



*this week's*

## HARVEST

### Spinach

Qty: 1 bunch

### Salad Mix

Qty: 1 bunch

### Kale

Qty: 1 bunch

### Joi Choi

Qty: 1 bunch

### Broccoli Rabe

Qty: 1 bunch

### Add-On Choices

#### Eggs

- Rushton Farm Co-op

#### Goat Cheese

- Shellbark Hollow

#### Honey

- Greenstone Gardens

#### Beef

- Crum Creek Farm



Week of June 9, 2008 ~ Issue no. 3

## IN THE BAG *tidbits from Fred*

Summer is almost here and the temperatures of the last few days are certainly letting us know. The warm days and cool evenings of what was a near perfect spring have turned into sweltering heat and scorching sun. While this may seem like a setback to some of the spring vegetables such as peas and lettuce, other crops such as tomatoes and eggplant are thriving. It is weather variables such as this heat wave that challenge, and occasionally reward, farmers.

Watermelon and cantaloupe were planted this weekend in the south field and the conditions were perfect. It is rare in Southeastern Pennsylvania to be planting melons in June in 90 degree temperatures, but the cantaloupes and watermelon seemed right at home as they moved from seed tray into the warm soil.

While the melons are enjoying sun and soil conditions similar to the Deep South, the broccoli and cauliflower are wondering what happened to spring. Their growth has stopped and they are ready to flower. The peas are being watered continuously in hopes of preserving the pods that have just begun to develop on their vines. The lettuce has decided to slow its growing until more seasonable temperatures return.

While the spring vegetables show some signs of suffering, the summer vegetables are flourishing. The zucchini are close to harvest size and the cucumbers are close behind. The first tomatoes are on the vine and growing by the day. Okra, eggplant and peppers are all benefiting from this early season blast of heat.

With changes in weather come changes in the field. If tended properly we hope to get the best of both worlds: a harvest overlap of spring and summer crops. I cannot remember zucchini and cucumbers being harvested the same week as peas and broccoli but with a little luck and a lot of work it may happen. If not, blame the weather!



-Fred

## THE DIRT *report from our field managers*

It was truly a pleasure to meet (almost) all our members last week and actually be able to give out some food after so many months of preparation. Not a day goes by that we don't feel fortunate to be growing in such a supportive and friendly community. The past week has been challenging with the heat stress on the plants and our bodies but there has been a good bit of beauty, too: a double rainbow after a thunderstorm; lines of lacewing eggs held aloft from cabbage leaves by exquisitely delicate filaments; the zucchini and peas growing in fast forward; and Max, the farm dog, bounding through fields of waist high grass in the late afternoon. We are working hard to keep our spring crops from flowering before we have a chance to harvest them but, unfortunately, plants don't always do as they're told. The sidebar in this newsletter is our best guess as to what we'll have for you this week, but things are changing so fast right now it's still just a guess. Thanks to all the lovely volunteers who have been and continue to be such a tremendous help in the garden and fields!

-Aaron

## HAPPENINGS *upcoming events at the farm*

Mark your calendars! Details forthcoming here or on the web site.

**July 27, 2008** - Midsummer Farm Celebration - 4:00 - 7:00 pm

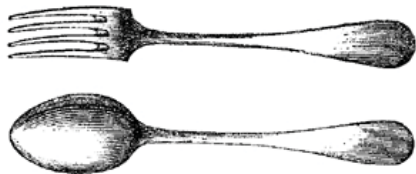
**September 7, 2008** - Community Farm Dinner - 7:00 pm

**October 18, 2008** - Final Harvest Celebration - 4:00 - 7:00 pm

## MORE DIRT *more musings from the field*

One of the joys of working on a small-scale farm is observing agroecological systems at work. Hand working beds, weeding, and scanning plants for insects allows for an intimacy with soil and plants not possible in a larger mechanized system. The relationship between those insects we deem “pest” and those we find “beneficial” in the ecological system we have created to produce food has been fascinating to watch unfold here at Rushton Farm. In the early spring, we planted our cool weather crops and the aphids found them almost immediately. While debating the pros and cons of using safer soap to control the aphids on our Swiss chard, the lady beetle population came to the rescue. Lady bug larvae can eat up to 40 to 50 aphids a day, an effective control making the use of spray unnecessary. As the season has warmed, more insects, both problematic and beneficial, have arrived. As the waves of pests arrived - aphids, cabbage looper, Colorado potato beetle, cucumber beetle, they have been invariably followed by a corresponding wave of beneficial insects - soldier beetles, hover flies, rove beetles, and lacewings. In this system of farming, one of the best tools a farmer can have is the patience to allow nature to correct for the imbalances that inevitably arise in an ecological system.

-Ashley



## RECIPES *what to do with those veggies*

### Spicy Broccoli Rabe

2 tablespoons olive oil  
 3 garlic cloves, smashed  
 1 red bell pepper, cut into thin strips  
 1 1/2 pounds broccoli rabe, hollow stems trimmed, blanched, and drained  
 1/2 to 3/4 teaspoon dried hot red pepper flakes  
 1 cup chicken broth

Heat the olive oil in a saute pan over medium high heat. Add garlic and cook for 1 minute. Add red pepper and saute until softened. Add broccoli rabe and hot pepper flakes, and coat with oil. Add broth, cover pan and cook until rabe is tender, about 4 more minutes.

Don't skip the blanching! This reduces bitterness of the broccoli rabe.

- adapted from Gourmet Magazine

### Braised Kale

1 tablespoon olive oil  
 2 cups thinly sliced onions  
 1 teaspoon salt  
 12 turns freshly ground black pepper  
 1/2 teaspoon red pepper flakes  
 2 tablespoons minced garlic  
 8 cups (firmly packed) torn and stemmed kale pieces  
 2 cups chicken stock  
 Splash cider vinegar

Heat the oil in a large skillet over high heat. Add the onions, salt, pepper, and red pepper flakes and stir-fry for 2 minutes. Add the garlic, kale, and stock and cook, stirring occasionally, for 8 to 10 minutes; add a splash of cider vinegar in the last minute of cooking. Remove from the heat. Serve immediately.

-adapted from Emeril Lagasse