

Newsletter

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April 2013



NEWS - Hungry Gap is here - We always get a gap in the UK between the winter crops finishing and the new seasons first crops coming in but this year it is looking like it might be longer than has been usual due to the extreme weather.

Fortunately we will have lots of lovely salads and tunnel grown greens to see us through.

Funny weather for the time of year ?

If the Government's Chief Science Officer is to be believed then the effects of climate change caused by human activity are here and we will continue to experience more increasingly volatile, unpredictable and extreme weather conditions in years to come.

Its certainly been the coldest March in my 16 year experience of growing in Cornwall. Keveral growers have yet to establish any outdoor crops this year. Its simply been too cold for germination, which has never happened before.

The winter crops are coming to an end over the next 2 weeks and if it wasn't for the polytunnels which are providing the next tranche of crops we would not have anything of our own to give you. We are starting to like plastic (this a bit tongue in cheek) as its nice to be working at 10 degrees rather than 4 or 2 or 0.

Ironically in the Arctic, sea ice reached its maximum extent on February 28 the fifth lowest sea ice winter extent in the past 35 years: nine of the ten smallest recorded maximums have occurred during the last decade



This Month's Grower's Profile - Brian Cavendish,

Brian has spent the last 25 years full or part time growing. He delivers his produce to Keveral and then packs your boxes with Sean and Marion before going home, sometimes he delivers some boxes on

the way back. The morning is filled with cheery banter, philosophy and occasional tea.

Brian, once an antiques dealer, has done several stints as a sheep farmer in the Yorkshire Dales National Park and West Sussex. He then spent 13 years at the Care Farm unit at Ruskin Mill College in Gloucestershire, as the Manager of the 45 acre holding. He's been involved in the box scheme since its rebirth as the Community of Growers 5 years ago

Brian grows biodynamic and organic fruit and vegetables at the market garden at Forest House and on rented land at Skye Grove alongside Kevin Austin another supplier. Both sites are close to Herodsfoot to the West of Looe

At Skygrove Bill and Ben, the working horses provide the power to pull all the horse drawn implements for the row crops, from ploughing to weeding, until they let Brian have a turn with harvesting. They are also an excellent source of rich organic compost, so all in all they certainly earn their keep.



Back at Forest House Brian concentrates on crops that need a more constant care, which he now grows in tunnels (thank you climate change) and smaller plots in the market garden, which is protected by Cornish hedges all around.

At the moment in the garden there is spinach, chard, mizuna, rocket, lettuce and rhubarb. The broad beans are coming on nicely and the propagating area is bursting with flower and vegetable seedlings.

He believes in producing good local food, Biodynamic growing and the benefits of good horse poo.