

HASE UPDATES – 2012

Update (July, 2012)

June 26 we harvested 180 heads of tender, tasty baby romaine lettuce. It was the prettiest lettuce I have ever seen– we only found 3 leaves on all the plants with the slightest blemish!

The best yield was from the bed covered with 30% row cover fabric, followed by the greenhouse double layer poly row cover. The lettuce in the uncovered bed was last in yield.

We gave some lettuce to the San Miguel Regional Food Bank and some to a local restaurant. We kept some for ourselves and friends. I must say that romaine made the best Caesar salad I have ever eaten! I also made old fashioned wilted lettuce like my grandma used to make.

Prior to the spring lettuce trial we grew winter greens– spinach, corn salad and kale. We planted them in mid September and harvested them in mid April. We lost the kale due to cutworms and the other two sites lost their kale as well. How wonderful to have that harvest of nutritious home-grown greens early in the season!

From what we learned, we will plant closer together to get a higher yield, we will plant a little earlier to get better growth before winter and we will harvest the corn salad earlier. I enjoyed the corn salad rosettes with a dressing of lemon juice, olive oil and a pinch of salt and pepper.

Similar to the spring trial, we got the best harvest from the winter treatment of a double layer of 30% row cover and diabetalon, followed by the greenhouse double poly and last the uncovered plot. The differences were greater in the winter trial.

We also did a warm season trial last summer. We got the best harvest of green beans from the greenhouse double layer poly cover, followed by the 30% row cover. We got almost no yield from the uncovered bed. Last week we planted a second crop of romaine and will follow that with a repeat of the winter greens.

These trials are part of a three county research project to test growing different crops using different season extension covers. It is most applicable for home gardeners in high altitude, short season areas.

Update (September, 2012)

San Miguel/ West Montrose Counties Colorado State University Extension, together with Teller County CSU Extension and Eagle County CSU Extension have been growing crops using different season extension techniques in raised beds at all locations. Crop yields under polycarbonate covers with automatic vents, and mini-hoops covered with spun-bound polyester are compared to an uncovered bed.

In the summer of 2011 we tested 3 warm season vegetables: green beans, cucumbers and sweet peppers. We got a 25-35 fold increase in yield in green beans grown under season extension covers than in the uncovered bed. The polycarbonate greenhouse cover yielded the best for the warm season crops.

Fall–Winter 2011/2012 we grew ‘Tye’ spinach, ‘Vit’ mache and “ kale" at all three locations. We planted in mid September and harvested in April. This past spring and summer we did two plantings of 3 varieties of romaine lettuces. We harvested 180 heads the first planting and 195 heads the second. The lettuce was donated and sold to local restaurants, the Norwood Farm and Craft Market and two local food banks.

We learned you can harvest tender, sweet, decent sized heads in 8-10 weeks (even in the heat of summer) and that the single row of 30% row cover fabric cover yielded the best. This past week we replanted a repeat of last year’s fall-winter greens trial slightly modifying timing and variety based on what we learned last year. How nice it will be to harvest fresh, nutritious greens in March and April!

For more detailed information, call Yvette Henson at 327-4393 or visit our office at 1120 Summit St. Norwood, CO