



WELL FED

Newsletter for Wellspring Farm CSA

www.wellspringcsa.com

August 8, 2006

Farmer's Message

This cool weather is a welcome change from last week's heat wave. Some folks asked how we manage to work in the fields in the heat. For starters, we begin work at 6:30 a.m. to beat the worst part of the day. But by 9 a.m. we were still sweating bullets. That's where a timely swim in the river comes in. What I find is that no matter the weather challenges -- humidity, rain, mosquitoes -- I just have to put my head down and work. I can't think about it too much, otherwise it would drive me nuts! We've all had experiences where we've said to ourselves, "Just get through this and you can think about it later." In that way, farming can be a bit like running a marathon. Whether it is getting through a scorching week, hoeing one more bed of winter squash, or carrying 50 pound totes of potatoes from the field to the truck, we just have to keep on going! Though I must say, I like farming in Vermont with its shorter season. Anyhow, the melons sure did like the heat and they are looking good!

The heat, compounded with our record breaking wet spring, has me thinking more and more about global warming. I'm very concerned about what lies in our collective future, as well as what changes in the weather pattern may mean for our farm. Vern Grubinger, Vermont Agricultural Extension agent, says that global warming will mean more rain for Vermont. Our soil does not drain very well, and rainy seasons are very challenging. We are scheduled to install more tile drainage in another acre on the farm this fall, which is a significant financial investment in the future of this soil. I do take pride in knowing that if we tile this land, it will benefit not only myself, but also any grower that comes after me. It is an investment not only in *our* farm business and CSA, but also in the attractiveness to and ability of others to *keep* farming this land. I don't want to see this farm, in the view shed of Route 2, to be left unworked. So while it can feel like a difficult financial decision, I know it is the right one.

On another note, I enjoyed being at our Montpelier pick up site recently, where Amanda Payne (2004-05 Wellspring apprentice) is managing the show. I hope our 30 Montpelier site members are enjoying the convenience of getting their share in town, with the option of coming out to the farm to get pick-your-own (PYO) crops. The Montpelier site certainly has been a wonderful expansion of our membership base; enabling us to focus our efforts on CSA production rather than supplementing the farm income with wholesale accounts. My goal has been to market exclusively through CSA, and each year we get closer. More Montpelier site members have been visiting the farm to cut flowers and pick beans, tomatillos and basil. These PYO crops plus hot peppers, cherry tomatoes and herbs will likely be available for the next few weeks, so please make the trip out here!

Lactofermented Pickles

Recipe from Sally Fallon of "Nourishing Traditions"

4-5 pickling cucumbers
1 T. mustard seeds
2 T. fresh dill, snipped
1 T. sea salt
4 T. whey (if not available, use an additional 1 T. of salt)
1 c. water

Wash cukes well and place in a quart-sized, wide-mouth mason jar. Combine remaining ingredients and pour over cucumbers, adding more water if necessary to cover the cucumbers. The top of the liquid should be at least 1 inch below the top of the jar. Cover tightly and keep at room temperature for about 3 - 10 days (depending on how sour you like them) before transferring to cold storage.

Variation: Pickled cucumber slices

Wash cucumbers well and slice at 1/4 inch intervals. Proceed with recipe. Pickles will be ready for cold storage after about 2 days at room temperature. You can also use the 1 T. salt, 4 T. whey basic recipe for pickling cabbage, turnips, beets, daikon radish, beans, and carrots. The one thing to remember is that you always want to have enough liquid in the jar to cover whatever it is that you're fermenting. Lactofermentation is an anaerobic process, so you don't want the food exposed to air, at all.

LOOKING FOR FARMLAND

I am looking for three+ tillable acres in Westford or a neighboring Chittenden County town to start a small vegetable CSA next season. Land must have a water source, and ideally includes housing with additional outbuildings. Traditional or creative lease agreement wanted. If you know of any options, I am willing to follow any lead. Please email me at csiegriest@hotmail.com or let's converse during CSA pick-up. Thank you!
Chris Siegriest, Wellspring Apprentice

Summer Salsa!

By: Dana Dwinell-Yardley

4 cups chopped fresh tomatoes
1 bell pepper, chopped
1 medium onion, chopped
1-2 cloves garlic (or more, to taste)
1/4 cup cider vinegar
1 tablespoon olive oil
1 teaspoon maple syrup or honey
1 tablespoon cumin powder
1 teaspoon salt
Fresh chopped oregano, to taste
Fresh chopped cilantro, to taste
Dried cayenne pepper, or fresh hot pepper to taste (you can leave out the hot pepper for a mild, non-spicy salsa)

For a chunky salsa, finely chop all veggies and combine with other ingredients. For a smoother salsa, roughly chop veggies and briefly blend with other ingredients in a food processor or blender. Refrigerate in a covered container. Keeps for several weeks--use on tortillas, rice, veggies, etc etc!



LOCAL BLACKBERRIES FOR SALE AT CSA PICK UP

Don Lenz, local berry grower, will be bringing pints of freshly picked blackberries to our CSA pick-ups soon. The berries are for sale by the pint. Don't forget your wallet if you'd like to purchase some! What a treat! Thanks to Don for offering his berries to our members.



Coming Soon
beets, potatoes, sweet corn, onions