

SPRING IS COMING by MICHAEL JAMES

It's hard to believe with all this wild weather, but spring is, in fact, just around the corner. You may look outside and think, "yeah, not likely," but whether or not we believe it spring is on the way. Underneath the grey sky; the half melted slush; and the piled up, dirty snow is a world ready to bring all the bounties of a beautiful and lush spring. Colorful flowers and buzzing bees—and yes maybe a little pollen here and there—will reanimate Charlottesville.

For the moment though, it is still winter, and winter, for a farmer, has two sides. After working through spring, summer, and fall to feverishly grow as much food as possible, it's a relief to have days when you're not working outside in the garden for hours on end. It's a relief to not be lugging around heavy bins of produce or broadforking row after row. This side of winter is really nice and rejuvenating. But, there is another side of winter that requires a lot of attention and meticulous work. This side of winter can even make spring seem like its arrival has come too quickly.

This time of year is really the only time of year a farmer can properly plan for the new seasons. At UAC, we are in full-on planning mode. There are constants of planning like what to plant when and where, how to manage our time more efficiently, and what do we want the gardens to look like. But this year, there are a few additions to our annual planning. Our UAC team needs to find a new home for our shop before mid-summer. We also have the exciting, yet daunting, task of planning for an entirely new garden of roughly 10,000 square feet at CATEC. These new additions combined with our annual scheduling have amounted to a winter full of preparation.

With snow on the ground and winter melting to spring, the UAC team is looking forward to a bountiful year of growth and change.