



WELL FED

Newsletter for Wellspring Farm CSA

www.wellspringcsa.com

August 10, 2009

In This Week's Share:

- Tomatoes – coming strong now
- Peppers – green and some purple
- Fresh Onions – sweet yellow ones
- Cabbage – from Dog River Farm in Montpelier (certified organic)
- Lettuce
- Summer Squash/Cucumbers
- Carrots
- Beets

PYO:

We're waiting on the cherry tomatoes and hot peppers. Not quite yet.
A little basil, and some beans

Question from a member last week...

Mimi – Would it be possible to give the small shares (like us) one tomato if there truly is not enough for both full & small share? I love the great food but admit to feeling disappointed that we could not get one tomato.

Of course you felt disappointed. So did we. We always want to give out an abundance of produce, but nature is really in charge here and we feel that constantly as farmers. From time to time, as crops begin to ripen, we only have a small quantity and not enough to go around. In those cases, rather than let the produce go by, we give it to our full shareholders who are much lower in number (35) than our small shareholders (100). When we do this, we also know that the crop will soon be more prolific and everyone will enjoy it. Last week and this week we have tomatoes for all. Yum!

Coming Soon: Sweet Corn, Melons, Eggplant

Farmer's Report: To Spray or Not to Spray?

This year is a very difficult one for potato and tomato growers in New England. I want to share information about how we are handling the challenges here. The disease Late Blight can tackle entire potato and tomato crops within a few days, leaving nothing but dead plants in its wake. This is now being considered an "epidemic" by New England's agricultural extension agents. We are scouting our crops nearly every day for signs of the disease. Extension agents are sending alerts to all farmers to plow in their crops immediately if they find the disease in order to curtail its spread. Non-organic growers can spray a variety of chemical fungicides on their crops to offer some protection. Organic growers have only one approved product that is considered a marginal protection against Late Blight: copper. Copper is a naturally occurring compound that acts as a general fungicide. Coating the healthy leaves of a plant impedes the fungus from establishing on the tissue. Even though copper does not offer guaranteed protection, it is the only tool in the organic toolbox. The decision to spray is difficult. On the one hand, CSA members may be sympathetic to the vagaries of each season and to the risk of crop loss. On the other hand, shareholders will be very disappointed if there are no tomatoes, which is almost certain to be the result if copper is not sprayed. Extension agents have informed growers that if they are not spraying anything, they should expect to lose their crops. And so, we have been spraying copper on our potato and tomato plants. The potatoes are buried underground and therefore have no contact with the copper, but the tomato fruits get sprayed and have residue. We take time to carefully wash each tomato (talk about labor intensive!), but you may find some greenish-blue spots on the tomato skin periodically. This is not dangerous to your health. The copper is not harmful to ingest in the quantities that remain on the fruits. Oral toxicity of copper is actually lower than caffeine and aspirin. With some luck and continued spraying we hope to have lots of tomatoes and potatoes for the remainder of the season.

Featured CSA Member

Name: Julie Hendrickson

Town: Montpelier

Wellspring member since: 2007

My idea of the perfect weekend is: one that includes family and friends, lots of activity like hiking and boating with a picnic on one of Vermont's beautiful lakes, and a great meal to share together.

What is the best meal you had this week? Probably dinner tonight.

Fresh tomatoes, tossed with olive oil, fresh garlic and basil that I got at the farm today tossed with pasta. A simple green salad, some Red Hen Bread and some chevre and Bijou from Vermont Butter and Cheese. Yum

Volunteering at Wellspring made me feel... like part of a wonderful community of people. Everyone was so friendly, interested in talking and learning about each other and sharing in this awesome job of harvesting the most wonderful produce. The time just flew by!



Featured CSA member **Julie Hendrickson** on the right, working member **Flora Justice** on the left, harvesting garlic on our volunteer day.

Thank you

Garlic Harvest Volunteers!!

Brenda Hawkins
Diana Batzel
Julie Hendrickson
Dan Zucker
Elissa Campbell
Emily Bandru
Rikki Thompson
Linda Boyd

We need bags! Please bring your clean, full sized plastic bags to CSA pick-up. We will save them for everyone's use.

We enjoyed working together in the fields, talking garlic, sampling roasted veggies and getting to know one another. Come on out for our next volunteer date, TBA.

Save the Date

Wellspring Harvest Fest

Farm games, live music, potluck, hayrides, and more.

Sunday, September 13, 2-5pm

CARROT AND BEET SALAD WITH GINGER VINAIGRETTE

1/4 cup minced shallot
2 tbsp. minced peeled fresh ginger
1 clove garlic, minced
1/4 cup rice vinegar
1 tbsp. soy sauce
1/2 tsp. Asian (toasted) sesame oil
Tabasco to taste
1/2 cup olive oil
4 cups finely shredded carrots
4 cups finely shredded peeled raw beets (about 3/4 pound)
Lettuce leaves, washed thoroughly, for garnish if desired

In a blender pure shallot, ginger, and garlic with rice vinegar, soy sauce, sesame oil, and Tabasco. With motor running add olive oil in a stream and blend until smooth.

In separate bowls toss carrots with half of the dressing and beets with remaining half. Divide carrot salad and beet salad among 6 plates and garnish with lettuce leaves. Serves 6. *Gourmet*, April 1994