



WELL FED

Newsletter for Wellspring Farm CSA

www.wellspringcsa.com

September 15, 2008

Farmer's Report:

Thanksgiving in September at Harvest Fest

Undeterred by the questionable weather on Sunday, we had a splendid Harvest Fest at the farm to celebrate the season. Hayrides, contra dancing, face painting and great food. There's lots of gratitude I want to express, and it starts with you, our CSA members.

- Our CSA continues to grow, with members returning year after year, kids growing up eating our produce and knowing where it comes from. It is a joy to welcome our shareholders back each spring and share the excitement of another summer season.
- The farm has also grown by expanding access to the CSA for low-income community members with our subsidized shares. Increasing this program remains a goal, hence our Silent Auction fundraiser this year. The winning bids totaled a whopping \$1200! We were so pleasantly surprised at the number of donations we received – over 35 in all! Each dollar of the winning bids will reap two dollars for our program. This means we'll be able to offer more half-priced shares to those in need next year.
- A big high five to our farm's volunteers. From web design by Shawn Bryan, newsletter layout by Pam Quinn, welding tractor parts by Steve Bronstein, loaning specialized wrenches by the Carters, and taking photos in the field by Jay Ericson, not to mention critical tractor work by our oh-so-generous and supportive dairy farming neighbors the Bickfords, our members lighten our load and improve our farm. At the Harvest Fest we had a slew of volunteers who created events solely on their own initiative – Devon and Joe Byers spearheaded our oven decorating; Jeff Swift, Joe Astick, Morgan Decker and Flora Jestice formed The Seconds Bucket Band and taught themselves contra dance music, practicing weekly for a few months now; Lauriana Capone and Angie Barger face painted; NECI students prepped food; and the carrot cake competition started when Tracey Hambleton, Rick Pope and Dana Berge all bragged that they were the best bakers around.
- The core is our farm team: Amanda Payne, Morgan Decker and Dana Berge. Add to them our stellar working members: Jeff Swift, Lu Van Zeeland, Diana Batzel, Mike and Lyla Keenan. Each day they are ready to work hard in all kinds of conditions, be it weeks of rain or killer mosquitoes. We are a crew, sometimes motley, mostly happy. The work is hard and the months add up to an intensity of soreness and deep-boned tiredness, but there is also a strong feeling of pride for a job well done. This crew does much more than well. They have worked beyond the simple job descriptions, and my gratitude is profound. And to my sweetie Parker, whose mechanical help has gotten me out of countless equipment jams, I'll just spend the rest of my life thanking you for all you give to me.

Look how many hands hold up this farm! Everyone does indeed make a difference. Our farm would cease to exist without this support. These fields could be fallow. It's a distinct possibility that's driven home each time I hear of another dairy farm closing or another field put up for sale to build houses. But commitment is growing – commitment to supporting farms by buying from them year after year, even if it means paying a bit more (though often it means paying the same or less), going out of our way to make an extra trip, or adjusting our eating habits according to the time of year and each season's challenges. This commitment is growing and becoming part of the fabric of our Vermont communities. And each person makes a difference when they commit. There's plenty of bad news out there and lots to be concerned about for our future, so I'm proud each season and each week that together we produce some good news and good feeling in our community. It's something we can *all* be proud of.

In This Week's Share:

- Broccoli – Maybe some cauliflower and cabbage too to choose from. The rain this weekend causes some blackening of the broccoli heads which of course is frustrating. We will do our best to leave those heads in the field while still trying to harvest enough to give it out this week.
- Cilantro/Dill/Parsley choice – Cilantro for salsa and dill for dilly beans!
- Sweet Corn – We're getting to the end of this year's crop. The latter plantings have had smaller ears, due to the enormous rains this summer that leached the nitrogen out of the soil. Even though we sidedressed, I think the plants took a beating.
- Lettuce
- Carnival winter squash – These beauties are aptly named. The small size typical of this variety is good for stuffing with dried fruits and nuts.
- Tomatoes
- Roots Mix-n-Match: beets, red onions, carrots and green tomatoes (thanks for the special request)

PYO:

- Beans – Get 'em while they're small.
- Corn Stalks – Yup, cut your own for decorating at home.

Coming Soon:

- Garlic
- Spinach & Collards
- Baby lettuce mix
- More broccoli and cauliflower

Silent Auction Winners

A big hootin' hollerin' yip-e-i-ay to our auction donors and bidders! If you were one of the lucky top bidders at our Silent Auction to benefit subsidized shares, please make your checks payable to NOFA-VT and mail to the farm, or drop them off at pick-up by Sunday, September 28. Thank you and enjoy your rewards!

It's Still Not Over!

Four weeks of fall veggies remaining. Our last CSA pick-up dates are **Monday, October 6 and Thursday, October 9.**

Question: Last year's cantaloupe seemed sweeter than this year's. What's the difference?

Answer: We grew the same two varieties this year, Earliqueen and Athena. But the plants suffered from alternaria during the wettest August on record and this reduced the ripening time. Hence, less sweet melons. The vagaries of each season really do affect some crops' flavor. But we also heard from many folks that the yellow watermelons were the best watermelons they'd ever eaten. What will next season bring??



Harvest Fest Thank You Poem

It's raining at the beginning of the day,
Mimi checks the sun report so she can say
"No one will rain on this festive parade"
The sun peaks out, clouds begin to fade

Set up the auction, the tables and chairs,
Stoke the fire in the oven with cares,
Welcome the sharers and friends around,
Talk, smiles and laughter abound.

Throw the tomatoes with finesse,
Many last a while or much less,
Splat goes the red stuff on the turf,
Catch and balance like in the surf,

Tug that rope forth and back,
The vegies take a well thought out tack,
"One, two, three" they tug,
The carnies are yanked in a giant shrug,

Into the sacks all the legs go,
Hopping as well as they know,
Speedy here and slowly there
The sack race is fun for eyes to share,

The wagon takes all on a ride
Sitting on haybales as a guide
Into the field around the farm
Catching the breeze on a day that's warm

The food, the food of course is best,
The carrot cakes are given the test,
The one with ginger takes the prize,
It's taste has the biggest size.

Vegies, noodles, potatoes and bread,
So wonderful it goes to the head,
Blended with good beer and wine
A spread has never been so divine.

So, thanks to Mimi and all the hands,
Parker, Morgan, Dana, the band,
From grownups, tweeners and lads,
A finer time has never been had.

Thanks Mimi!

Lori Baker

Fried Green Tomatoes

Vegetarian Cooking for Everyone by Deborah Madison

4 medium sized green tomatoes
3/4 cup fine cornmeal
3-4 Tablespoons vegetable oil
salt & pepper
Green Chile Mayonnaise

Slice the tomatoes crosswise 1/3 to 1/2 inch thick. Press each piece into a plate of cornmeal and coat on both sides. Heat oil in a wide skillet over high heat until hot enough to sizzle a drop of water. Add tomatoes, reduce heat to medium and fry on both sides until golden. Remove to plate, season with salt and pepper. Green Chile Mayonnaise Add several minced and seeded jalapeños or 1-2 unseeded poblano or serrano chiles to 1 cup homemade or purchased mayonnaise.

Apple Stuffed Squash

One winter squash
2 sm. apples, unpeeled and diced
2 tbsp. diced celery
2 tsp. minced onion
2 tsp. butter, melted
2 tbsp. water
Cinnamon

Heat oven to 400 degrees. Cut squash in half. Remove seeds. Place cut side down on baking sheet sprayed with vegetable pan spray. Combine apples, celery and onion. Add butter and water. Put in small baking dish. Cover. Bake squash and apple stuffing for 45 minutes or until tender. Remove from oven. Fill squash with apple mixture. Sprinkle with cinnamon and serve. Yield: 2 servings.

