



Kevin Milaeger

Milaeger's

Greens to Grow Fall 2013!

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My 2013 Milwaukee weather calendar notes that the summer of 2012 was the hottest on record. That heat, coupled with the drought, made for many challenges last year. This year is completely different. I don't know if it will be the coolest summer on record, but I am betting it will be recorded as one of the coolest. We'll see. Normally, we have several warm spells every summer, which makes growing lettuce difficult. Most folks grow it as a spring crop, and then again in the autumn. This year, in the greenhouse, we are for the first time

experimenting with growing summer greens (supposedly heat tolerant) that we plan to sell to local restaurants. There are about 20 different types. They are nearly all leaf lettuces, and a few related "greens." I decided to try some of the

plants in the garden, to see how heat tolerant they really are. Since the summer turned out so cool, it's not much of a test, but I thought I'd share the progress report with you just the same. The seed was sown on July 8th, broadcast fashion, in some large containers. We'd planned on growing and then harvesting the greens right from those large containers. We transplanted a few of the extra seedlings from that group into standard bedding flats, the kind you buy flowers in at springtime. I wanted the



Kevin Milaeger planting lettuce 8/8/2013



Same lettuce as of 8/19/2013

plants to get established before I planted them in the garden. I transplanted them in the garden on August 8th, and they are off to a nice start. Above are a couple of photos. Of course, we've sampled some of the greens already and we are making notes about flavor and productivity.

You will remember this past spring we launched our first "Greens to Grow" program. This was a broad selection of "greens" (again, mostly leaf lettuces along with some kale, spinach and others) that were all very cold tolerant. We offered them in early April, well before our normal spring



Selection of Greens to Grow Fall 2013

offering. I planted some in our test garden and they all turned out well. If you tried some, I'd like to hear how yours fared. The second part of this program is scheduled to be ready around September 1st, so the plants are now well underway.

These plants should be planted at that time and you will likely be able to start harvesting some of them within a week of planting. Really. They thrive in the cooler temperatures that we typically start to have in September. You should be able to continue harvesting through October, and even longer for the kale. [Here is a link](#) to a spreadsheet that shows what we will be planning on offering.

Tomatomania 2013 is all set for Saturday, September 7. Many of you are familiar with this [popular event](#).

We hope you can join us this year. This will be our first year with live music! The main feature of the event is the blind tomato tasting, which is free. You can sample as many tomato and pepper varieties as you care to; there will be well over 120 tomato varieties, and 40 kinds of peppers, including the world's hottest pepper! All varieties are identified by number, and then you vote on your favorites. We'll give you the key to the varieties after you have filed your ballot. In addition to the tasting, we have many other



Blind Tomato Tasting

flavorful food samplings available, for which you will need tickets. We will have numerous food stations, making tomato based creations such as salsa, nachos, guacamole, pico de gallo, pizza, bruschetta, and more. We also have a number of beverages for you to choose from, including local craft beer, regional wine, and other favorites such as bloody marys and margaritas. We'll have our grill going, with grilled pizza and other tasty treats. Everyone always has a great time at [Tomatomania!](#)



Tomatomania T-Shirt 2013

Check out the t-shirts for this year's event---how can you not have a great time wearing one of these?