

# Wholesome Harvest

News Letter 8/3/09



## This Week on the Farm

Hello to all members.

Glad we are back on track with the newsletter. Sorry we have been behind. The past few weeks have definitely been the busiest of the season. We are still in desperate need of rain. It seems every storm veers around our farm this year. We have never had to water so much and so frequently. We have been doing a lot of planting and transplanting of our fall crops. Below is a picture of our transplanter. The planter has one or two people who ride on the planter and feed the plants into a sprocket pocket, a wheel like apparatus that continues to go around depositing the plant into the ground. A water tank is attached to the planter allowing us to water the plant as it goes into the ground.



Figure 1 – Planting



Figure 2-Planting

When we plant we do our planning around blocks of land so that we are able to completely work and prepare the soil for

You can see in the picture below one such block that is planted with fall crops.



Figure 3 - New fall crop

As you can see from the picture of our weed pile, which we will be composting, we have been doing plenty of hand weeding. Even with little rain and cooler temperatures there will always be plenty of weeding to keep us busy.



Figure 4 - Weed compost

Chris Zastrow

## Frequently Asked Questions

This section is intended to address questions that are brought to our attention by our members. It is our hope to answer most of these questions in the newsletter helping us to better communicate to all members.

### Where do our seeds come from?

We purchase seeds from a variety of sources. A lot of our seeds come from Johnny's Seeds. We also get a variety of rare and heirloom seeds from small companies all over the place. Strawberry plants come from Minnesota Sweet potatoes from Tennessee, and potatoes from Wisconsin. It takes a lot of searching to find seeds available organically and untreated.

### How to keep the vegetables fresh longer?

All modern fridges come with a crisper compartment for vegetables. But you may notice that if you place your vegetables straight in there, your lovely crisp veggies shrivel and flop fast. This is not because organic produce doesn't last, it does! And it definitely isn't because the produce isn't fresh, it is!

Most vegetables won't last because the fridge air is too cold. It's best to keep the fridge temp as is, so don't go changing it, but what your veggies would love is a little protection from the cold. Here are some tips:

- - Put all vegetables in a sealed container or store in a plastic bag.  
Do not store in paper bags in the fridge, transfer to plastic bag or container. Tip: Have some plastic bags that you can reuse and bag up several veggies together.
- - Ideally salad mix, lettuce & spinach should be washed, spun dry and stored in a container or plastic bag ASAP. It is also best to break lettuce heads apart to wash and to store. If that is too organized, keep in bag or container until ready to use. Best stored away from top shelf and back of the fridge as they can freeze up!

## Get to Know Your Produce

Each week we will include pictures and brief descriptions of less common varieties of produce that we have ripening in the fields. You may have already received some of these or may be receiving them in the future.



Bianca

**Add another color to your pepper basket.** These ivory colored peppers are medium-large, 4-lobed, and blocky. The fruits have a mild taste and if left will continue to ripen to scarlet red.



### Chioggia

**Candy Striped Beets.** The smooth, medium-height tops are all green with pink-striped stems. These beets have a sweet flavor. This striking Italian variety is a standard in U.S. specialty. We have several varieties of beets. You will find that beets will vary in size, color, and taste. This is one of the varieties that we grow. One thing we have found to help our beets keep their deep color after cooking is to leave a short portion of the stems in tack. This helps to prevent the bleeding of the color from the beet.

## This Weeks Recipes

We thank are members who have submitted some of their favorite recipes. We do not have room for all recipes in the newsletter but we will work on pulling together a recipe file that we can share with the members at the end of the year. If you have a recipe you would like to share please e-mail a copy to us. Hope you enjoy.

### Warm Asparagus-Spinach Salad

Ingredients:

2 pounds fresh asparagus, trimmed and cut into 1-inch pieces  
2 tablespoons plus 1/2 cup olive oil, divided  
1/4 teaspoon salt  
1 pounds uncooked penne pasta  
3/4 cup chopped green onions  
5 tablespoons white wine vinegar  
3 tablespoons soy sauce  
1 package (6 ounces) fresh baby spinach  
1 cup coarsely chopped cashews (optional)  
1/2 cup shredded Parmesan cheese

Directions:

Place asparagus in a 13-in. x 9-in. baking dish. Drizzle with 2 tablespoons oil; sprinkle with salt. Bake, uncovered, at 400° for 8-10 minutes or until crisp-tender, stirring after 5 minutes. Meanwhile, cook pasta according to package directions; drain.

For dressing, combine onions, vinegar and soy sauce in a blender; cover and process. While processing, gradually add the remaining oil in a steady stream.

In a large salad bowl, combine pasta, spinach and asparagus. Drizzle with dressing; toss to coat. Sprinkle with cashews and Parmesan cheese.

I actually substituted one of the pounds of asparagus for cut green beans and baked it with the asparagus. I also used my food processor rather than the blender, but it is obviously the same. It did keep in the refrigerator for leftovers the next day, but I wouldn't keep it any longer than that!

### RAW BEET SALAD

1 lb. beets (bottoms only)  
1 large shallot  
salt and freshly ground pepper  
2 tsp dijon mustard  
1 Tbl olive oil  
2 Tbls wine vinegar (a strong, good-quality vinegar is best for this)

minced parsley, dill, or tarragon

Peel the beets and shallot. Combine then in bowl of food processor and pulse carefully until beets are shredded; do not puree (the beets can also be grated by hand and the shallots minced). Scrape into a bowl (non-reactive).

Toss with salt, pepper, mustard, oil and vinegar. Taste and adjust seasoning (I sometimes add a bit of sugar, depending on the natural sweetness of the beets); add in the herbs. Can be served immediately, but is better if refrigerated for at least 2 hours.

### BEET GREENS

1 lb beet greens  
1 strip thick cut bacon, chopped  
1/4 cup chopped onion  
1 garlic clove, minced or pressed  
3/4 cup water  
1 tbl sugar  
1/4 tsp crushed red pepper flakes  
2 tbls vinegar

Wash greens well (2 or 3 times) and drain. Remove heavy stems and chop.

In 3 qt saucepan, lightly brown bacon. Add onions and cook until soft and lightly brown. Stir in garlic. Add water and stir to loosen brown particles from bottom pan. Stir in sugar and pepper and bring to a boil. Add greens and reduce heat. Simmer for 10-15 minutes (30 minutes if using recipe for kale or collard greens, until desired tenderness). Stir in vinegar and serve.