

The days are becoming discernibly longer and my thoughts are turning to seeds and visions of the seedlings and garden to come. As my energy levels rise in conjunction with the lengthening days, the seed catalogues start arriving in the mail. Perfect timing! After resting over the winter, I'm ready for another season of sowing, seedlings, sunshine and shovels.

Seed catalogues are a font of information; from germination requirements to the timing for direct seeding to the best place to grow your chosen variety. Don't forget to look for the Safe Seed Pledge, usually near the beginning of the catalogue. This ensures you are supporting a seed company that does not knowingly buy or sell genetically engineered seeds. Given that the long-term

consequences of genetically engineered seeds are unknown, I choose to support seed companies that take the Safe Seed Pledge.

I will be growing a full complement of vegetable, flower and herb starts this season - watch for my plant list and order form in the next Echo. In addition to being able to order your plants pre-season, the nursery will be open for retail sales in May and June, along with plants and produce at the Junction Community Market. Posters announcing the opening weekend will go up in April!

I've been thinking of food security and sustainability over the winter. Our dropping dollar and the news of produce price-increases in the grocery stores makes me thankful that I have the knowledge which allows me to grow food for myself and others. Living in the Yukon, the reality of not having easy access to fresh food is a fact of life - the highway closure of a couple years ago brought this point home for many. There are some crops that are very easy to grow: lettuce, kale and radish come to mind, along with peas and green onions. That is a salad right there! All of these crops do well in our climate and over our long summer. A large pot, some good quality potting soil, a naturally-sourced liquid fertilizer, the plants and water is all you need to have fresh salad all summer and into the fall. I encourage everyone to try a salad pot and please don't hesitate to ask if you need help or advice on getting started.

In growing harmony,

Jolene Billwiller

~ Gardening Maven ~



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