



Week of September 15, 2008 ~ Issue no. 17

*this week's*
**HARVEST**

*This list may change, but this is our best guess at printing time.*

Peppers  
Eggplant  
Tomatoes  
Joi Choi  
Beans  
Melons  
Arugula  
Beets  
Cilantro  
Basil  
Dill

**Pick-your-own:**

Cherry Tomatoes  
Flowers  
Sage  
Parsley  
Rosemary  
Thyme  
Cilantro

**Add-On Choices**

Eggs from Rushton Farm  
Co-op  
Goat Cheese from  
Shellbark Hollow  
Beef from Crum Creek  
Farm


**IN THE BAG** *tidbits from Fred*

The harvest moon rose last night and the fields of Rushton Farm were truly a sight to behold. Traditionally the full moon closest to the equinox would signify harvest time and farmers would be work well into the evening to bring the crops in from the field. It is the climax of the season at Rushton Farm and tomato plants hang heavy with fruit next to fields full of pumpkins just beginning to turn orange. This is my favorite time of the growing season with the bounty of summer overlapping with the fall harvest. This has been reflected in the weekly shares, as the last couple of weeks have been the most bountiful of the season.

Autumn arrives next week and with it comes the reality that our first frost is not far behind. We have many frost hardy crops to look forward to including broccoli, Brussels sprouts, winter squash and fall greens but with the first frost the summer vegetables will fade. While we are at our peak in this season's harvest I urge our members to take advantage of the last taste of summer. We will be offering paste tomatoes for making sauce along with our regular heirloom varieties. The melons should hang on for a couple more weeks as will the summer squash. Basil, cilantro and dill are still plentiful but once the nights turn chilly they will drop off. Both the sweet and hot peppers are beautiful right now. We have plenty of hot peppers and large quantities are available. Of course don't forget the okra. The Rushton Farm staff has experience canning and freezing fruits and vegetables so please ask if you want to try and preserve the summer harvest. Enjoy the last taste of summer and if you get a chance, take a walk in the harvest moonlight.

-Fred


**THE DIRT** *report from our field managers*

The farm continues to evolve on a daily basis. The summer cover of buckwheat is now in full flower, much to the delight of the honey bees and birds, and it is time to incorporate it back into the soil before it sets seed. In its place, and in other areas where we have cleared out the crops for the season, we will sow a fall green manure mix made up of winter rye, field peas, ryegrass, crimson clover, and hairy vetch. The benefits of this mix for the soil are numerous. In addition to the important erosion control these cover crops will provide over the winter months, they will give back to the soil what we have taken in the form of nutritious vegetables. The field peas, clover, and ryegrass will winter kill to provide organic matter and the leguminous peas, clover, and hairy vetch have rhizoidal nodules which fix nitrogen from the atmosphere and make it available for plants to use in the soil. The hairy vetch and winter rye will grow back next spring and will provide competition against the annual weeds and additional nutrients for the crops to utilize.

The recent wet weather has given rise to a culinary treat not accounted for in our crop plan- wild mushrooms. Friday night's dinner consisted of an egg scramble with arugula, fresh herbs, and puffball mushrooms. Aaron spent part of Saturday afternoon looking for other wild fungi and, to his delight, found meadow mushrooms. Commonly found in old pasture land, this species of fungus is the parent of the white button mushroom you find in the supermarket. Meadow mushrooms are not as common as they once were in our landscapes due to the widespread use of herbicides on lawns and nitrate fertilizers in farm fields. The presence of them at Rushton Farm is a heartening indicator of a relatively healthy, unimpacted ecosystem. Just the same, please do not eat any mushrooms you find growing around the farm. For every edible species of fungus, there are a host of poisonous ones that can often look quite similar.

-Ashley and Aaron

## HAPPENINGS *upcoming events at the farm*

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

**October 18, 2008** - Harvest Celebration 5:00 - 8:00 pm



## RECIPES *what to do with those veggies*

### **Recipes from the Farmers**

*Over the course of the season, we've had a lot of opportunity to talk with many of you about the way we like to prepare some of the more common vegetables included in your share. We thought we'd take this week to summarize a couple of these recipes.*

#### **Quick Kale/Chard/Beet Greens**

Rinse and shred greens. For kale and chard, remove the midrib of the leaf, tearing chunks of leaf away with your fingers (the midrib can be tough, particularly on older leaves). For beet greens, simply slice the whole leaf into strips.

Sliver two cloves of garlic. Warm 1-2 tablespoons olive oil or butter in a skillet or wok at stir fry temp (medium heat). Drop in slivered garlic. Stir for one to two minutes, just until softened. Put in shredded greens and enough salt to taste. Stir greens until they are coated with oil. They should brighten in color a bit. Put in a small amount of water, just enough to quick steam the leaves (maybe 1/8 cup), and cover. Sometimes we don't add water, relying on the water from the rinsing process, but other times we like to get a little more steaming action.

After a couple minutes, check the greens. They should be softened but not slimy, still retaining some of their original form, but more tender. Different greens cook at different rates, beet greens being the quickest. None of these greens should take longer than six or seven minutes from start to finish in the skillet. Some people might like to include a capful of balsamic or other good vinegar at the steaming stage.

This method works with Asian greens like Joi Choi, too, but those crops cook much quicker, being far more succulent plants. The biggest mistake people generally make with greens, in our experience (and our palate), is over-cooking them.

- Aaron and Ashley

#### **Roasted Beets/Potatoes/Turnips/Carrots**

Preheat oven to 375. Cut root crop into dice-sized chunks. Bigger chunks take longer, smaller go quicker. Put chunks into a Ziploc bag with olive oil, salt, and pepper. Shake bag until chunks are well coated. Spread chunks out on an oiled cookie sheet. Bake for twenty to thirty minutes, stirring occasionally to prevent chunks from sticking to the pan. Ideally, the chunks should get a little bit crispy, retaining a soft center, but without burning. Different people will have different opinions about when they are 'done'.

- Aaron and Ashley