



# THE RED HILL ROOT



The Seasonal Weekly Newsletter for Members of the Red Hill Farm CSA, Aston, PA

Volume V, Number 15

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## Farm and Member News

**“Vintage Tuesday,” the 19<sup>th</sup> of August**—Join other Farm members this Tuesday, from 5-7pm—for another Vintage Tuesday evening! This is an opportunity for members to enjoy the Farm and a glass or two of wine and juice. Join us near the Barn and Children’s area. Hosted this week by Core Group member Eric Lienhard, Vintage Tuesday is an effort for members to get together on a social basis, but more importantly to encourage a sense of community and ownership of the Farm. You don’t have to be a Tuesday pickup person or a connoisseur of wine to stop by, but if you are, try to allow a little more time to hang out this week! Feel free to bring a bottle or snack to share, but it’s not necessary. Bring your own glass or cup to save on waste, and if you can, bring a chair or blanket to relax on. See you Tuesday! **Thanks Eric!** ([photo credit](#))



**Don’t forget the Potluck!!!**—Such a busy social schedule we have at the Farm!! Our casual **potluck lunch** is at the Farm on **Saturday, 23<sup>rd</sup> Aug, at 1:00 pm**. Bring a dish & come meet the farmers & make new friends!! (P.S. Mice will **not** be served at the potluck!!!)



**Upcoming Workshops at Misty Hollow**—Red Hill Farm members get a discount on workshop costs at our sister CSA, IMBY at Misty Hollow, run by Sally and Jim Hammerman in Westtown, near West Chester. Upcoming workshops include **“Garden Gastronomy III—Pizzas to Die For!”** (20 Sept, 10am-1pm); **“Garden Gastronomy IV: Pies to Die For!”** (18 Oct, 10-1); and **“Gifts & Gala from the Garden”** (15 Nov, 10-1). There’s also a **Children’s Bountiful Harvest & Craft workshop**, 11 Oct, 10-1. For more info, see Sally’s website, [here](#), & click near center-top on “Workshops.” Or call 610-717-6949.

## News from the Furrow

Mira Kilpatrick’s Report

“This week on the Farm Emily took some time off. She’s in NY with family, visiting her grandparents. We’ll miss her, but we’re glad she’s getting some rest & relaxation in before school starts up in a few weeks.

We have transplanted out some fall greens, and direct seeded some fall crops as well. We have been noticing low germination on some of the things we direct seed, which is frustrating. There are so many factors that could contribute to low germination, it’s hard to pinpoint the exact thing that would resolve this issue in the future. However, on a positive note, we were quite pleased that the crazy storm & hail that occurred in the area on Sunday didn’t harm any of our young tender veggies in the field!

The workshares have been doing a great job plugging away at weeding the two beds of leeks. It’s amazing how different crops look after the smothering weeds are pulled away. And we have to thank Lee, one of our workshares, for putting a big dent in one of the last fields still covered in plastic. This is not a fun Farm job, & he worked hard, & he worked fast!

Last but not least, there have been some goings-on at the Convent this week. There is a beautiful Copper Beech tree that may be about 150 years old. The Sisters are quite attached to it, and there is no denying its majestic nature. Unfortunately, it is a sick tree too. There was a service to honor it, and work on taking it down started this week. The Sisters want to get a cross-section to count the rings & determine its exact age. Now I



think I’ll make like a tree and leave...until next week!” **Thanks Mira!** [Photo: not “our” Copper Beech, but another big one (257" circum.) in Fairmount Park; photo from [www.PABigTrees.com](http://www.PABigTrees.com), [here](#)]



Farmers: Abygail Wright and Mira Kilpatrick, [awright@osfphila.org](mailto:awright@osfphila.org)  
 Newsletter writer/editor: Melinda B. Parsons, [m.boydp@gmail.com](mailto:m.boydp@gmail.com)  
<http://www.osfphila.org/red/what>  
 Red Hill Farm, 609 Convent Road, Aston, PA, 19014 (610) 558-6799



## The Amazing Seed

By Sister Josandra

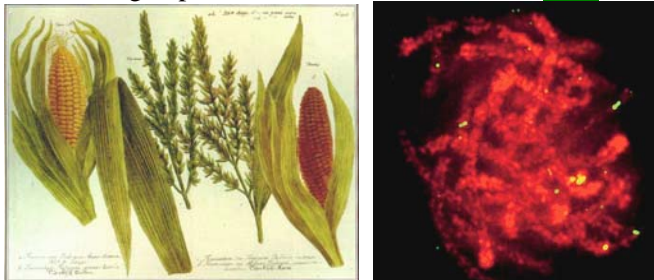
“Last week we seeded new lettuce, squash, and beans. I could not help but marvel at these amazing little seeds. How can something so small become something so



delicious to eat?! What makes one seed become a juicy red tomato [see photomicrograph of tomato seed, left; [source](#)] while another tiny little seed turns into a luscious watermelon? Where do the color and shape come from? What

makes an eggplant purple or a squash yellow? What gives fennel and basil their wonderful aroma? While I know the answer to all these questions is, “Genetics,” I still find it amazing! This tiny little dot in the palm of my hand holds tremendous potential. It knows what it is “programmed” to become, and it does! Without fuss or fanfare, when put into the ground, given sunlight and water, it quietly grows. Looking out over the fields at the Farm, I stand in awe to think that everything began as a seed. Each fruit and vegetable picked from the field was once a tiny little insignificant seed. *Now isn't that amazing!?”*

Thanks *so much* for your energy and sense of wonder, *Josandra!* [For a brief explanation of differences and similarities between plant and animal DNA, see [here](#). For an interesting explanation suitable for kids, see [here](#).]



Left: Johann Weinmann, *Zea mays* [Sweet Corn], from *Phytanthoza Iconographia*, 1737-45; right: partial projection of *Zea mays* DNA ([credit](#))

### Roasted Tomatoes & Peppers & Etc.—This is versatile!

- ❖ a bunch of tomatoes, cored & roughly chopped
- ❖ a few sweet bell or roasting peppers, chopped
- ❖ some chopped onion
- ❖ some peeled, chopped garlic
- ❖ some chopped or shredded squash, if you like
- ❖ roughly chopped herbs—whatever you like!
- ❖ olive oil, salt, & pepper

Throw all your veggies & herbs in a roasting pan, drizzle w/ oil, & season w/ salt & pepper. You can also add some

chopped olives, capers, mushrooms, anchovies, etc. Stir it all up & put in a slow oven, if you have the time—it could cook at 225 to 250 most of the day; or, if you’ve less time, bake it at 350 to 375 for an hour or two. Stir occasionally. You want the veggies to brown a bit; you can aid their caramelization by sprinkling a spoonful or two of sugar on them before baking. When things are soft and juicy, take out of the oven and A) serve over rice; B) serve as is (chunky) over pasta; C) let it cool, whiz in blender or processor, & use as pasta sauce; or D) serve cold w/ a little vinegar added as gazpacho (cold soup)! My recipe.

**Hot Swiss-Chard Artichoke Dip**—makes ~3 cups. An update on the old spinach-artichoke dip. ([source](#))

- ❖ ¼ cup olive oil
- ❖ 1 cup finely chopped onion (ours!)
- ❖ 4-6 garlic cloves, peeled & minced
- ❖ 1 bunch Swiss chard (~12 oz), leaves & stalks separated & both chopped into small pieces
- ❖ one 14-oz can artichoke hearts (in water), drained, rinsed, & chopped into small pieces
- ❖ 4 oz cream cheese, softened
- ❖ ½ cup sour cream
- ❖ ¼ cup mayo
- ❖ 1 ½ cups grated Pecorino-Romano cheese (4 oz)
- ❖ 2 tsp Worcestershire sauce
- ❖ salt & pepper to taste
- ❖ chopped scallions or chives (ours!) as garnish

Heat oil in large pot. Add onion & chard stalks & cook, stirring, till soft, ~5-7 min. Add garlic & cook, stirring 2 min; don't let brown. Stir in chard leaves & artichokes. Cover & cook, stirring a bit, till chard is tender, ~5 min. (Remove lid for last few min, if there's still liquid in pot.) Stir in cream cheese, sour cream, mayo, cheese, & Worcestershire & cook 10-15 min, stirring a bit, till dip is hot & thick. Salt/pepper to taste. Serve warm w/ garnish.

**Herbed Potato Salad**—This was sent by *Christine Baer!*

- ❖ 2 lbs potatoes (ours!)
- ❖ 2 tbsp chopped chives (ours!)
- ❖ 3 tbsp chopped flat-leaf parsley (ours!)
- ❖ 3 tbsp rice-wine vinegar
- ❖ ¼ cup finely chopped shallots
- ❖ 1 tbsp chopped tarragon (ours!)
- ❖ ½ cup olive oil
- ❖ salt/pepper to taste

Wash & peel potatoes. Cook in boiling salted water till just done. Drain, cool slightly, & cut in small chunks. Mix in herbs, shallots, & oil & toss. Salt/pepper. Serve at room

temp or make ahead, refrigerate, & bring back to room temp to eat. Stir to redistribute oil & vinegar. Keeps in fridge 3-4 days. *Thanks Christine* (her recipe)!

**Summer Chicken**—Adapted by *Christine Baer* from Rosso & Lukins' *Silver Palate Cookbook*. *Christine recommends it highly!* Vegans can make substitutions, though it may change the nuanced flavors, says Christine.

- ❖ 1½ lbs chicken tenderloins
- ❖ 3 tbsp butter plus 2 tbsp butter
- ❖ 1/3 cup Dijon mustard
- ❖ ½ cup basil leaves, washed, dried, chopped
- ❖ olive oil
- ❖ 2 cups chicken broth
- ❖ 3 tbsp flour
- ❖ 1/3 cup heavy cream (or ¼ cup half & half)
- ❖ salt/pepper to taste

Soak chicken in salted water 10-15 min; drain, rinse, & pat dry; lightly coat w/ flour. Heat large skillet; when hot, pour olive oil into pan & swirl to coat bottom of pan. Add 3 tbsp butter. When melted, add chicken pieces & sauté, turning, till just done; don't let them get too brown & crusty. While chicken is cooking, prepare sauce. In small saucepan, melt 2 tbsp butter; then whisk in flour & cook, whisking, till mix bubbles & is pale gold. Slowly whisk in stock & cook, whisking, till mix has thickened. Remove from heat; whisk cream & mustard together. Add a little hot stock to cream mix; whisk to blend, then add that to rest of stock. Add basil; taste & adjust seasonings. Drain remaining oil/butter from skillet & pour stock mix over cooked chicken. (Adjust basil amount to taste, says CB.)

**Roast Peach Soup**—*One more from Christine*, in this case from Royal Caribbean Cruise Lines.

- ❖ 4 large ripe peaches, peeled, halved, & pitted
- ❖ 2 cups peach nectar
- ❖ 3 oranges, juiced
- ❖ mint sprigs
- ❖ 1½ cups sugar
- ❖ a split vanilla bean
- ❖ 2 lemons

Preheat oven to 400. Lightly coat baking sheet w/ butter. Put peach halves, cut side down, on sheet. Sprinkle w/ ½ cup sugar & bake 15-20 min, till well roasted. Transfer to food processor, with any drippings from baking sheet. Purée till smooth, stopping 2-3 times to scrape down sides. Transfer to large, nonreactive bowl & set aside. In non-reactive saucepan, combine nectar w/ remaining 1 cup sugar on medium heat. Scrape vanilla bean seeds into mix.

Bring to boil, then remove from heat. Let syrup sit till almost cool. Stir in orange & lemon juices. Tasting as you go, slowly add peach syrup to peach purée till desired flavor is achieved. If soup is well flavored but too thick, thin w/ a little plain peach nectar. Cover & refrigerate till totally cold. To serve, ladle into chilled soup bowls & garnish w/ mint sprigs. *My oh my!!!! Yummy!*

**Nancy Bernhardt's Easy Summer Squash Soup**—  
Servings depend on amount made & level of hunger!!!

- ❖ a bunch of zucchini or other summer squash
- ❖ water
- ❖ chicken bullion cubes

Slice, chunk, or shred the squash (as desired) & add to bullion cube(s) diluted according to package instructions for the amount of water you're using (less water for thicker soup, & vice versa). Simmer on stove till squash is tender (time depends on how finely you've cut it—shredded cooks fastest). Eat hot as is, or cool & pulse or purée in blender or processor depending on how smooth you like it. Eat! [Of course, you can add herbs, nuts, etc!]

**Grandma's Grain Recipe**—This makes a fabulous, super-healthy base for any sautéed, steamed, boiled veggies of any sort! If you don't have all the ingredients, simply substitute more of one grain for what's missing. It also can be used as hot cereal, cold grain salad, or seasoned w/ olive oil, nutritional yeast, nuts, herbs, avocados, olives, cherry tomatoes, etc.

- ❖ 1 cup long-grain brown rice
- ❖ 1 cup millet
- ❖ 3 handfuls whole barley
- ❖ 3 handfuls whole oats (oat groats)
- ❖ 1 handful red rice, wild rice, or a mix of wild-type rices
- ❖ 2 tsp salt

Mix all grains together, rinse, drain, & put in large, heavy-bottomed pot. Stir in the salt. Cover w/ water...about 2" above the grains. Bring to a boil, then turn down heat as low as it will go. Cook uncovered (simmering) till all water is gone, ~35 min. If you overshoot amount of water you added, & the grains cooked before the water absorbed entirely, strain off extra water. Super easy!!!! ([source](#))

*For Sr. Josandra*

*"Two years ago, I was saying as I planted seeds in the garden, 'I must believe in these seeds, that they fall into the earth and grow into flowers and radishes and beans.' It is a miracle to me because I do not understand it.*

*The very fact that they use glib technical phrases does not make it any less a miracle, and a miracle we all accept. Then why not accept God's miracles?"* Dorothy Day, 1938