



THE RED HILL ROOT



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

Volume V, Number 18

7 Sept 2008

Farm and Member News

SAVE THE DATE—18TH OCTOBER—HARVEST FEST!!!!

—Our wonderful annual Harvest Fest will start at 4:00 on Saturday, 18th October, with the feasting to begin at 5:00!!! There will be more info forthcoming, but for now, please circle it on your calendar! We'll have a sign-up sheet in the Barn, where you can note how many people and what dish you'll be bringing. Hope to see you there!!!



In the Carrot "Zone"



I stopped by the Farm on Thursday to spend a little time weeding baby carrots. I must say, it was unexpectedly satisfying! It's very close work—that is, it demands close looking and very careful removal of the weeds nearest the carrots.

You do it kneeling on a pillow along the row, so it actually is a very quiet, contemplative activity, almost Zen-like. (carrot seedling: [photo credit](#))

News from the Furrow

By Mira Kilpatrick

"This week on the Farm, we finally caught another groundhog! We stopped setting traps b/c we weren't catching any, but the groundhogs started to really get aggressive, taking chunks out of our big bell peppers and eating up our newly planted lettuce. The nerve! So we reset some yesterday and caught one right away. Feels good. [[aggressive groundhog: credit](#)]



We've done a lot of work in the first tunnel this week, preparing new beds for late season/early spring veggies like roots crops, greens, and lettuces.

In the fields, we hope to do a large amount of planting/seeding in the next couple of days. That way when it rains this weekend (cross your fingers), we won't have to worry about irrigating newly planted seeds and transplants.

We're also chipping away at weeding 4 beds of carrots. If carrots are not weeded early on, you can often lose them all to weeds. It requires pretty meticulous weeding, because the plants are so tiny, but if done in time, it pays off (see your shares these few weeks)! That's not to say you won't have to weed it one or two more times, but this is one of the most pivotal weeding. Thanks to anyone who's been helping get it accomplished."

Autumn's Coming...

This past week I saw the first autumn leaves—just a few trees, and just a few leaves, but unmistakable nonetheless. It's exciting! This month also marks the *Autumn Equinox* (22nd Sept), the date when day and night are of equal length and after which nights gradually get longer as winter comes on. It's a month with many feasts dedicated to the Virgin Mary, perhaps because she's associated w/ loving and giving, so appropriate at harvest time. *8th Sept. is Mary's nativity, which, for early Pennsylvania-Germans, marked the changing seasons: "It's Blessed Virgin's Birthday, the swallows do depart; far to the South they fly away, and sadness fills my heart. But after snow and ice and rain, they will return in March again."* (Don Yoder, *Ground-hogs Day*, Stackpole Press, 2003) The



12th of Sept. honors the "*Most Holy Name of Mary*," while *15th Sept.* is the *Addolorata*, commemorating the Sorrows of Mary ([here](#)). (For a video of a solemn *Addolorata* procession, see [here](#), with related videos on the right.) In Italy, where Mary is called *La Pecorella* (the Little Lamb), *this date also marks the wheat harvest, with wheat berries in the day's menus.* (See recipes!)

In China, the *15th* is a celebration of the *Mid-Autumn Moon, Zhong Qui Jie*. Traditionally, it is women who mark this moon, because it starts the "Yin" part of the



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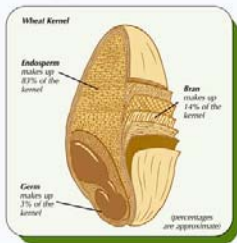
year, with darkness increasing. Yin is said to be associated with water, women, and night. (See [here](#) for more.) In Chinese farming practices, fall and winter are considered women's months. (*Addolorata*: [image credit](#))



Vegetable Stew with Wheat Berries—serves 4-6

- ❖ 3 tbsp olive oil, & more for drizzling
- ❖ 1 leek, including some green, thinly sliced
- ❖ salt/pepper
- ❖ ¼ lb green or wax beans, sliced in 1" pieces
- ❖ 1 small summer squash, thinly sliced
- ❖ ½ cup white wine, or veggie stock or water
- ❖ 2 cups cooked wheat berries (these are the entire wheat kernel, with bran, germ, & endosperm; get them at health-food stores [[picture credit](#), below])
- ❖ 2 medium, ripe tomatoes, cut in wedges
- ❖ ½ cup chopped fresh basil or parsley

Put oil in large pan or deep skillet on medium-high. Add leek & salt/pepper. Cook till tender, ~2 min. Add beans & squash & stir to coat w/ oil. Stir in wine. Reduce heat to medium-low, cover & cook, stirring a bit, till veggies just start to get tender, 5-7 min. Raise heat a little & stir in wheat. Cook, stirring, till hot & bubbling, ~1-2 min. Stir in tomato,



season again w/ salt/pepper, cover & turn heat off. After 5 min, add herbs & fluff stew w/ fork. Serve hot or at room temp, drizzled w/ a little oil if desired. (Bittman, *How to Cook Everything Vegetarian*, 2007)

Moretum—I took this (ancient Roman) cheese, herb, and garlic spread to "*Foolishness and Mayhem*" Friday (which was great by the way!), and there were requests for the recipe, so here it is. It's derived from a poem by Virgil (see [here](#) and [here](#)) and calls for an amazing amount of garlic—4 heads (not cloves, heads!). You can of course cut the garlic down. The Romans called this a "salad."

- ❖ 4 heads of garlic, cloves separated & peeled
- ❖ ¾ lb hard grated cheese (I like Pecorino Romano, but Parmesan works too)
- ❖ 2 tbsp olive oil
- ❖ 2 tbsp wine vinegar
- ❖ 1 bunch cilantro
- ❖ 1 bunch tarragon

Chop herbs roughly & put cheese, herbs, & garlic in food processor. Whiz till all is chopped. Add oil & vinegar &

whiz till it all adheres together in a lump. Spread on bread (the way the Romans used it), or try on pasta, or, really, on anything (as Emeril Lagasse says, you could lick it off a car bumper & it would still taste great)! A *caveat*: you must really, REALLY like garlic to eat moretum! ([source](#))

Corn, Tomato, & Basil Chowder—serves 4-6

- ❖ 6 ears corn, shucked
- ❖ 2 tbsp unsalted butter [or oil]
- ❖ 1 large onion, chopped
- ❖ 1 shallot, finely chopped
- ❖ 2 garlic cloves, finely chopped
- ❖ 4 cups chicken or veggie broth
- ❖ 1½ tsp kosher [or sea] salt
- ❖ 1 lb potatoes, cut into ½" cubes
- ❖ 1 pint cherry tomatoes, halved [or 1½-2 cups chopped regular tomatoes]
- ❖ ½ tsp fresh-ground black pepper
- ❖ ¼ cup chopped fresh basil
- ❖ juice of ½ lime
- ❖ crème fraîche or sour cream for garnish (optional)

Slice corn kernels off cobs & put in bowl. Run back of knife along each cob to remove additional corn pulp, & add that to bowl; reserve cobs. In medium soup pot, melt butter on medium heat; add onion, shallot, garlic & cook, stirring a bit, till soft, ~5 min. Add broth, reserved cobs, 1 cup water, & 1 tsp salt to pot. Bring to boil on high heat. Immediately lower heat to medium & simmer 10 min. Add potatoes & simmer till tender, ~15 min longer. Remove cobs & discard. Stir in corn kernels & pulp, tomatoes, remaining ½ tsp salt, & pepper. Simmer 20 min more. Stir in basil & lime juice. Turn off heat & let cool for at least 15 min before serving. Serve warm w/ dollops of sour cream, if using. ([source](#))

Fennel 101—Folks are still perplexed by fennel, so here's what to do. Slice off the root end. Then slice off most of



the stalks [you can leave some short bits]. Remove all tough or blemished layers from the bulb, usually outer layers. Cut bulb in half lengthwise & remove tough core if necessary w/ knife.

Wash out any dirt/grit. Then slice or cut into wedges, as recipe requires. It's good raw in salads (adds an anise flavor), roasted w/ other veggies, added to soups, cooked into tomato sauces, sautéed & added to mac and cheese or other pasta dishes. (fennel photo & video, see [here](#))