



this week's

HARVEST

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

Fennel
Kale or Chard
Leeks
Peppers
Potatoes
Salad mix
Savoy Cabbage
Spinach or Arugula

Pick-your-own:

Flowers
Sage
Parsley
Rosemary
Thyme

Add-On Choices

Eggs from Rushton Farm
Co-op
Goat Cheese from
Shellbark Hollow
Honey from Rushton Farm
Ground beef from Crum
Creek Farm



Week of October 13, 2008 ~ Issue no. 21

IN THE BAG *tidbits from Fred*

Columbus Day has come and with it the end of the planting season. This past weekend Ashley and Ellen Simmons worked up the last field bed where the fall garlic will be planted. The Rushton Farm staff has eagerly anticipated the planting of this crop as not only a sign that this season is over but that with the planting of the garlic next season has begun. Garlic is traditionally planted Columbus Day weekend before the first hard frost has had a chance to cool the ground. Bulbs that have been harvested in July are broken down into cloves that will be individually planted in the fall soil. These bulbs will form a root base before winter cold sends the newly forming garlic bulbs into dormancy. Next spring as the soil warms, the roots will fully develop creating a garlic bulb. In June the bulbs will form a seed head called a "scape". That scape will be harvested much like chives and used like a green for their garlic flavor. Cutting this scape helps the garlic to conserve the energy needed to fully develop in size. In early July the garlic will be harvested and cured to dry the bulb and intensify the flavor. Most farmers I know have a fondness for garlic because it is a unique link between the seasons. The small green shoots that emerge from the soil in October will serve as a reminder all winter of the promised harvest to come. It is a fitting way to put the farm to bed for winter and know that come spring the next season has already begun.

-Fred



THE DIRT *report from our field managers*

Last week Ellen Simmons and I prepared a bed for garlic. As we worked the soil and noticed the amazing tilth (or 'texture') of the soil, I remarked to Ellen how the season had come full circle. In April, we had worked in the same northwest corner of the farm preparing the first beds of the season for peas. Back then, we were contending with ground that hadn't been worked in decades. There were well established perennial weeds, such as multiflora rose and quack grass, not to mention a sizable ground cover of poison ivy. Preparing a single bed at that time took hours of work and multiple kinds of cultivating tools. In comparison, the bed work Ellen and I did last week took little effort, few tools, and minimal time. The effects of our spring cultivation efforts working in combination with the results of our summer buckwheat cover crop were clear. The weeds we encountered last week were far less numerous than in the spring, and annual species dominated versus the more difficult perennials. Likewise, the soil tilth was far improved over the spring. The deep rooting and soil building effects of the buckwheat was made evident by the ease in which our forks dug into the soil and by the perfect crumble of aggregates as we tested the soil with our hands. It was quite gratifying to see so directly the effects of our management practices in the course of one season. This week that bed will be planted with a "stiffneck" variety of garlic called Music. In the late winter and early spring, the beautiful blue green leaves of the garlic plants will stand out dramatically against the grays and browns of winter and signal the beginning of a new growing season.

-Ashley

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
RSVP and advance payment required - send \$10/person or \$25/family to the Trust.



RECIPES *what to do with those veggies*

Fennel and Leek Soup with Fennel Greens

2 fennel bulbs, 1 to 1 ¼ lbs
6 cups vegetable stock or water
2 medium leeks, white parts plus an inch of the greens, chopped
1 small potato, peeled and thinly sliced
2 Tbs olive oil or butter
1 onion, chopped
Salt and freshly milled pepper
½ cup cream, optional

Remove the tough outer layers of the fennel and use them in the stock, along with 1 cup chopped stalks, 2 cups chopped leek greens, the leek roots, and the potato skins. Chop ½ cup of the fennel greens and reserve.

Quarter the fennel bulbs, remove the core if tough, and thinly slice crosswise. Warm the oil in a soup pot and add the onion, fennel, leek potato, 1 teaspoon salt, and 1 cup of the strained stock. Cover and stew over medium heat for 20 minutes, stirring occasionally. Add the remaining stock and bring to a boil. Lower the heat and simmer, partially covered, until the fennel is tender, 15 to 20 minutes more. Stir in the cream and the reserved fennel greens. Taste for salt, season with pepper, and serve.

- Ashley Brister

Leek and Potato Soup

3 large or 6 medium leeks, white parts only, finely chopped
1 ½ pounds potatoes, scrubbed well
2 Tbs butter
Salt and freshly milled pepper
Milk or water to thin the soup, if needed

Set the leeks in a bowl of water to soak while you prepare the potatoes, then lift them out with a strainer, letting any sand fall to the bottom. Quarter the potatoes lengthwise and thinly slice them.

Melt the butter in a wide soup pot, add the leeks and potatoes, and cook over low heat, covered, for 10 minutes. Add 7 cups water and 1 ½ teaspoons salt and bring to a boil. Lower the heat and simmer, partially covered, until the potatoes are soft to the point of falling apart, about 35 minutes. Press a few against the side of the pan to break them up and give the soup body. If needed, thin the soup with milk or water and heat through. Taste for salt, season with pepper, and serve. (A little cream can replace the milk if you wish to enrich what is really quite a meager soup. If your soup is very thick because of the type of potato used, thin it with milk or water first, then add a small amount of cream at the end to give it fullness.)

- Ashley Brister