

# The Bandera PROPHEET

March 4, 2021

Gone Country  
Oh, the Horror!

By Mikie Baker  
The Bandera Prophet

While I was concerned about our survival during SNOVID-21, there was something more pressing on my mind: Would my first attempt at spring vegetable gardening survive the snow and extreme cold? Would my newly planted onions make me cry?

It has been a year since I grew anything in the garden. Well, there was that one pop up-pumpkin plant in the middle of the backyard, but that's a different story. No, I had turned my attention away from dirt. Trying to move, start a new job and survive a pandemic had me rather frantic.

My only hope was to look longingly at others Facebook posts of people's gardening success. Gardening is much like fishing. If you can't hold up an oversized homegrown catch from your garden, well then, what's the point of social media at all?

Since My Future Husband's garden dirt is rather suspect in my opinion, I did a hostile takeover of his abandoned chicken yard by announcing, "This chicken dirt is the best soil I've dug up in a while." I convinced MFH to till it up for me, I bought all the cattle manure I could haul in my car and had him work that into the soil as well. Since there's already a Funny Farm Garden, I named this plot the Dancing Chicken Garden. The dance floor will get installed later.

Then I planted onion sets, nearly 100 of them, in neat little rows about four inches apart. When I was done, I came inside only to hear the weatherman announce, "The Polar Vortex is coming, and it just might kill your onions." I dropped down on my knees and prayed for their survival.

Then we made a plan. My Future Husband bought some nice costal hay, and we threw three inches of it over the onions. MFH looked at me and said, “Now they are all buried. Best we can hope for is that they pop right back up after this is all over.” I slapped a couple of freeze blankets on them and a bit more hay just to make sure.

It snowed. It melted. It snowed some more. When we finally ventured out on the first sunny, warm day I ran to the Dancing Chicken Garden and pulled back the top layer of hay and the blankets. Underneath I found beautiful green tops starting to pop up out of all that hay and I knew I’d be slicing and crying all summer long.

Feeling rather confident that I could grow again, I bought some seed potatoes. I planted a few in buckets, some in the DCG and the rest in the My Future Husband’s garden just to prove that his dirt isn’t as good as the Dancing Chicken’s. I always say, “Gardeners know the best dirt.” Since I’m garden ready this year, I decided to read up on vegetables. I mean who doesn’t love a good giant zucchini story?

Until my eyes came across this:

“Scientists found that a caterpillar called the tomato fruit worm not only chomps on tomatoes and their leaves, but also deposits enzyme-laden saliva on the plant, interfering with its ability to cry for help.”

Do vegetables cry for help? What if I forget to water one day? Will the Dancing Chicken Garden begin to moan? Maybe to Rap? What terrors await my vegetables?

Last night, I had a nightmare about green tomatoes ripping themselves off the vine and rolling out of the garden because the killer caterpillars were coming. So far, I haven’t heard a scream one out of the onions. I think that’s because they’re rather sweet.

No, I’m not scared. I’m just going to grow some giant zucchini that can be used as a gardening weapon if need be. Happy Spring!