



Veggies on Wheels



Volume 24 – # 282 NEWSLETTER OF PFENNING'S ORGANIC FOOD BOX May 2, 2022

1760 Erb's Rd. W., St Agatha – (519) 725-4282 – E-mail: store@pfenningsorganic.ca – <https://www.pfenningsorganic.ca/>

"Veggies on Wheels" (edited by Wolfgang W.) generally appears around the beginning of every month.

Dear Pfenning's Food Box Community,

Are we planting already?

Traditionally, May 1st is the starting date for the new season's transplanting activities. In recent years, it was sometimes already warm enough in April to get a head start and take to the fields even before that. However, if you have been paying attention, you know that this spring is nothing like that. It has been far too cold and wet overall for any early planting activities. Planting was in limbo until it warms up sufficiently, which has now ever so gradually been happening – so that this week planting activities are finally under way, officially ringing in this year's growing season. There is an old German farmers' adage which goes something like this: If April is wet and cold, it will fill the barn and barrel (*April kalt und naß füllt Scheuer und Faß*). As they tend to apprehensively and carefully say in German: "Abwarten und Tee trinken" – or *Wait and see, and have some tea*.

Robert's Community Garden

While we are lamenting about the sluggish and chilly ascent to spring, **Robert** – a long-standing customer at Pfenning's Organic & More and resident of St. Agatha – has requested permission to start a community garden on the land behind our Store which, so far, has nothing more to present than some grass and wildflowers. We are more than happy to give Robert and his local gardening project our unrestricted blessing.



As you can see in the action shot here, to get things under way, Robert and his fellow gardeners have taken to first covering a little parcel of land with a tarp, intending to have the grass underneath die off. After a few weeks, they may want to remove the tarp and work the land, meaning to plow it with a rotor tiller – the backyard farmer's plough (*a task to which Almut just recently encouraged me in our own garden*). Ideally, they can add some compost or mulch and work it under, and before long they can give planting a go. By that time, presumably around May/June, temperatures will be warm enough to make up for the late planting start. Robert may have anticipated the delay and will have started some seedlings which will be ready to go in St. Agatha's first community garden as far as we know.

We will keep you updated on Robert's progress as he goes along. Maybe this will inspire one or the other of you to sacrifice part of your well-kept lawn for your own growing initiatives – be it this year or next. Best of success to you, Robert, and to all your helpers from the community! If you live close enough to St. Agatha and would like to participate or create your own little plot next to Robert's, please, contact the Store at (519) 725-4282.

Almut's Greenhouse

While Robert and friends are pioneering their first community garden in St. Agatha, Almut herself has not been idle while whole-heartedly advancing her own long-standing greenhouse project. You can see here that the front (and back) end of the greenhouse with the doors needs to be put in yet, but Almut has already progressed to laying out and installing her planting beds – even using an old battered aquarium from our oldest son Adam's fish period (below) as a mini greenhouse for her seedlings.

Almut enriched our sandy soil with

earth – delivered directly from **Dirt Cheap** (<https://dirtcheap.ca/>), who deliver high-quality soil, mulch or sod for your garden in bulk or in bags – along with compost from the Farm. In the past years, greenhouse operations – such as Slegers, where many of our sprouts come from – have become more and more prevalent, especially in our climate zone and in consideration of the erratic weather patterns that seem to be observed more and more all around. Especially in consideration of the growing importance of local production, greenhouses – such as the one Organic Oasis, one of our main suppliers (north of Stratford), uses to supply us with fresh greens in the colder season – will become increasingly significant for our region. Almut is on the right track!



Get Seeding!

If your own gardening instincts have been tickled, you can still give

it a try – even on a small scale. There are still plenty of garden seeds available (find them in our online **Catalogue** in the **HOME** department under **GARDEN SEEDS**) and it's still not too late, especially since it has been so cold up to now. With warmer temperatures now gradually rolling in, everybody is blissfully playing catch-up these days.

The LOCAL Basket

Although the growing season is now just getting under way, Almut still does a great job filling all our Baskets, but notably the **Local Basket** with an unbelievable variety for this time of the year. At our latest packing session, our daughter Barnhild proudly displays the **Large Local Basket** for the last week of April. You got: Sweet Potatoes, Green Cabbage, English Cucumber, Red Potatoes, Chard, Baby Spinach, Green Kale, Red Pepper, Red Beets and Carrots – all totally local and organic from Ontario, believe it or not. No wonder Barnhild is all smiles.

**Have a merry month of May,
Wolfgang**

