



BROOKWOOD COMMUNITY FARM CSA NEWSLETTER

OCTOBER 17 2010

Field Notes

Judy Lieberman

Brookwood Farm experienced its first frosty fall mornings this week, which was surprising since below freezing temperatures had not been predicted, but actually is a bit later than normal for us. The harvest on Tuesday and Thursday mornings was beautiful, while at the same time uncomfortably wet and cold. As often occurs at this time of year, a low mist settles over the fields at Brookwood while the sun is shining low in the sky and everything sparkles with light frost and dew drops. I remember looking at Evan, our young, weekly volunteer, harvesting broccoli in that bright, white haze and thinking how picturesque the scene was. Once I joined him in the task my mind was more focused on my very wet feet and cold hands and I noticed how basil, squash and pepper leaves had turned black from the early morning chill.

This is October farming, when you need to dress warmly in layers and appreciate the more physical work of cleaning up and spreading compost, or planting extended season crops inside the greenhouse. We still have plenty to do, lots of crops to harvest and fall garlic planting to look forward to, but the pace is definitely slowing down, and the rhythm of farming has become more gentle to match the shorter days and reduced plant growth. At this end of the growing season there is a moment of satisfaction and sweet relief before the planning starts for another farm year.

Before the regular CSA ends and the weekly newsletters stop, I wanted to share with you, our farm members, some important information about our efforts to achieve our mission of broadening access to fresh food and farming opportunities for all members of local communities. This newsletter includes a story about the Mattapan Farmer's Market, which is one part of this effort. Produce donations are another component of our distribution strategy, a way to share the farm harvest with those who lack the means to purchase fresh food. This year Brookwood Community Farm donated lots of food to four programs each week of the CSA season. We have been recording these donations so as soon as I have a chance to add up the numbers I will know exactly how much produce went to the folks who use these pantries, but I already know that the fresh food made a huge difference to those who received it and that it wasn't enough to reach all those who wanted fresh fruits and vegetables. Here is a brief description of the programs the farm donates to each week:

(continued page 2)

This Week's Share

Leeks
Lettuce
Parsnips
Carrots
Arugula
Turnips
Salad Mix

Volunteer Drop-in Hours

(Last of the season!)

Come out to the farm while we're finishing up the season! It's nippy, but a good reason to work out in the fields and build up some sweat!

Wednesdays from 9am-12pm at BRADLEY

Saturday, October 23rd from 9am - 12pm at BROOKWOOD

Be sure to see important notices regarding shares on page 3!

Field Notes, *cont'd from page 1*

Germantown Neighborhood Center, Quincy

The Germantown Neighborhood Center provides critical support services to the Germantown community of Quincy, where the percentage of people living in poverty is four times greater than in the overall City of Quincy. The GNC food pantry distributes food to over 550 low-income families who are registered with the pantry.

The pantry director, Susan Walsh, tells us that most of the food items are canned or boxed and that fresh produce is considered a luxury. "We can't get enough to satisfy our clients. The donations that BCF made to our pantry were gone almost as soon as they were put on the shelves." Ed, the driver who picked up produce at Brookwood each Monday, asked if we could add another day so that more people could get fresh produce, but so far, this has not been possible since we have other donations scheduled for the rest of the week.

Plant A Row For Haiti

This year, BNAN expanded the pilot program "Produce to Pantry," an initiative to deliver produce donated by community gardeners to two local food pantries in Mattapan. As a result of this January's earthquake, Boston is resettling Haitians who are joining their families and friends living here in Boston. For some, it has become a decision between buying food for their family in Boston and sending money to their family in Haiti. Therefore, any contribution of food to Boston Haitian families helps earthquake victims.

BNAN's partnership with HAPHI in Mattapan provides a gardening link to Boston's Haitian community. The "Plant a Row for Haiti" project organizes produce pick up and distribution once per week. The produce is picked up and driven by volunteers to Mattapan where it is sorted, weighed, and delivered to two food pantries. Brookwood Community Farm is among three local farms and ten community gardens that participate in this effort. I have not been able to go to these sites but I hear that all the produce quickly finds good homes and that folks have been very excited about the food that comes from our farm, especially the purslane!! A group from HAPHI visited the farm this summer and while I talked about the farm, two of the older, Creole-speaking women

spent their time harvesting purslane to take home. Two of the youth who worked at the farm this summer, Jeff and Steven, were also involved with HAPHI and the Mattapan Food and Fitness Coalition's Vigorous Youth, so it felt like a good connection to make.

Rosie's Place

Through their Farm Initiative, Rosie's Place partners with local farms to help place fresh fruits and vegetables onto the lunch and dinner plates served in the dining room and onto the shelves of their Food Pantry for guests to take home to their families. Rosie's Place Groceries is a food pantry that allows 1,250 women each month to take home 20 to 40 pounds of foods that their families prefer and enjoy. While many food pantries hand out pre-bagged groceries, Rosie's guests shop among shelves set up like a grocery store. The dining room and the grocery programs serve as food and income supplements. Access to no-cost meals and groceries enable women to use their nominal incomes for other basic necessities such as rent and utility bills. Brookwood Farm is an essential partner in this effort! The vegetables that Brookwood Farm donates make a huge difference in helping Rosie's Place to provide healthy food for their guests.

Milton Food Pantry

The Milton Food Pantry is located in the Parkway United Methodist Church and has served families in Milton since 1991. Currently over 100 families in Milton receive support from the Pantry. Each Saturday morning, one of our CSA members delivers farm produce to the church, where volunteers divide it up for distribution and community members eagerly anticipate the addition of fresh produce to the items they can collect. As a local farmer and Milton resident I am pleased to contribute to this program and share the farm's harvest with members of my community. It is one way of giving back since Milton has been a strong supporter of Brookwood Community Farm.

Thank you, farm members, for contributing to our mission of fresh food and farming for all, and helping us reach more folks who would otherwise not have access to fresh, organic produce. Your \$25 BCF membership directly supports these outreach efforts by covering the costs of seeds and production for the portion of the harvest that is donated or sold below cost. If you want to get more involved in our mission or have ideas/skills to contribute to this effort, we welcome your participation.

**Pick up times this week:**

Tuesday 10/19: 1 – 6pm

Thursday 10/21: 1 – 6pm

Saturday 10/23: 9am – 12pm

Important REMINDER to CSA members!!

Last regular CSA share pick-up for the 2010 season: Week of October 24th

Last FRUIT Share pickup: Week of October 24th

Important NOTE to EGG share members!!

Starting in November, eggs will only be available on Tuesdays for pickup since all the eggs will be delivered on Tuesdays from Brambly Farm. Please contact us at brookwoodfarmer@gmail.com if this is an issue and we'll figure out an alternative plan for your situation. Thanks for your cooperation!

Brookwood Extended Season CSA vs. Shared Harvest Winter CSA – What's the difference?

Produce: Our own Brookwood fall CSA will mostly consist of greens with a few scallions and root crops but the Shared Harvest CSA will contain a variety of produce drawn from different local farms in the area.

Length: Brookwood's Extended CSA last only in the month of November and has a pickup every week in which members pickup a week's worth of produce. Shared Harvest CSA lasts for 2-3 months and has a pickup every month in which members pickup a month's worth of bulk produce.

Cost: Our Brookwood fall CSA is \$50 for 3 weeks of extended season veggies. The Shared Harvest has a 2 or 3 month option that is \$160 and \$240 respectively.

Will I need both CSAs? To be honest, your decision will depend on the size of your family, your family's food consumption, and the ability to store produce. If you only wish to receive fresh vegetables every week, go with the Brookwood fall CSA. If you have the capacity to store produce well through the winter, go with the Shared Harvest CSA. If you're a family of 2-4, you'll most likely just need one or the other. If you're content in just receiving greens and root crops, Brookwood's fall CSA share will be just fine. But if you wish to receive addition items that Brookwood does not grow, such as potatoes, popcorn, and dried beans, Shared Harvest CSA is the way to go.

See Shared Harvest's website with more info: <http://sharedharvestcsa.com/>

Brookwood's Extended CSA Details:

Pickups: Tuesdays – 11/9, 11/16, 11/23 from 3-5:30pm

Cost: \$50 per share

What: Spinach, lettuce, mixed greens, turnips, radishes, kales, and others

Deadline to reserve your spot: Saturday, October 30th

Please email brookwoodfarmer@gmail.com to reserve your spot.

Note: We can only do one day a week due to our decrease in staff hours in November. We have also shortened the pickup hours because it gets dark and colder by 5pm in November. Please email us if you anticipate a conflict during the pickup times, but still would like to participate in the share.

Mattapan Farmer's Market 2010

by Shani Fletcher

Hi everyone! My name is Shani Fletcher and this summer, I ran Brookwood Community Farm's stall at the Mattapan Farmer's Market. Coordinated by the Mattapan Food and Fitness Coalition (MFFC), the market is in its third year, and is held in the parking lot of the Church of the Holy Spirit in Mattapan Square.

Like any new farmer's market, it takes a while for marketing and word-of-mouth to have their effect, so we began the summer with a trickle of customers. However, as neighbors told neighbors, daughters called mothers, and friends brought each other along, we saw the numbers of people coming and the amount of vegetables sold increase week by week throughout the summer. With the help of several of the Vigorous Youth, a youth council within the MFFC, we served the ebb and flow of customers each week, including some enthusiastic regulars (and some crankier regulars, too!), with beautiful fresh fruit and veggies from the farm. Some of the most popular items included green peppers, eggplants, plums, tomatoes, onions, and of course, corn!

It was such a highlight of my summer to be a part of this market community each week, building relationships with the young people who helped run it, getting to know MFFC members who came by to show their support, and even learning a bit of Creole while serving this largely Haitian community.

A big part of Brookwood Community Farm's mission is to improve "access to healthy, affordable, freshly grown fruits and vegetables in urban communities," which is why I wanted to work here. As we all know, times have gotten tight, and they've gotten especially tight for families who were already low-income and who are facing other big social and economic challenges including immigration, unemployment, and community violence. In times like this, a place like the Mattapan Farmer's Market, which offers delicious local and organic produce at affordable prices, can make a tremendous difference in the health and well-being of a community. I'm so pleased I got to be a part of it, and am already looking forward to next summer!



*Glorie, Shani, & Chanelle at the
Mattapan farmers Market*

Nothing Gold Can Stay

**Nature's first green is gold
Her hardest hue to hold.
Her early leaf's a flower;
But only so an hour.
Then leaf subsides to leaf.
So Eden sank to grief,
So dawn goes down to day.
Nothing gold can stay.**

By Robert Frost

*The flower patch at Brookwood in
October*

Leek and Swiss Chard Quiche

provided by Simca Horwitz

This quiche is a wonderful addition to a brunch, or paired with a salad, is a great light dinner. It's satisfying without being too heavy as it relies on milk rather than cream in the filling.

Quiche Crust:

1 recipe your favorite pie crust or purchased pie crust (9-inch), par-baked in a 375 degree oven until just starting to turn golden brown.

Filling:

1/2 bunch swiss chard (about 2 cups chopped) or substitute spinach or other favorite leafy green

3 leeks, green parts removed, and sliced

1 tbsp olive oil or butter

4 eggs

1/2 cup gruyere or other cheese-of-choice, grated

1 1/4 cups milk

1/4 tsp salt

1/4 tsp pepper

1/8 tsp nutmeg

Preheat oven to 375. Finely chop the chard stems and sauté with the sliced leeks in olive oil until they begin to soften. Rough chop the chard leaves and add to the stems and cook until they just begin to wilt. Set aside. In a large bowl whisk the milk, eggs, salt, pepper and nutmeg. Stir in the cheese and the chard/leek mixture. Pour into the cooled, par-baked pie crust and bake until set, about 35 minutes. If the edges of the crust begin to brown before the filling sets, cover with foil. This is great right out of the oven, but can be prepared ahead and then reheated, covered, in a 375 degree oven for about 15 minutes.



Note from an Editor

This being is my last week on the newsletter, I wanted to thank everyone at the farm for the privilege of working on this project, for providing such great photo opps, and most of all, for the opportunity to have worked the volunteer hours I did over these months. From laying drip lines to tying tomatoes to creating hoop covers to transplanting, seeding, weeding, and harvesting, it was an education unlike any other. Brookwood, to my mind, exemplifies everything we mean when we use the word "sustainability," and the folks working there truly have their hearts, minds, and souls in the right places.

If you're looking for off-season activity, I'd highly recommend the following (non tech) books: Michael Pollan, *The Omnivore's Dilemma*; Raj Patel, *Stuffed and Starved*; Daniel Imhoff, *Food Fight*; Joel Salatin, *Everything I want to Do Is Illegal*; Peter Singer, *The Way We Eat*; Jonathan Safran Foer, *Eating Animals*; Scott Chaskey, *This Common Ground: Seasons on an Organic Farm*; Mike Madison, *Blithe Tomatoe*; Barbara Kinsolver, *Animal, Vegetable, Miracle*.

I'd also suggest signing up for the Northeast Organic Farmers Association newsletter—and attending their winter conference in January! And check out Edible South Shore (they host regular events in Kingston) at www.ediblecommunities.com/southshore and the Southeastern MA Ag Partnership (another terrific newsletter) <http://www1.umassd.edu/semag/>.

If you're involved in any local food movements and events, drop me a line. I'd love to help and to publicize: michaelhoran@comcast.net.

Thanks to ALL for making these three memorable seasons.--Michael Horan



The pumpkin raffle winner at the October potluck!