



# BROOKWOOD COMMUNITY FARM CSA NEWSLETTER

OCTOBER 3 2010

## Field Notes

by Jason McCartney

Last week was interesting with a visit from the FDA, finding wild mushrooms and more transitions to fall crops. Those transitions should continue this week.

Tuesday morning we had our first inspection by the FDA. I had never had the farm inspected before this point and was slightly surprised to see them here. As it turns out, one of the jobs of the FDA is to do food inspections, including randomly selected farms. Overall, this is a policy I am a fan of, wanting to eat food that is not contaminated. But it *was* weird. The whole time it seemed as if they were waiting for me to tell them that I had to call my lawyer. With numerous signed injunctions and far more legal documents than I'm used to seeing, they definitely had the legal aspect covered. As for the inspection, I was sadly disappointed. I was sort of looking forward to a thorough inspection, getting mentally prepared for their questions. This didn't really happen. The closest they ever got to the field was about 50 feet away. While they did ask me to go pick some lettuce for them to take to their lab to test for pesticide use, this was pretty much it. Now, not using pesticides, I'm not particularly concerned with the findings. Basically they were here for two hours waiting for me to give them 6 heads of lettuce and file the four legal documents that were required.

Anyhowof, while part the job of the FDA is to do food inspections it is definitely not their priority. One of the inspectors was waiting to do research on pharmaceuticals and was hired to do that, but his first year means doing the doing food inspections required of everyone, and he clearly didn't seem to be into it. Though who would be, when all you do is ask questions and have a sample provided? I would expect higher standards and I think that the food system is too important to let it be tested under such lax standards. These are the protectors of our food system—people with no experience in agriculture at any level, far more concerned that rules and legal documents are filed than actually looking for

## THIS WEEK'S SHARE

Salad Mix

Broccoli

Lettuce

Carrots or Swiss Chard

Cauliflower or Cabbage

Dill

Shallots

PYO Herbs

## Volunteer Drop-in Hours

Come lend a hand and join us for fall fun in the fields!

**Wednesdays** from 8am-12pm  
at BRADLEY

**1<sup>st</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> Saturdays** from  
9am-12pm at BROOKWOOD

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



## Save the Date! Pumpkin-fest CSA Member Potluck/Celebration Saturday, October 16, 12noon-2:00pm

Please join us for our last CSA potluck of the season and enjoy fresh-baked pumpkin pies and other treats!

*Food assignments (by last name):* **A-F:** main dish **G-M:** salad **N-R:** breads/rolls, cheese **S-Z:** side dish/veggies

Pies and drinks provided by Brookwood!!! Suggested donation \$5 per person; \$10/family

Please RSVP at [brookwoodcommunityfarm@gmail.com](mailto:brookwoodcommunityfarm@gmail.com) so we can estimate quantities of pies & drinks

Field Notes, *cont'd from p. 1*

problems. I don't know why I expected more. Really, them showing up was a surprise, but it should be better.

The other exciting event of last week was my second attempt at mushroom foraging. I've been inspired by mushrooms for a while now. I really want to get into growing them as well as foraging for them, though it is a bit of a challenging thing to get into. Somehow the prospect of eating potentially deadly items is a bit intimidating to me. Fortunately one of our farm volunteers is a far more experienced forager, and has pointed me in the direction of some easily identifiable mushrooms. The ones that he directed me to on Wednesday are commonly referred to as Chicken of the Woods. This was by far the largest harvest of edible mushrooms I had ever come across. After harvesting nearly 20 lbs. I brought them home and cooked up a huge portion. Hardly able to wait for them to finish cooking, I invited all of my roommates to join in tasting my glorious find. "Glorious" may be too strong of a word for the flavor. It turns out that the larger and older mushrooms turn stiff and woody and are no longer good to eat, and these made up the bulk of what I cooked. My roommates were not especially impressed with the outcome and most of it was thrown out. Next time it's going to be great.

This will be the week for celery. Celery is a crop that enjoys swampy conditions and cool weather. It is the first crop that we start in the greenhouse, usually in early February, and takes an extraordinarily long time to reach maturity. It has been growing for over six months. This has not been the ideal season for celery and the heads are small, though with far more flavor than the celery sold in the stores, making it perfect for soups and cooking.

Have a good week,

Jason

## THANK YOU 2010 WORKSHARES!

Along with our new and returning interns this season, our farm crew also consisted of workshares who came on a designated day of the week to help with the harvest in exchange for a share of vegetables. Unlike the youth interns who only work during the summer due to school conflicts, our workshares stay from beginning to end of our 20- week CSA share season. Workshares are a crucial aspect of the farm team in making sure our busy harvest mornings are successfully seen through. It has also been so lovely getting to know more about each one of them, learning about their reasons for joining us in the dirt, and seeing their passion for farming and food grow. We are so very grateful for their energy that they bring on those busy harvest mornings. Thank you to the following workshares:

Margaret Carels  
Sandy Johnson  
Trish Rooney  
Kristin McDonnell  
Brenda Gaff  
Jennie Coates  
Terry Bartlett

*Thanks,  
Anna*





## Gazette

### **Pick up times this week:**

Tuesday 10/5: 1 – 6 pm

Thursday 10/7: 1 – 6pm

Saturday 10/9: 9am – 12pm

### **GARLIC PLANTING at Brookwood!**

It's that time of year again to plant garlic for our next season's crop! Come out and lend a hand planting garlic on Saturday October 16th from 9am- 12pm (also conveniently scheduled before our last potluck of the season!) If you plan to also stay for the potluck after volunteering, we have a cooler to keep your potluck dish fresh, OR, if you have a crockpot, we can hook it up somewhere to keep your dish warm. Just let us know!

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

### **Extending the Harvest: Kimchi workshop**

Sunday, October 10, 1:00-3:00pm, at the Wakefield Estate in Milton

Learn how to prepare this delicious fermented cabbage dish of Korean cuisine so that you can enjoy Brookwood's fall vegetables for months to come! This workshop will be led by Kelly Lake, farm educator at Newton Community Farm. The workshop is free but space is limited, so please call to pre-register: 617-333-0924

### **1st Annual Tour de Coops**

Sunday, October 17, 12noon-3:00pm (rain date: Oct 24)

Brookwood is co-sponsoring this fun and unique tour of Milton's growing backyard poultry movement! The tour includes self-guided walking or driving tours as well as a guided bike tour that will visit a wide variety of chicken coops and designs. Talk to backyard chicken enthusiasts to learn the "how to's" of raising backyard chickens.

Maps for the self-guided tour will be available at 12noon at 148 Central Ave in Milton. The walking tour is designed to visit a number of coops all within a short distance. The guided bike tour will begin at 1:00pm from the parking lot at Turners Pond on Central Ave (Parking available), approx. distance 10 miles. Questions? Contact [brookwoodcommunityfarm@gmail.com](mailto:brookwoodcommunityfarm@gmail.com)

### **Wish list**

Wrenches, folding chairs, hot cider, delicious baked things

## Vegetable of the Week: Shallots

Shallots are a member of the Allium family (*Allium ascalonicum*), which also includes onions, leeks and garlic. Its name comes from Ascalon, an ancient Palestinian city where the shallot is thought to have originated. Crusaders from Asia are believed to have introduced the shallot to Europe. Shallots are formed more like garlic than onions, with a head composed of multiple cloves, each covered with a thin, papery skin. They are favored for their mild onion flavor and can be used in the same manner as onions. I find shallots to be more refined and gourmet than onions and I enjoy using them in salads, soups and many other dishes where they lend a wonderful flavor. This year we started our shallots from seed, back in late February, and were able to harvest a decent quantity of good sized, red-skinned bulbs, a definite improvement from last year's experience buying and planting "sets" in the field. (See *Recipe for Shallots on page 5*).

## What I Did Last Summer

by Trish Rooney

It is the first day of fall as I write this and the 40-ft maple in my backyard is just beginning to show color at its tip. My name is Trish and the long, sunny summer of 2010 was my second year as a Brookwood Farm workshare. It feels like more... perhaps because I've been following the farm for more years than that, but also because a weekly dose of harvesting in all kinds of weather brings a variety to the days that makes one remember the glorious early morning coolness, the weeded rows, the golden angle of a generous sun as well as the bone-chilling weep of a rainy sky onto water-thirsty cotton overalls. The year I didn't work at the farm, I missed it. There is something primal in knowing what the weather is doing to the crop.

What makes Brookwood unique? A couple of things come to mind: the raw entrepreneurial energy of the management team, the level of community involvement, and the variety of the produce. Other

farms have their own qualities, but Brookwood began as a start-up. Because the community helped, and because the management never blinked, Brookwood is now producing the widest range of produce I've seen anywhere.

Take for example, the husk cherry. Who could imagine that "summer's strawberry" would be an offering—it is a farmer's gift of love to you to grow (and pick!) such a fruit, and it has brought such delighted joy to members of my family who'd never seen, nor tasted such a wonder. Another favorite of mine has to be the pale green Lebanese summer squash, which I'd never had the opportunity to taste before this year, and which I will forever choose over its yellow cousin for its meaty creaminess and lack of seeds. If you haven't tried it, you should sign up now for a share next year because a sun-warmed squash will never be available to you from the grocery. And what about the fat lobes of purple-skinned garlic, and...

I hope to see you next year.



## RECIPES

**Mesclun Salad with cranberry and shallots**

*(adapted from a recipe given to me by Lisa Huban -- Judy)*

This recipe is meant to be flexible and the quantities listed are not precise. My version does not give specific amounts, so I just go by feel and taste each time I make it, but this salad is always a hit when I serve it. You can adjust to your own taste and substitute as desired. For a large salad use a ½ pound bag of greens and the following quantities of other ingredients, or use ¼ greens and halve everything else.

½ lb Salad Greens  
¾ cup chopped shallots  
1 cup crazins (dried cranberries)  
1 tablespoon honey  
1 tablespoon Dijon mustard  
1/3 cup olive oil  
3 tablespoons balsamic vinegar  
½ cup hazelnuts

In a heavy skillet, heat the olive oil, add chopped shallots and sauté until tender. Add crazins vinegar, honey, mustard and enough water to cover. Simmer to reduce the liquid. Toast the hazelnuts. Add nuts and shallot/crazin mixture over greens. Toss and serve.

**Butternut Bevy**

*From the Horn of the Moon Cookbook by Ginny Callan*

1 medium squash, peeled and cubed- 6 cups  
5 cups water or stock  
2 tablespoons oil (safflower or sunflower)  
2 cups chopped leeks or onions  
1 sprig fresh thyme or 1 teaspoon dried  
4 tablespoons butter  
1/3 cup unbleached white flour  
¾ cup cream  
½ teaspoon ground ginger  
1 teaspoon salt  
black pepper to taste

Combine squash and water or stock in a 4-quart soup pot. Bring to a boil, then lower heat, cover and cook until tender (approximately 25 minutes). Meanwhile, heat oil in a fry pan and sauté the onions or leeks with thyme until tender and lightly browned. Add to squash. Puree the squash and onions/leeks (in blender or with a blender stick in the pot) until almost smooth, leaving a few chunks. Return to pot.

In the fry pan, melt the butter over low heat. add the flour and stir 1 to 2 minutes until well mixed and lightly browned. Add cream and mix with a whisk until blended. Add to the soup, then return the soup to a simmer. Add ginger, salt and pepper. Simmer 15 minutes, uncovered and serve. Garnish with almonds if desired.

**Baked Winter Squash Soup**

*From The New Basics Cookbook by Julee Rosso & Sheila Lukins*  
*Here is one more winter squash soup that uses any of the other types we gave out in the share last week (and more coming). "The magic of this soup comes from baking all your vegetables first to release a rich depth of flavor."*

4 squash (about 2 lbs each)- combination of acorn, butternut, delicata, buttercup, etc.)  
8 tablespoons (1 stick) unsalted butter  
8 teaspoons dark brown sugar  
3 carrots  
1 large onion, thinly sliced  
10 cups vegetable or chicken stock  
¾ teaspoon ground mace  
¾ teaspoon ground ginger  
pinch of cayenne pepper  
salt to taste

1. Preheat oven to 350 degrees
2. Cut the squash in half lengthwise and discard the seeds.
3. Place the squash halves, skin side down, in a shallow baking pan. Place 1 tablespoon of butter and 1 teaspoon of brown sugar in the cavity of each squash half. Arrange the carrot and onion slices around the squash. Pour 2 cups of the stock in the pan, cover it tightly with aluminum foil and bake for 2 hours.
4. Remove the pan from the oven and allow the vegetables to cool slightly. Scoop the squash pulp out of the skin and place in the soup pot. Add the carrot, onions and the cooking liquid.
5. Add the remaining 8 cups stock, and the mace, ginger, cayenne and salt. Stir well and bring to a boil. reduce the heat and simmer, uncovered, for 10 minutes.
6. Puree the soup until smooth. Return to the pot (if pureed in a blender or food processor), adjust the seasonings, and heat through. Serve in bowls, if desired garnish with sour cream and chives.

OCTOBER  
*Robert Frost*

O hushed October morning mild,  
Thy leaves have ripened to the fall;  
To-morrow's wind, if it be wild,  
Should waste them all.

The crows above the forest call;  
To-morrow they may form and go.

O hushed October morning mild,  
Begin the hours of this day slow,  
Make the day seem to us less brief.  
Hearts not averse to being beguiled,  
Beguile us in the way you know;  
Release one leaf at break of day;  
At noon release another leaf;  
One from our trees, one far away;  
Retard the sun with gentle mist;  
Enchant the land with amethyst.  
Slow, slow!

For the grapes' sake, if they were all,  
Whose leaves already are burnt with frost,  
Whose clustered fruit must else be lost--  
For the grapes' sake along the wall.

