



Field Notes

November 2006

Newsletter for the Phillie Bridge Farm Project CSA

End of the Season Potluck & Exciting Raffle Drawing

Join us at the Gardiner Reform Church on Sunday, November 12th for the annual End of the Season Potluck Dinner. The event is a wonderful way to conclude the season by sharing a meal with fellow shareholders. **Please bring a dish to share, along with serving utensils, and your own place setting – plate, bowl, fork, spoon and cup – to reduce the use of disposables.** Dinner will be followed by a breath-holding, nail-biting **raffle drawing**, which will include such prizes as restaurant gift certificates, artwork, gift baskets, booze, books and more! Raffle tickets are \$5 each or 5 tickets for \$20 and can be purchased in the Harvest Room on distribution days or at the potluck itself. Proceeds from the sale of raffle tickets go towards supporting the programs of Phillie Bridge Farm Project. A \$100 deposit towards a 2007 CSA share results in an automatic entry into the raffle drawing.

Oh, Grow On!

When you come down the driveway at the farm, have you noticed the field of lush glistening green to your left? Do you know what is planted there, and how it fits into our farming system?

In many of the fields on the farm, we've planted a cover crop mixture of either oats and peas or rye and

vetch which serve several beneficial purposes on the farm. Cover crops prevent erosion because soil that is held together by root systems is less likely to wash away in the rain or blow away in the wind. The cover crops that we grow are also a source of green manure, which means that instead of harvesting the oats or rye or peas, we incorporate the plants into the soil to increase its fertility. Legumes, like peas and vetch, pull nitrogen from the air and transmit it to the soil through tiny nodules and with the help of micro-organisms. Cover crops also help control weeds by providing stiff competition for nutrients and sunlight that chokes out some weeds – see how thick and lush the stand of oats and peas is? For the weeds, this is like trying to board a crowded bus and not finding a seat!

So, now that you're sold on the benefits of cover cropping, you might wonder: why doesn't every bed on the farm have a cover crop planted? Well, most cover crops, like vegetables, don't grow well in the cold, so cover crops need to be sown at least a month before the first frost. Some of our beds still had vegetables in them right up until the first frost – or even past it! For these beds, we let a cover of dead weeds act as a winter mulch (with the aim of preventing erosion) and sow cover crop in the spring or summer. Ideally, every bed on the farm receives some sort of cover crop at least once during the season.

This has been such an exciting season for us and we are incredibly

Dates to Remember:

- Nov. 7th** – Final Tuesday CSA distribution
- Nov. 11th** – Final Saturday CSA distribution
- Nov. 12th** – End of the Season CSA Potluck, 5 PM, Gardiner Reform Church. Bring a dish to share & your own place setting (plate, utensils, cup).
- Late May 2007** – It all begins again!

grateful to the shareholders for broad support and broad smiles at every distribution. Mid-way through the season, I commented to Alex that each time we put a crop in the ground, I felt like one of the sky-divers who pepper our skies on clear days – suspended. Would the crop grow well and produce abundantly? Would we encounter pest and disease problems? Would we be able to harvest what we had planned for the CSA? It wouldn't be until that same crop – be it cabbage, eggplant, tomatoes or peppers – was displayed proudly and colorfully in Harvest Room bins, that I would exhale a small sigh of safe-landing.

So, it was a season of 30 breaths held – that's how many different crops we grew. And a season of *almost* – but not quite! – 30 breaths exhaled.

We had hoped to have carrots, beets, broccoli, cauliflower and



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collard greens to distribute by now, in addition to the lettuce, chard, kale, winter squash, onions, Tokyo turnips, radishes and fennel that have been a part of the fall shares. The heat wave in late July/early August pushed back the seeding of carrots, beets and brassicas – if we had seeded them during those soaring temperatures, germination would have been poor. Also, the fall plantings have been much slower growing than we'd anticipated, resulting in a lack of yield.

As the season draws to a close, we cannot emphasize enough how grateful we are for your support of Phillie Bridge Farm Project through your participation in the CSA.

– Gwenaël Engelskirchen,
co-farmer/project coordinator

Sign Up for a 2007 Share

We thoroughly appreciate your deposit of \$100 towards a 2007 CSA share, first because it means you liked our veggies enough to eat them again next year – smile – and second, because the income from deposits helps the Farm Project's cash flow through the winter months and into early spring, when seeds and potting mix are purchased, repairs are made, and the greenhouse is heated.

Not only is your deposit great for us; it's also good for you! Why? Because it guarantees you a spot in next year's CSA. This year, we sold out of shares in May, so don't miss out for 2007! And if that isn't

enough incentive, a \$100 deposit towards a 2007 CSA share results in an automatic entry into the raffle drawing, with a chance to win many exciting prizes!

Coming Soon in Your Share

Peruvian Potatoes! These potatoes are from Taliaferro Farm in New Paltz, and are the result of a CSA trade between farms. We traded Pete Taliaferro sweet red peppers and in exchange received these beautiful purple potatoes. Wash or scrub potatoes (the skins are so tender, you needn't peel them) and toss with olive oil, minced garlic, chopped herbs (rosemary, thyme, sage or oregano), salt and pepper until the potatoes are lightly coated. Spread evenly in a baking dish and roast at 350 degrees, stirring every 10 – 15 minutes to prevent sticking, until they are done.

Jerusalem Artichokes! This vegetable is neither from Jerusalem, nor an artichoke. It is actually the sweet, crisp tuber of a wild, native, perennial sunflower. To clean J'chokes, just scrub them with an abrasive brush. Peel them if you must, but because the tubers are small and brittle, you may end up with more peel than vegetable. Jerusalem artichokes are delicious sautéed, stir-fried, rubbed with oil and baked whole for 30 – 40 minutes at 350 degrees, sliced or julienned in salads, or added to soups and stews.

Potato & J'choke Salad

Heat 4 tbsp oil in a skillet. Cube 2 slices of bread. Add 1 clove of garlic and bread cubes to the oil and fry until golden brown. Remove and toss with $\frac{3}{4}$ lb. boiled potatoes, 6 oz. julienned J'chokes, 2 thinly sliced carrots and 4 oz. lightly steamed chard or kale in a bowl. Then, toss mixture with 3 tbsp olive oil, 1 tbsp balsamic vinegar, $\frac{1}{2}$ tsp mustard, $\frac{1}{2}$ tsp sugar, salt and pepper to taste.

Kale Crunch

Adapted from Mollie Katzen's
Vegetable Heaven.

Try these "chips" for snacking or for sprinkling on any savory dish.

Preheat the oven to 350 degrees. Line a large baking tray with foil, then brush or spray it with oil. Stem and chop kale leaves, then layer leaves evenly on the baking tray, spread out as much as possible. Bake for 10 minutes, mixing it up once or twice during that time. Sprinkle with Parmesan, if desired, and continue baking. First, the leaves become bright green and soften, then they begin to turn crisp. In between, they go through a chewy-crisp stage, which is also delicious. So the baking time is flexible. Just keep checking the kale until it is done the way you like it. The kale will continue to shrink and crispen the longer it bakes. Stir it often to keep from burning it. Remove the tray from the oven, and let the kale cool on the tray.