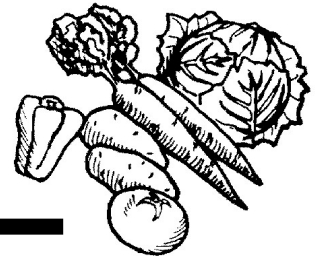


CSA Newsletter

WALTHAM FIELDS COMMUNITY FARM

A project of Community Farms Outreach

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Notes from the Field:

It's All Downhill from Here

This is what Linda said to us the other day while we were eating lunch. July is over. The acute pressure of the weeds is ending, although we still have to deal with the results of the spots where they got out of hand (oh, the poor onions!). The mornings come just a little later these days; the sun comes up around 5:30, so we're rising in the darkness again for a while. By the end of the month, we will have to begin our harvests later.

This month, we'll begin to see the bountiful harvests of tomatoes, eggplant, peppers and melons that send you home weighed down instead of floating on clouds of greens. The peak of the season, where we're pulled in three different directions on the farm and we're so tired we can't see straight, has come and gone. Are there long days still to come? Yes, but they are long, satisfying days, with big harvests, lots of donations, more relaxed meals, and maybe some beach trips or ice cream forays thrown into the mix. This is a good time of year to be a farmer.

This is the time of year when farmers start cooking again, after weeks of taking home bunches of beets and heads of lettuce and watching them turn to compost in the refrigerator while we eat raw peas and carrots, unless we're lucky enough to have a caring partner with time on their hands to cook for us. Now we begin to can tomatoes and set them aside for the winter. We enjoy the last of the summer squash and look forward to the melons and then the winter squash. We take home the garlic that's not quite good enough for the CSA and pile it in our basements or hang it on our walls to use for the winter. We begin to stockpile and hoard, and we eat like kings and queens.

This is the time of year when we like to linger around the CSA distribution shelter and talk to our members about the crops, less pressured by tasks that needed to be done a week ago. There is still a lot to do, but we can take time now to rest and dream and make plans for the coming season. We have about one more week of fall vegetable planting to do, and then we begin putting in our cover crops. You'll see us walking through the fields with handfuls of peas, vetch, winter rye and oats, feeding the birds while we fertilize and add organic matter to the soil.

August 1–5, 2004 (Distribution Week #9)

You've seen all this week's vegetables before . . .

You can watch the fields slowly open up over the next two months, one crop after another finished and disked under, replaced by green cover crops.

By now, we have a pretty good idea of what battles we won and lost this season, what will be a tremendous crop and what will be a loss. We have a good idea of what our members enjoyed and what they had too much of, and what we should plant more of next season. We know what our hunger relief partners enjoy and what they can't use. All the scrambling of the early season, the uncertainties of spring, the potential that comes laden with risks, are over, and we move with more calm and assurance around the farm these days.

Even though a good three months of the season are still to come, it really is all downhill from here. We look forward to sharing the harvest with you.

—*The Farm Crew: Amanda, Meryl and Ryan, with many dedicated volunteers*

OUR MOST APPRECIATIVE THANKS to the following organizations for their recent donations to Community Farms Outreach:

- Temple Shalom of Newton, Social Action Committee
- Draper Laboratory, in support of the Children's Garden
- Body and Soul Magazine
- The Jane B. Cook 1992 Charitable Trust

And for donations in support of the Friends of the Field Station/Farmland Preservation Committee, thanks to G.R.O.W. (the community garden next to our fields), the Iris Society of MA, and the New England Daylily Society, whose specimens are currently brightening the field alongside our vegetables and flowers.

2005 CFO Board of Directors

The CFO Board of Directors has identified the types of skills, experience and knowledge our 2005 Board needs to successfully address the challenges ahead of us. This year, the CFO Board of Directors has identified individuals with development (fund raising) and publicity expertise to be of particular importance. We are also looking for people who have knowledge about farmland preservation, community food security, or sustainable agriculture. Board directors commit to attending monthly board meetings and participating in committee work as needed between board meetings. They join a congenial group of people making important decisions that guide the future of CFO. *If you, or someone you know, has skills in these areas, time to commit to our work, and interest in a board position, please contact the Nominating Committee at Board@communityfarms.org.*

Oakes has been wondering what to do with carrot tops and it turns out the farm has an answer:

If you pick up your CSA share on Thursdays at the Farm, you may have noticed the sign above the box in the corner where you can discard carrot tops, outer leaves of lettuce, and so on. Every Friday morning, the Animal Rescue League of Boston picks up this box of goodies to be chopped up and fed to their population of homeless rabbits and hamsters. One box lasts them a week and is of higher quality and nutrient value than grocery store discards, which typically have been on the shelf for many days before discarded.

So it's nice to know that the woodchucks and field mice aren't the only furry creatures to get a chance at our veggies. On other days, the discards go back to the compost pile, turning into valuable soil.

Vegetable Pancakes

Here's a tasty and colorful twist on latkes (potato pancakes):

Using a hand grater or food processor, grate raw potatoes (no need to peel). Squeeze handfuls of the grated potatoes into the sink to get out the excess water. Then add a mixture of other raw vegetables (see below). Make sure the final mixture contains at least 50% potato and make sure you include the onion. Mix in 2–4 eggs and some fine bread crumbs (you can also add wheat germ) and/or flour until the mixture is gummy and will hold together pretty well. Add salt and pepper. Heat a shallow coating of oil in a fry pan and spoon on the pancakes, flattening them out. Turn when the first side has browned. Don't use too high a heat or the exteriors will brown before the interior cooks. Drain on paper towels. Serve with yogurt and/or applesauce. Vegetable possibilities:

grated:

carrots
parsnips
jerusalem artichokes
zucchini

finely diced:

red/green peppers
green beans
onions

things I'd like to try:

celeriac
fennel
turnip
beets

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CFO Board of Directors: board@communityfarms.org

Marina thanks all the people who have sent her support.

Community Farms Outreach is a nonprofit organization dedicated to farmland preservation, hunger relief, and education.