



## Soil Life: Winter's Hidden Helpers

The freezing temperatures and slower pace of Winter can lead us to thinking that nothing special is happening on the farm — that life is dormant and growth is stagnant. While it's true, the exponential rate of plant growth witnessed during Springtime is still a few weeks away, life is in fact active and abundant at the farm during these cold, quiet months. Most of the activity is out of sight right now, but not entirely out of Farmer Joe's mind.



Tardigrades, a.k.a. moss piglets, water bears, and space bears, are found nearly every place on Earth and even in space!

Why does Farmer Joe care and what does all this have to do with your produce shares? A BUSHEL!! Year-round signs of life on the farm are evidence of a thriving ecosystem. Simply put, these often overlooked organisms help build the healthy soil needed for producing hearty, disease resistant plants full of nutrients. Not to mention, how about the size and flavor of the veggies that end up in your shares!?



Nightcrawlers burrow and remain active all Winter.

Hidden approximately 6-12" below the frost layer (the top layer of soil where water freezes), creatures such as earthworms, frogs, turtles, insect larvae, and microscopic organisms have set up camp for the Winter. Some of these creatures are in a state of torpor, with metabolisms so slow they can barely move. Others, like earthworms and microfauna, such as tardigrades, continue moving about, business as usual, creating pockets of air, eating, and depositing nutrient-rich waste.



**Who remembers the robust tomatoes and radishes in 2020?**

**Dates To Remember!!**

**March 31st**—Returning Shareholder Application + \$50 Deposit Due

**April 1st**—Shares open to waitlist and the general public