

STUDENT ORGANIC FARM CSA NEWSLETTER March 3, 2005

In your share this week:

- Onions
- Garlic
- Scallions*
- Baby Salad Mix*
- Carrots (NutriRed and/or orange) and/or Parsnips
- Komatsuna OR Tatsoi*
- Cabbage, red or green
- Optional extras: leeks, turnips

*items with a star were harvested from the hoopouses; the others were in cold storage or from the field (some leeks, root veggies, etc. still under mulch in the fields)

Announcements

1. MSU, Organic Growers of Michigan, and the Michigan Organic Food and Farming Alliance will co-host the 2005 Michigan Organic Agriculture Conference--Growing Michigan's Organic Future, on Saturday, March 5, from 8 am to 6 pm, at the Michigan State University Business School Complex--Eppley Center, located on Bogue Road and Shaw Lane, on the MSU campus in East Lansing, MI. Parking is free. The Conference also will offer an organic trade show with vendors of organic products and services, and educational program information. An organic lunch and refreshments will be provided to all conference participants. There was a registration deadline, but that's just to guarantee lunch. Walk-ins will be welcome! \$40 per person; \$25/student registration. See "What's up at the farm" section below for more info.

2. Volunteer Opportunity this week: We'll be seeding onions, leeks, celery, celeriac, and parsley Thurs and Friday. If you'd like to learn how to start those seedlings as transplants and pitch in, please call the farm phone: 230-7987 to coordinate volunteering (Thurs afternoon and/or Friday 11-4-ish).

ANOTHER VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITY: During Spring Break, CSA will still go on. As you can imagine, we'll be down to a bare bones crew that week. If you are available the **second week of March** to pitch in at the farm, particularly on Wednesday and/or Thursday for harvest and distribution, please call the farm phone. Thanks!

3. MSU and Student Organic Farm Alumna Andrea Corpolongo offers a "Foraging Foray: Spring Salad Stroll" **Saturday April 2nd 2005 at 12:30 pm**

At the Bunker Hwy Canoe Livery in Eaton Rapids

- Learn to responsibly harvest and prepare common "weeds" to make a nourishing spring salad
- Discover the food and medicinal value of plants you thought were pests such as dandelion, chickweed, chicory, and plantain
- Receive a handout with valuable information about ten common spring edibles and recipes for salads, main dishes, teas and more

-Share some delicious Pine Tree Tea

The cost is 20\$ per person (5\$ for children 10 and under) and the program lasts approximately two hours, space is limited so please call soon

For More Information or to Reserve a Spot Call:

**Andrea Corpolongo, Experienced Forager, Botanist, and Chef
517 663 1224**

Interview of the Week (on hiatus again this week)

(We could use some more roving reporters out there to interview each other....)

Each week (except this one) we'll interview a student farmer, a CSA member, a farm volunteer, or one of the many MSU staff and faculty who help keep the farm running.

What's up at the farm?

This past weekend several student farmers and John traveled to La Crosse, Wisconsin, for the Upper Midwest Organic Farming Conference (UMOFC). John presented workshops on season extension and on compost. Michelle, Jeremy, Emily, Jay, and Mikey were part of a panel of three student farms, including us, Iowa State, and U. of Wisconsin-Madison. Our workshop went great, and lots of folks were interested in what we're doing here. We'll show the powerpoint presentation at CSA pick-up one of these days, so you all can see what those students saw there. (Of course you can see the farm in person any day, so don't limit yourself to watching a computer at CSA pick-up). While that panel was good, the best part of the conference, in my mind, was a conversation that followed it. About 30 students, faculty, and student farm supporters (mostly students) from all over the Midwest gathered to brainstorm into being a coalition of student farms and farmers. Right now our plan is to "piggy back" a student farming conference onto the UMOFC next year, with the possibility of developing our own conference in the future. We've also agreed to host visits to each other's farms throughout the year for informal tours and Q and A sessions. MSU, Iowa, and UW-Madison are going strong already, albeit in different directions, and Minnesota, Chicago, Colorado, and Northland College are all starting or interested in starting student farms or gardens of their own. Stay tuned for updates....

This Saturday is the Michigan State Organic Conference, featuring the Nordells, a farming couple from the northeast who farm with draft animals. I saw a video from their farm once and was so fascinated with their system, I jumped at the chance to hear them speak in person this weekend (putting off a weekend of cross-country skiing to hear their talk!). If you're interested in draft animals on the farm, crop rotations, cover crops, pastures, and sustainable small-scale vegetable production, I think you'll enjoy their talk. It's Saturday morning, I believe at 9:00, but check the MOFFA web site for specifics: <http://www.moffa.org/>. There's plenty of other information to be had and interesting folks to meet on Saturday. Contact Doug Murray for information about the conference and trade show: DAMURRY@mei.net or 269-674-3078, PO Box 381, Paw Paw, MI 49079

What else? We're in the midst of a seed-a-thon this week, seeding onions, leeks, scallions, celery, celeriac, and parsley, the first batch of early spring transplants to go out in the fields (and some in the tunnels). If you'd like to come help seed some trays, please call the farm phone at 230-7987 for details. By the way, we're thinking of starting "First Saturday" or "Last Friday" work parties at the farm (last Friday or First Saturday, or something like that, of every month). How many volunteers are available on Fridays? Saturdays? Let us know if you're interested – we can use the help, and it's always more fun to do big jobs with more people.

New or Unusual Vegetables in Your Share this Week

New in your share this week: Scallions (yum!). It's been a while since these delicious Alliums have showed up in shares, but you'll see more of them this spring. We just seeded a bunch for mid-spring, and we're seeding even more for late spring.. You all know what to do with scallions, but let me suggest something: There is a cheese stall at the Lansing City Market, Hill's Cheese. They sell a triple-cream Brie "log," rolled in herbs, that looks like a giant white and green cinnamon roll. And it is ridiculously rich and yummy, *especially* with chopped scallions on crispy rye crackers (or pumpernickel toast, I bet). See what you think.

Recipe Ideas

1. Red Cabbage and Hummous: Are you looking for creative ways to use up that cabbage (those cabbages?) in the back of your fridge? My favorite red cabbage dish is very simple: use red cabbage leaves (fresh) to scoop us hummous, instead of bread or crackers. If you're the raw, adventurous type, make up a batch of sprouted hummous instead of the cooked-chickpea variety. Our friend Brian from Ann Arbor, the only raw-food metal-head chef, makes a killer raw hummous, and always serves it with fresh red cabbage leaves, either cut into strips and rolled up, nori-style, or still in a cabbage head: "peel your own" style. I recommend cabbage as a vehicle for any dippy-food: baba ghanoush, cream cheese dip, egg salad, whatever you can think of.
2. My latest version of "use up the roots" : Fridge and Cupboard Stew

If you're like me, you've got a few spare turnips, carrots, parsnips, beets, onions, garlic, etc. rolling around in the bottom of your refrigerator drawers or (for onions and garlic) hanging in the 3-tier wire mesh hanging basket. Tonight I made up a fabulous stew with "farm leftovers." I chopped up a beet, 2 rutabagas, 4 carrots, one giant turnip, 2 heads of garlic (starting to sprout – no problem; the green shoots are plenty tasty), one onion, and one parsnip, also ¼ a red cabbage. I sautéed the onions and garlic in olive oil til just brown, then I added all the other roots, and cooked about 15 min, stirring a couple times. I added the chopped cabbage, a lot of dried thyme, a little rosemary, a lot of ground pepper, a little salt, a dash of cayenne, and a dash each of ground cinnamon and ginger, for warmth. Also two bay leaves and three dried chiles. I dissolved a cube of bouillon in hot water, added it and about 3 c. water, and boiled everything briefly. Then I turned it way down and simmered about 20 minutes more. I added 2 cups of cooked chickpeas, a dash of white wine, another dash of tamari, another dash of molasses, and maybe a few other things, but at that point it was probably overkill. Oh, and a tablespoon or so of cornstarch, mixed with about a cup of the broth, then added back in, thickened it up enough to call it a stew, not a soup. That's it. Be sure to remove the chiles and bay leaves before serving. I bet this would be good with thick brown bread and SOF salad on the side. Bon appetit!