

# Newsletter

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## March 2017



**Local - Organic - Fresh  
and 20 years old**

**NEWS - New Propagation tunnel completed at Keveral just in time for this seasons sowing.** This time of year we keep an eye on the hedgerows and banks and as the wild plants start to germinate and re-grow from their roots we know it's time to start get plants in the ground.



To get ahead of the outdoor conditions and the new weeds we start seeds off with heat and keep the young plants inside a poly-tunnel to grow on until we can move them outside.

We have just completed the shelves in our new tunnel to take many thousands of small plants in module trays that will grow and be in the boxes in a couple of months.

### **Keveral Community of Growers the Story. Part 2**

We started the box scheme as environmentalists and campaigners and we have always tried to research and understand how to minimise the impact from our products. **The box scheme allows us to get produce to people straight from our fields. So why are some things in still in bags ?**

We have a policy of minimally packaging things if possible. The only things that come in plastic usually are the delicate leaves. This is for a number of reasons.

Leaves go limp very quickly as water evaporates from them and the bag means that they are still good when you get them. Much more energy goes into production and transport than the bag and so the thinking is that it would be pointless if all that was wasted as the leaves were no good when you got them (basically the fine leaves are a thing that is so good when they are just picked and quickly are a lot less good and ideally would be grown by everyone at home.) in the bag they can last for five days or maybe a week, out of the bag they last a day or maybe two.

They get put in a box with other veg that has dirt on it. Because we minimise energy and water use by

not washing everything (spuds, and other roots, etc) so they would get covered in mud which again may cause them to not be used by customers. **A quick reminder here that you should always wash all veg before consuming.**

They are protected against being crushed and thereby damaged and again wasted by the air in the bag.

We have tried to put them in paper bags, and indeed most things we bag go into paper, however wet bags fall apart and don't protect from crushing.

We tried compostable plastic bags but until recently were only available in very large quantities, which didn't get used in time and therefore started to compost before they were used , which was an expensive waste of resources.

Finally - the plastic film is lighter than the equivalent paper bag and therefore takes less energy to move the same number of bags around around, an issue that is often overlooked in the great bag debate

So on balance we have made the call that it is better to ensure the leaves that take a lot of time and energy to grow and move, are not wasted and the impact of the very small amount of plastic is less than the wasted energy otherwise.

The punnets that the coriander and other small leaves sometimes come in are made of PET plastic , exactly the same as milk bottles (and most fizzy drink bottles) and are 100% recyclable so in theory can be recycled again and again.

The boxes are a coated card, which helps them be wiped out and reused, we try to reuse each one as many times as possible. You can help by emptying them when they are delivered, wiping them out and folding them up to return to us. Please don't store your veg in the boxes.

It's not ideal and we are always looking for better ways to do things and welcome your input.