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Newsletter

Issue #31

BloomingNow!

Features Fresh from the Farm

Community

Supported

Agriculture

From the field...

The days at the farm have slowed to a more reasonable pace. The shortening hours of daylight force us to retreat inside earlier than usual—dinner at a reasonable hour means there is actually time before bed to read a bit or catch up on events in the world beyond the farm. The recent wet weather has also allowed us to catch up on record keeping—updating all the spread sheets that record the when and where of a season of planting. These are the kinds of records required for organic certification. Even though we are not “certified organic”, we are establishing a system that we hope will make us better farmers over the years, as we learn something new each year and can refer back to these spreadsheets. Though interestingly enough, with variables like weather, even the best kept

records won't enable us to replicate the successes of each season exactly. As you stroll around the farm and enjoy the last few weeks of pick-your-own crops, you may notice little shoots sprouting in the freshly tilled fields. This is our winter cover crop of rye and oats. Those of you who are lamenting the last of the cherry tomatoes, understand that though it may seem a travesty to pull the plants out with a few tomatoes still hanging on, we must get those plants out, the fields tilled, and the cover crop seeded and established before it gets too cold. We have the greater interest of the farm as a whole in mind when we decide a crop has run its course and it is time to plow it in. Oats are a cover crop that winter kills—if we get it established early enough it will create a big root system, and after consistent heavy freezes in mid-

January, it will die, leaving a dense carpet of ground cover. This will protect our soil from heavy erosion over the winter, and be a great source of organic matter to go back into the soil in the spring. Rye is a cover crop that will never completely die back, but will regenerate as the soil warms next season—we use this fast growing cover crop on ground we don't need to plant immediately into in the Spring. So enjoy your farm walk—we have another week or two of green beans to go. What an amazing crop of those this year! Enjoy a beautiful tribute to picking beans in a poem by a CSA member on page 2 of the newsletter. And we hope to see you all at the Harvest Festival on Saturday October 11th, as we celebrate another wonderful season of the earth's bounty!

— Farmer Tricia

News and Notes:

- **Coming up in the share:** Purple-top turnips, cabbage, kale, collard greens, acorn and butternut squash, dill
- **Harvest Festival is this Saturday, October 11, from 2 until dark, concluding with a potluck at the end of the day.**
- **Sweet peppers building up in your fridge? Freeze some for the winter, it's so easy!** Cut them in strips and freeze them on a cookie sheet, then toss into a freezer bag. Then when you need them, no need to thaw, just chop and toss into your stir-fry!
- **One of our customers, Cote and Co. Specialty Foods in Doylestown, would like to offer 10% off in their store for the month of October for all Blooming Glen Farm CSA members.** Pick up a coupon in the distribution center and check out this great locally owned business!
- **Just to give everyone a heads up—**if you're wondering about next season already, we will email you the **2009 Registration form** for returning members after Thanksgiving. You will then have until Jan. 1st to get a deposit to us to hold your space (please do not give us a deposit until we send out the 2009 registration forms). After Jan. 1st we will open up any remaining spaces to our waiting list, and then to the general public. So set aside that deposit, as we all know how crazy the holidays can be! If you know for sure you won't be coming back next season, please let us know as soon as possible. Thanks!

Harvest Festival 2008

The **Harvest Festival is this Saturday, October 11, from 2 until dark**, concluding with a **potluck** at the end of the day. Friends and family are welcome!

Some of the activities you can look forward to: scarecrow making, decorate a pumpkin with vegetables, face painting, ghost bean bag toss, a hayride around the farm, potato sac and spoon relays.

Check out some local vendors: Pennridge Wellness Center; handmade jewelry; organic t-shirts; coffee from Bucks County roasters The Coffee Scoop; and

honey from the farm! Join us for hot cider, live music and a potluck at 5:00. Bring a dish to share, and your own plate/bowl, beverage and utensils.



In case of rain this event will be held the following Saturday, the 18th.

You can buy **raffle tickets** at the day of the festival or this week in the distribution area. Tickets are **\$5**. You do not need to be at the event to win one of the many great prizes donated by your fellow CSA

members. Check them out on display this week in the distribution room—local artwork, a free massage, handmade jewelry and much more! Purchasing a raffle ticket helps to offset any costs of the festival. Thanks!

Wanted: Donations of children's sized clothing and hats for the scarecrow making, as well as folks interested in making a big pot of soup or stew for the potluck. (Think warming, as it's bound to be cool out!) We're also looking for a large apparatus for warming and serving hot cider. Also still looking for vendors.

Scalloped Celeriac and Potatoes

Butter for greasing the baking dish
 1 pound celeriac, peeled, halved, sliced
 about 1/8 inch thick
 1 pound baking potatoes, peeled, sliced
 about 1/8 inch thick
 salt
 freshly ground black pepper
 1 cup grated Gruyere or domestic Swiss
 cheese, divided
 1/2 teaspoon dried thyme
 2 cups chicken, beef or vegetable stock
 2 tablespoons butter

Preheat the oven to 350° F. Grease a 2-
 quart baking dish with butter.

Place the celeriac and potatoes in alter-
 nating layers in the baking dish, sea-
 soning every few layers with salt and
 pepper. At about the halfway point,
 add 1/3 cup cheese in an even layer;
 sprinkle with the thyme. Continue with

the celeriac and potatoes, until you
 have used all your slices (don't go all
 the way to the top edge; leave a little
 room to allow the liquid to boil).

Pour the stock over the celeriac and
 potatoes. Dot with butter. Cover with
 foil and bake for 45 minutes. Remove
 the foil and bake for 15 minutes more.
 Sprinkle the remaining 2/3 cup
 cheese over the top layer, add several
 grindings of fresh pepper, and bake
 until the cheese turns golden, about
 15 minutes.

Let stand for 10 minutes before serv-
 ing.

Serves 6.

From *Farmer John's Cookbook: The
 Real Dirt on Vegetables*, by Farmer
 John Peterson and Angelic Organics

Celeriac

Celeriac is a celery variety bred to form
 a large globular root, sitting just below
 the soil surface, like a beet. The seeds of
 celeriac are one of the earliest plants we
 start in the greenhouse— it typically
 takes 6 months from seeding to matur-
 ity. The taste is a wonderfully subtle
 blend of parsley and celery that can be
 enjoyed raw or cooked. Popular in
 Europe, celeriac is still relatively un-
 known in American cuisine, though
 many would agree once you have it, it's
 impossible to go back to the blander
 celery stalk! Peel off the bumpy exterior
 (easiest with a paring knife) to reveal a
 pale smooth flesh, similar to a potato,
 but less starchy. Celeriac enhances
 winter soups and stews, jazzes up
 mashed potatoes or roasted root veg-
 gies, and untouched it will store for
 weeks in your fridge and months in a
 root cellar. Interesting historical fact:
 the women of ancient Rome swore by
 celery's aphrodisiac qualities!

Phaseolus vulgaris

Fifty years after Columbus, the bush bean
 appears

in Leonhart Fuchs' great herbal
de Historia Stirpium

along with a hundred other New World species
 some of which Fuchs himself grew in his gar-
 den in Tübingen:

pumpkins, summer squash, chili peppers,
 maize,

and these small boats (as the Latin name has
 it):

under the leaves a crowded harbor
 clustered with beans.

Four hundred sixty six years later
 I'm on my knees, quick-finger gathering
 green beans that look like canoes

and grew here before there were herbals,
 before engraving, before cataloguing,
 but not before gardens, or hands in the dirt.

These Ambra variety beans
 are so sweet I'm not sure
 I can bear to pickle them

the way Mary taught me
 the summers we picked Pioneer beans

with our toddlers, young women now, in tow:

paper bags full of beans to overflow
 into hot jars with a garlic clove,
 a sprig of dill, a certain number

of peppercorns. The wiping of rims,
 the simmering of lids, the hot
 brine of vinegar water and salt,

releasing bubbles (stir
 of chopstick in hot jar).

The canner steaming like danger, like a thrill

boiling for its jars, submerge
 the jars, tong them into their artful cage
 and sink them down

the water flattens
 don't look don't watch
 it will boil again as long as

you don't
 check.
 It boils.

Thermal magic:
 hoist the artful cage and tong those jars --
 everything cleaned up now, the clean towel

awaiting its jars --
 you set them down
 like eggs

and later, moving through the kitchen
 hear the gentle pop, the sleepy
 smack of lips as the jaw drops open

only these are lids snicking down
 on the dilly beans
 that Mary taught me to make.

Not thousands of years ago,
 when the bean vine was holy here,
 not hundreds of years ago

when the first plants of the New World
 arrived
 to change the Old. No,
 those summers were just a teenager ago --

even when I am fifty
 those toddlers won't yet be the ages we
 were
 when we knelt in the Pioneer beans.

Not quite, not quite.

—By J. Issacs, Blooming Glen Farm CSA
 member