

Tombreck Market Garden

Newsletter #11 January 2024

It continued to be tough going with the weather in January. The dry, cold spell was quite enjoyable, with the combination of sun, blue skies and snow always a pleasure, but the back-to-back storms and rain, wind and constant heavy cloud has made motivation hard to come by in the mornings! Planning for the year ahead continues, including finalising the design for our packing shed, and we've started putting in our seed orders, so that gives us something positive to focus on at least.



One outside job has been turning the first bracken compost bays we piled up at the start of last year. They're mostly broken down, but could use a few more months to be fully mature. Because they were high carbon content (ie: mostly brown, fibrous materials, not many greens or much animal manure) this means the decomposition is more fungal than bacterial, doesn't get as hot, and takes longer as a result. We sieved some to add to an empty bed in the polytunnel, which is already looking happier for it.



We've also put in around 90m of willow hedge around the edges of the second and third outside growing areas. This is much easier than the broadleaf hedges we put in previously, which require a lot of ground preparation and protection of the young seedlings. Willow has an incredibly useful ability to form new trees simply from cuttings pushed into the ground, with new roots growing from the buds in contact with the soil. We didn't want them too close to the drainage ditch in the middle of the field as the roots can be a problem when seeking out water, but hopefully come the Spring it will all start to sprout and provide some wind protection for the crops. Then we can coppice it one row at a time and use it for wood chip, charcoal, basketry or ... making more hedges! Thanks to Georgia for providing the cuttings.

Veg boxes are now finished for our first season, and will start up again likely in early June when we have enough variety and quantities to make them up again. We'll be offering three different sizes of box, and looking to expand our customer base in the local area - so please tell your friends! In the meantime remaining produce such as leeks, swede, parsnips, cabbages and winter salads, as well as veg bought in from the organic wholesaler will be available to buy from Tombreck Farm Shop. Make sure you're signed up to receive this newsletter via email, and keep an eye on our website or facebook page to stay updated.

<https://www.tombreckmarketgarden.co.uk/>