



local food for everyone

NEWSLETTER

“Only two things that money can’t buy – that’s true love and homegrown tomatoes.” Guy Clark

240 Beaver Street • Waltham, MA 02452 • 781-899-2403 • www.communityfarms.org

A DAY WITH DENNIS FROM FOOD FOR FREE

By Dede Dussault, WFCF Intern

One Wednesday late in August I had the privilege of riding along on the Food for Free truck to follow some of the food that Waltham Fields Community Farm donates to hunger relief. Food for Free (FFF) has been gathering and distributing fresh produce and other foods since 1981, and working with Waltham Fields Community Farm since our beginning in 1995. Currently, Food for Free distributes food to 74 different food programs in Boston, Cambridge and Somerville, helping to feed 20,000 people every month.

The day started at 7 AM, when I met long-time FFF Operations Manager Dennis McCarthy at their office in Central Square, Cambridge. We loaded the truck with boxes of food that had been stored in the cooler overnight, and then we were off to Costco to pick up boxes of baked goods. Our next stop was Waltham Fields Community Farm, where the farmers had approximately 410 lbs of fresh produce boxed up and waiting for us, and then we picked up more vegetables at FFF’s Field of Greens plot at Lindentree Farm in Lincoln. I was surprised later in the day when the vegetables proved to be every bit as popular as the sweet pastries!

Our first drop off point was Grant Manor in Roxbury, a community of 179 apartment units. Tables were set up to receive and distribute the food, and about 30 residents were eagerly waiting for us. Lots of people pitched in to get the food off the truck, so it didn’t take long to unload boxes of lettuce, tomatoes, carrots, cucumbers and eggplant. Vegetables distributed through Food For Free are the only source of fresh produce for the Grant Manor food pantry, so we gave out about 2/3 of what had been donated by Waltham Fields.

Rosie’s Place was next. The first shelter for homeless women founded in the United States, Rosie’s Place now provides a wide range of human services, including a pantry which serves 1,250 women a month. Waltham Fields Community Farm lettuce, tomatoes and eggplant went to the food pantry.

After stopping at several community day care centers to drop off pastries and apples, we arrived at our final drop off point, just outside Harvard Square. Youth on Fire is a drop-in center for homeless and street-involved youth between the ages of 14-24. The boxes of Waltham Fields carrots that we dropped off there will contribute to the hot meals and snacks that they provide.

The experience of following the food that I have observed being produced all season long was eye-opening. It is one thing to hear that Waltham Fields distributes \$40,000 or more per year of fresh organically-grown vegetables through food access programming, and it is another to observe that programming in action. To see the gratitude on the recipients’ faces, contribute to efforts that value and work in promotion of all people’s basic right to healthful food, and connect with others in the food security movement grounds me in my academic studies and nutrition communications career ambitions.

Dede Dussault is a MS Candidate in the School of Nutrition and Science Policy at Tufts University. She has been interning with WFCF in fulfillment of her degree, and is also working as our Learning Garden Educator this fall.

COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS AT WORK

Waltham Farm Day

Over 200 people attended our free Waltham Farm Day event on Sept. 25th to celebrate farming and kick off Mass Harvest for Students Week. Thanks to Healthy Waltham, Waltham Public Schools, Waltham Mayor’s Office, Waltham Recreation Dept., Waltham Recycling Dept., Waltham YMCA, Waltham 4H Club, West Newton Ceili Band, Whole Foods Market, Autumn Hills Orchard, AlphaGraphics and numerous volunteers for their involvement in making the afternoon a huge success!



Waltham Land Trust Library Display

Waltham Land Trust Board Member Dee Kricker showcased the Waltham Field Station property in the Waltham Public Library display case throughout the month of September. Waltham Fields Community Farm was featured in the display along with additional tenants of the UMass site. Plans to have the Western Greenway Trail extend along the site’s eastern edge were also made a focal point. To learn more about the Greenway effort, go to: <http://walthamlandtrust.org/open-space/the-western-greenway>

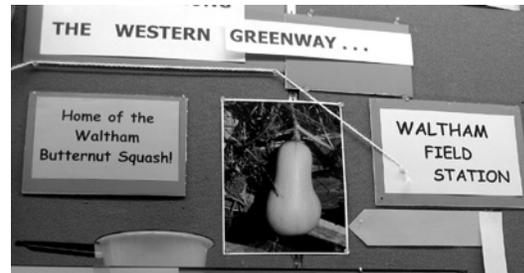


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FROM THE FARM OFFICE

I recently attended Project Bread's Appreciation and Grant Award Ceremony. I look forward to this annual event to connect with others doing food assistance work, and to be inspired by Ellen Parker, Project Bread's Executive Director. Each year, Ellen takes the microphone and delivers words of wisdom through personal stories that stick with me for a long time. This year was no different, as Ellen talked about being invited to be the Master of Ceremony for a 5th grade graduation, which came with the honor of giving out the Giraffe Award. This award went to the student who most had his/her feet firmly planted on the ground, but was also able to reach way into the sky and see above the trees. That image stuck with Ellen enough to share with me and it surely is a good one to keep passing along to others, as it speaks so eloquently of the path to societal success and serves as a guide for our work.

There's the daily work of tending to the fields and providing high quality produce and experiences, subject always to the realities of the moment's weather, economy, and cultural environment. And this needs to be balanced with keeping our eyes on the prize, our minds and discussions focused on a larger vision. It was exciting this year to hear Project Bread reframe their vision from ending hunger to establishing community food security.

With the severity of existing health crises such as child obesity and the rise of type II diabetes, it is no longer sufficient to help people get enough food; people need to get enough of the right foods. We at Waltham Fields

WALTHAM FIELDS COMMUNITY FARM

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Amy Cook, 1st yr. Assistant Grower

Dan Roberts, 2nd yr. Assistant Grower

Dede Dussault, Learning Garden Educator

Paula Jordan, Learning Garden Educator

David Azer, Learning Garden Assistant

Sarah Spielman, Fall Intern

We promote local agriculture through growing and distribution practices that are socially, ecologically, and economically sustainable. We forge relationships between people, their food supply, and the land from which it grows.

Waltham Fields Community Farm is the business name of Community Farms Outreach, a 501(c)(3) nonprofit charitable organization.

Contact Us

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Community Farm firmly stand by this belief and are committed to working in solidarity with it as we continue to grow fresh, organic vegetables for distribution through several different food access avenues.

An additional treat for me at the Award Ceremony this year was witnessing Kelly Erwin honored for her work starting up the Mass Farm to School Project. Kelly has been instrumental in connecting local farms with local schools, and creating the State-sponsored Mass Harvest for Students Week, which we recently celebrated through both our Waltham Farm Day event and the delivery of summer squash to the Waltham Public Schools lunch program. Today, there are approximately 200 school districts and 75 colleges/universities buying locally grown food, with about 100 farms selling directly to schools and another 40 selling to distributors that supply schools. What an accomplishment for a project less than 10 years old, with no more than just a handful of these connections being made at the time of its inception.

Bravo, Mass Farm to School Project! Bravo, Project Bread!

Sincerely,

Claire Kozower, Executive Director



Assistant Farm Manager Erinn Roberts with summer squash bound for the Waltham Public Schools.

FROM THE BOARD

For my family like so many others, Waltham Fields provides an oasis from our city life. We travel to the farm each week to bring ourselves into connection with the land where our food grows and with the people who grow it. One daughter yells "Farmer Andy!" as he passes on his way to the distribution shed. The other makes a bee line for the husk cherries, happily consuming a fruit that many other city kids don't know exists.

As we on the Waltham Fields Board and staff begin planning in earnest for next year, we are mindful of the importance of the farm to the community. Over the past several years the farm has grown in almost every way in an effort to better serve the growing demand. We have added staff, expanded our education programs and infrastructure, and increased the size of the CSA. Our CSA is thriving and our food access program continues to provide a significant source of donated and subsidized fresh, organic produce for people in need in the area. The efficacy of our farmer training program has been amply demonstrated this year as we've watched Andy step into the role of farm manager, and Erinn into the role of Assistant Farm Manager. In the coming year we will focus on deepening and developing our core programs and thinking creatively and strategically about how we can continue to forge connections between our community, our food, and the land from which it grows.

Your enthusiasm and support give energy to the staff and Board for continued strategic planning and dreaming big for the future. In the midst of the fields it can be easy to forget that we are one small foothold in an area in which farmland is rapidly disappearing and young farmers are a species still coming back from the brink of extinction. Your promotion and participation helps us envision and work toward a future of local food for everyone.

Enjoy the harvest!

Rebecca Nesson, Board President

The Elephant Walk in Waltham

Benefit Restaurant Program • All of October
at The Elephant Walk • 663 Main St., Waltham

Enjoy a delicious French/Cambodian lunch or dinner at The Elephant Walk in Waltham anytime in October and you'll be supporting Waltham Fields.

We're so excited to be the October beneficiary of the Benefit Restaurant program at The Elephant Walk. **3% of all sales for the month will be donated to us!**

Make Reservations Today:

781-899-2244 or

www.elephantwalk.com



5% Day at Whole Foods Market Wednesday, October 27th

Two Participating Locations:

Fresh Pond, 200 Alewife Brook Pkwy, Cambridge
Newtonville, 647 Washington St., Newton

Stock up on groceries on 10/27
at either of these stores.

**5% of profits for the day go to
Waltham Fields Community Farm!**



FOOD BUSINESSES LEND THEIR SUPPORT!

We've got a number of exciting events coming up this fall and winter. Thanks to Bob Perry from The Elephant Walk and Terri Petrunyak and Lynay Smith from Whole Foods Market for organizing the fantastic October fundraisers on our behalf. The end of October also brings our Harvest Potluck and Annual Meeting, and we have additional meals planned in November and December with Kitchen on Common and Flatbread Pizza Company. See the *Mark Your Calendars* section on the back cover...

SUSTAINABILITY INITIATIVES CONTINUE TO EXPAND

Solar Power: Thanks to Roger Lee from Sunshine Advantage and volunteers James Crall and Leo Keightley, we're narrowing in on getting our Learning Garden solar kitchen running smoothly and have recently added solar-powered lights to our wash station and cold storage area.

Waste Reduction: Bentley University Professor and WFCF Member Rick Oches called us up last winter and explained his new idea for a service learning addition to his spring semester course, Science of Sustainability – the students would work together on an energy audit of our farming operation and come up with feasible recommendations. The most promising of those recommendations ended up being a proposal to form a partnership with Bentley to recycle their pre-service vegetable waste into compost for the farm. The project has been picked up by Amanda King, Bentley's Manager of Sustainability and Jason LaPrade of Dining Services, who have been working in collaboration with our Farm Manager, Andy Scherer, to collect and deliver approximately 140 gallons per week of food scraps to our composting area. Before this initiative, Bentley was trucking its trash, food scraps and recyclables out to a facility in western Mass and the sorting was mechanically done there. Amanda reports that "with this new initiative, behavior change is being addressed through having the food service workers do the sorting themselves and through work on the part of their Green Dining Student Intern to educate the student population about the program. Also, the overall carbon footprint is much less now." She is thrilled to see students and staff engaging in campus efforts that reduce waste and provide a benefit for their local farm.



Rose Tomatoes from Claire's home garden – all from one plant! The seedling was purchased at WFCF's spring sale. Stay tuned for our 2011 Seedling Sale dates!

FARMERS' FAVORITES – THE REBIRTH OF NEW ENGLAND TOMATOES!

After a devastating crop loss across the region last year for one of the most prized of summer fruits, this year's tomatoes were all the more appreciated and savored.

Here are the farmers' 2010 Top 5 Tomatoes (for flavor and production):

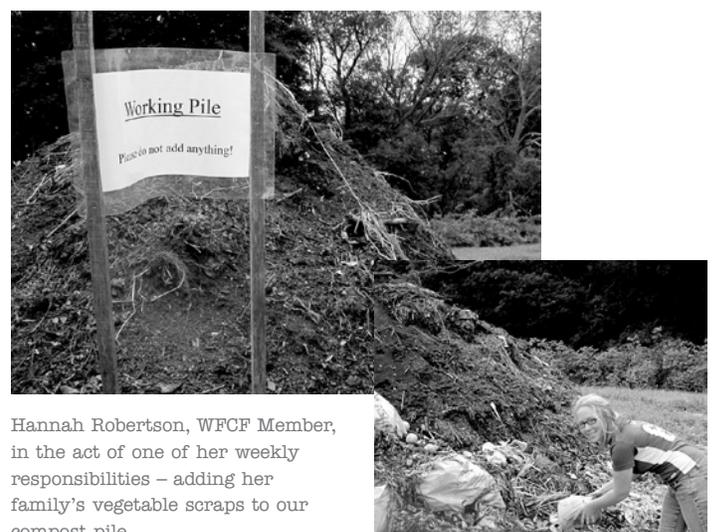
Rose: An Amish dusty rose-colored heirloom from Pennsylvania. This cross between Brandywine and Rutgers produces large, delicious fruits on sturdy, disease-resistant plants.

Moskovich: A Russian heirloom with perfect, medium-sized red fruits. It's an early and long-lasting producer with excellent taste.

Japanese Black Trifele: Despite its name, this heirloom is also from Russia. The fruits are small and pear-shaped and are produced in abundance with purplish-black skin and green shoulders. The fruits are scrumptious and make a sublime tomato sauce as well as being great for fresh-eats.

Paul Robeson: This black heirloom variety is named after Paul Robeson, a famous opera star and civil rights advocate. The plants produce large, abundant fruits with a unique and rich smoky essence.

Gold Medal: Giant heirloom fruits weighing up to 2lbs. each, these sweet, low-acid tomatoes are yellow with a pink blush throughout the flesh – making them a gorgeous slicing tomato for caprese salads. The plants can tolerate cool nighttime temperatures, maintaining yields well into the fall.



Hannah Robertson, WFCF Member, in the act of one of her weekly responsibilities – adding her family's vegetable scraps to our compost pile.



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WAYS TO GET INVOLVED

Harvest Potluck Volunteers

We're looking for 10–15 volunteers to help with our Harvest Potluck on Saturday, October 30. We need people on the day of the event as well as ahead of time. If interested, please contact Jericho at 781-899-2403 or jericho@communityfarms.org.

Fall Field Volunteering – Continues through Saturday, October 23

There are still a few weeks left to volunteer with fieldwork. You can drop-in to volunteer Tuesday through Saturday. Stay for an hour or up until noon, but please show up at 9am so everyone can get started as a team.

Whole Foods 5% Day – Tabling Help

Volunteers needed to help staff a WFCF info table at the Whole Foods Fresh Pond and Newtonville locations. Dates/times needed are Sat. Oct. 16 (in promotion of the event) from 1–4pm, and/or Wed. Oct. 27 (day of event) from 11am–1pm or 4–7pm. Contact Jericho (phone/email above).

Winter Share Harvest and Distribution Help

We are looking for a few key volunteers to help us on the day of, and during the week leading up to, our November winter share distribution. If you have weekday availability in early November and/or can help us on Saturday, November 13, please contact Andy at farmmanager@communityfarms.org.

MARK YOUR CALENDARS!

The Elephant Walk in Waltham Benefit Restaurant Program, All of Oct. • 3% of all sales for the month will be donated to us – See page 3!

Second Chances Clothing Drive at the Farm, Week of Oct. 10–16

At Waltham Fields – Leave Items in Bags Under the White Tent. Your used clothing, shoes and accessories can make a difference in another person's life and reduce waste. Help people in need by donating your un-needed clothing, shoes, accessories, and linens. Learn more about Second Chances at www.secondchances.org.

MARK YOUR CALENDARS! *continued*

Whole Foods 5% Day at Fresh Pond and Newtonville Stores, Wednesday, Oct. 27 • 5% of profits for the day at these two stores will be donated to us – See page 3!

Harvest Potluck and Annual Meeting, Saturday, Oct. 30, 12–2pm

Bring a dish to share, dress in costume (there will be prizes!), vote on changes to our bylaws, and learn about our accomplishments for the year and plans moving forward. All are welcome at this free, annual celebration for volunteers, members and other farm friends! Potluck suggestions (organized by first letter of last name): A–N: Main Dish; O–R: Beverage or Dessert; S–Z: Side dish or Salad

REAP Benefit Dinner at Kitchen on Common, Sunday, Nov. 7, 5:30pm

Assist with (R)aising Funds for (E)ducation and Food (A)ccess (P)rograms. Enjoy a wonderful farm-fresh fall meal with chef Joh Kokubo and Waltham Fields produce. Our farmers will be present for some good conversation. \$45/person plus tax and tip. Seating is limited.

Make Reservations Today! Kitchen on Common, 442 Common St., Belmont: 617-484-4328.

Putting Up Pears: Jam-making workshop, Tuesday, Nov. 30,

6:30–8:30pm • Join Bonnie Shershow (www.bonniesjams.com) at the farm to learn how to turn the fresh fruits of fall into delicious jam to be enjoyed year-round! Check our website soon for more information.

Flatbread Pizza Company Fundraiser (in Somerville), Tuesday, Dec. 14,

5pm until close • Part of the evening's pizza sales at the Davis Sq. location (45 Day St.) will go to us. The more pizzas sold, the more gets donated! Please bring your friends and family out for some brick-oven pies and check out the bowling lanes too.