



# BROOKWOOD COMMUNITY FARM CSA NEWSLETTER

JULY 11 2010

## Field Notes

by Jason McCartney

So, for people who didn't notice... it was a bit hot last week. Okay ... it was extremely hot, and I'm starting to forget what rain looks like. While this weather has been a bit hard on me, it's also been hard on some of the plants. Lettuce and salad mix has been especially hard hit and most likely will not be as prevalent in the share over the next few weeks. The celery has also suffered and what was left of the spring brassicas are pretty much gone. Other plants, however, are simply loving the weather. The tomatoes are looking amazing, the peppers are shooting up, and the cucumbers and summer squash are producing very well.

As for the farm tasks, irrigation has been a top priority and has taken up a huge amount of time. (On the plus side, weeds have stopped germinating due to the lack of rain, allowing us to catch up on many of our weed problems).

The share this week is an odd mix. We're sitting in the gap where spring crops-- peas, kale, broccoli, turnips, radishes, scallions, mini onions--have had their

day, while we're still awaiting the arrival of the true summer crops (tomatoes, peppers, eggplant, beans). This, on top of poor germination of certain crops resulted in shares that are less-well rounded than I'd personally consider ideal .

Nonetheless, I'm starting to get excited about the approaching tomato season. This week I had my very first tomato from the farm, and my first field-grown tomato of the season. While it will still be a few weeks before significant quantities start to pour in, the plants look awesome. We have chosen over twenty (!) varieties of hybrid and heirloom tomatoes this season and so far they couldn't be happier. So as I bake in the sun on those those 90-plus degree days, it's really rewarding to look over and see them growing in front of my eyes.

*Jason's Field Notes  
continues on page 2*

## Harvest List- This Week's Share:

Carrots  
Beets  
Purslane  
Fresh Garlic  
Swiss Chard  
Cukes and  
Squash  
Kale  
PYO Herbs

*Coming  
Soon...!  
Tomatoes  
Peppers*



*Field Notes, cont'd from page 1*

We are going to be doing a "pick-your-own" herb garden this year. I'm very excited about this, though, due to its limited size, it does make me think of the "tragedy of the commons." So, while it may appear that we are being a bit controlling, we are going to be limiting both the size and the variety available to be picked to ensure continuous growth. There will be clear labels as well as descriptions of how to pick each variety. So we ask that people pick only during scheduled CSA hours, try to limit the amount, be careful to stay in the pathways, and keep an eye on children. Signs will be in place to help with this process.

Thanks for reading. I think it's time to pull out the rain sticks!

Jason

### Volunteer Drop in Hours

Yes ..it's been warm! But we would still love to see in the fields you no matter how long you can stay!

Wednesdays: 7am – noon at  
BRADLEY

First and third Saturday of every  
month:  
8am – noon AT BROOKWOOD

Questions? Email Anna at  
[volunteer@brookwoodcommunityfarm.org](mailto:volunteer@brookwoodcommunityfarm.org)

## Vegetable of the Week

### **PURSLANE** (*Portulaca oleracea*)

Common purslane (Spanish, *verdolaga*), is a member of the Portulacaceae family, which comprises more than 120 different species. Other members of the purslane family include moss rose, miner's lettuce, and redmaids (desert rock purslane). It is a weedy summer annual species that is abundant throughout the world, invading vegetable gardens, bare areas, low-maintenance lawns, ornamental plantings, and agricultural areas. Wild purslane skirts along the ground of vegetable gardens everywhere and is a major presence in both of our fields. Purslane is a familiar wild green in many areas, used by different cultures and called by many names. It has been cultivated in India and the Middle East and has been popular in Europe since the Middle Ages. It was first identified in the United States in 1672 in Massachusetts, and in this country, common purslane is a minor crop whose popularity is due to its use in ethnic cooking and its reputed health benefits thanks to bioprotective nutrients (antioxidants, vitamins, and amino acids).

When young, purslane can be added to salad with no preparation. Just wash it and pluck the clumps of fleshy leaves from their stems. It is succulent, crispy and a bit tart. Some folks use them in potato salads, add them to soups or sauté them with butter and mushrooms. An excellent crunchy salad plant, it is said to blend well with hotter-flavored salad herbs. Hispanic cooks fry them with onions and add them to pinto beans. In the Haitian community it is known as *coupier*. A woman who saw it at the market last year said "My grandmother fed me this! She knew it was really good, really nutritious." Try some this week and let us know what you think.





## Gazette

### Share Pickup times this week:

Tuesday 7/13 : 1pm - 6pm

Thursday 7/15 : 1pm - 6pm

Saturday 7/17 : 9 am - 12pm

### Shared Harvest Winter CSA - It's not too early!

*What's in the share?* Plenty! You'll receive your usual storage crops - carrots, beets, celeriac, garlic, onions, potatoes, sweet potatoes, popcorn, and more. But you'll also find weather-tolerant green stuff like kale, spinach, broccoli, bok choy, brussel sprouts,

*Time frame and pickups?* You have TWO times frames to choose from (two-month or three-month) and TWO pickup location options (Lexington or Canton). Each month you will receive about 40 pounds of produce, meaning about 10 pounds of food to feed you and your family each week.

*Cost?* \$160 for one month or \$240 for two months. E-mail Gretta Anderson at [GrettaAnderson@earthlinke.net](mailto:GrettaAnderson@earthlinke.net) and request a subscription form.

For more information and FAQs: <http://sharedharvestcsa.blogspot.com/2009/01/faq-about-09-winter-csa.html>

### CAUTION: Watch out for the sunflowers!

Baby sunflowers are growing horizontally across our flower bed and along side the compost pile (you'll see two rows). Please watch your children and your feet when venturing around the flower bed and compost pile!

### Pesto Shares!

*What's in a share?* 2 pounds of basil and 2 heads of garlic

*Why?* Because we have lots of basil growing and garlic is ready! Because it's delicious. Because it keeps well in the refrigerator. And because, well-you love pesto!

*How long?* Just for the week of July 18th

*How much and where do I pay?* \$12 for the share, and you can pay at pickup by dropping off a check or money order in an envelope marked with your name and "Garlic share" on it.

*How do I make my reservation?* Email: [brookwoodfarmer@gmail.com](mailto:brookwoodfarmer@gmail.com)

### Wish List

Spray bottle; riding mower; pruners; scissors; towels; 250-ft. tape measure; file cabinets to organize seeds (preferably metal or wood)

## Voices from the Farm Community

*Martin Weiss, Milton Academy '10, wrote his reflections on his month volunteering with us for his senior project in May. We are happy to say that he will also be one of our interns!*

At the end of their senior year at Milton Academy, students may propose an alternative way to spend their last month at the school, planning a project that has some personal and academic value instead of taking classes. This May, I decided to spend 18 hours a week at Brookwood Farm, with another few hours a week dedicated to planning the garden that Milton Academy will plant next year. (I also spent another 20 hours each week reading *War and Peace*.)

When I first arrived at Brookwood bleary-eyed and a little sweaty from the five-mile bike ride that started at 7 AM, I was a complete novice. I'd never worked on a farm before and the only time I'd been to Brookwood was on a field trip during which we managed to plant about one row of leeks. We were an example of neither proficiency nor efficiency. But that group did display some real enthusiasm, and that's what I brought with me that morning at the beginning of May.

Over time, under Anna's constant watch, I gradually learned how to not make a total mess of the farm, destroy tools, over-water seedlings, or otherwise embarrass myself. On those not-so-rare occasions when I did "blow it," Jason was there with some quick wit and a helping hand. And how could I complain about laying plastic in the pouring rain or under a blistering sun when Judy would get there before me in the morning and stay far later in the day?

During my month at the farm, I realized that life outside isn't like life at high school. At Milton Academy you're simply expected to look out for yourself, get good grades, and stay out of trouble. Real life takes grit and empathy. It's about showing up, day after day, because there is a job that needs to be done, and I can help.

I did what I could for the farm that month, and though I've since graduated, I hope to come back to Brookwood to continue volunteering. The farm has given me so much—time to think, time to talk, knowledge about plants, a lot of laughs, and, of course, a farmer's tan—that I just can't bear to not keep giving back. --Martin

## Save the Date!

Our second **CSA potluck** will be on **Thursday, July 29th** at 6pm in the red barn.

Bring a dish and/or drinks to share – enough to feed 4 hungry people!  
**BYOS: Bring your own silverware! AND bring instruments to jam if you wish!**



## Recipes featuring Fennel

### PASTA WITH GOLDEN FENNEL

From: *Local Flavors* by Deborah Madison

2-3 Fennel bulbs, including the greens  
 2 Tablespoons unsalted butter  
 1 Tablespoon olive oil  
 Sea salt and freshly ground pepper  
 Grated zest and juice of one lemon  
 1 Garlic clove, minced  
 1 lb fettuccine  
 Parmigiano-Reggiano cheese

1. Peel the outer layers of the fennel, then quarter the bulbs, setting aside the greens, and slice thinly. Heat a large pot of water for the pasta.

2. Melt one tablespoon of butter with the olive oil in a wide skillet. Add the fennel and sauté over high heat, stirring occasionally, until browned in places, 7-10 minutes. Season with 1 teaspoon salt. Toss with lemon juice, then add 1 cup water. Reduce the heat and cook, covered, until the liquid has evaporated. Add another ½ cup water and continue cooking in this fashion until the fennel is very soft and deep gold in color, about 25 minutes in all. Season with pepper. Chop a handful of fennel greens- about 1/3 cup- with the garlic and lemon zest and set aside.

3. Add salt and the pasta to the boiling water and cook until the pasta is al dente. Scoop it out and add it to the pan with the fennel and the chopped greens. Taste, and season with salt and pepper. Serve with the cheese, finely grated or thinly shaved over the top.



### CHOPPED SALAD (*Gourmet*, July 2006)

This salad is great for picnics. It has all the components of a family favorite: beautiful color, satisfying crunch, and a delicious dressing. Yield: Makes 10 to 12 side-dish servings

10 oz frozen black-eyed peas (not thawed)  
 1 lb zucchini, trimmed  
 1 medium fennel bulb (sometimes labeled "anise"), stalks discarded  
 1/2 cup finely chopped scallions (about 4)  
 2 tablespoons finely chopped fresh dill  
 3 tablespoons cider vinegar  
 2 tablespoons fresh lemon juice  
 1 tablespoon coarse-grain mustard  
 1/2 teaspoon black pepper  
 1/2 teaspoon cayenne  
 2 tablespoons salt  
 1/3 cup extra-virgin olive oil  
 2 3/4 cups fresh corn (from about 4 ears)  
 1 lb frozen shelled edamame (not thawed)

Bring 3 quarts water to a boil in a 5- to 6-quart pot, then cook black-eyed peas, partially covered, until tender, about 20 minutes.

While peas are cooking, cut zucchini and fennel into 1/4-inch dice. Whisk together scallions, dill, vinegar, lemon juice, mustard, pepper, cayenne, and 1 1/2 teaspoons salt in a large bowl. Add oil in a slow stream, whisking until emulsified.

Add zucchini and fennel to dressing.

When peas are tender, transfer with a slotted spoon to a sieve set over a large bowl, reserving cooking water in pot, and cool peas slightly, then add to salad.

Return water to a boil and add remaining 1 1/2 tablespoons salt, then cook corn and edamame, uncovered, until tender, 6 to 7 minutes. Transfer to sieve to cool slightly, then add to salad and stir to combine. Cool salad completely and serve chilled or at room temperature.