



THE RED HILL ROOT



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

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Farm and Member News



“Vintage Tuesdays & Fridays”—The Farm staff & Core Group want to make the Farm more community-oriented, turning it into a place to stop/relax/hang out. The first event—a chance to sit around late on a Tuesday afternoon, converse, and drink some refreshments—came about at the last minute, so many folks couldn’t attend. But those who did say a really amazing time was had by all. This won’t necessarily be a formal, scheduled type of event. We hope that different folks will initiate similar get-togethers. If you’d like to do that, contact Aby with your info, and she can get an announcement out by email!



Theft at Red Hill Farm—Nancy Bernhardt of Indian Orchards provides our fruit shares and extra fruit for sale, and her baker friend offers delicious baked goods for sale. *Each week they come up considerably short on money that should have been paid for their products. Further, more than once each of them has had their cash box wiped out entirely except for change in the bottom of the box.* It’s shocking that in a close-knit community like Red Hill, run by the Sisters of St. Francis, this kind of aberrant behavior would occur. *Nancy has several suggestions* to remedy this situation. The preferable one is that anyone who wants to buy fruit or baked goods will prepay Nancy a small amount of money—say, \$25—and then each purchase will be debited against that account. When the money is gone, the account can be supplemented with more funds. In this way, no cash will be available to be taken at the Farm. (This is the way that Philadelphia’s *Farm to City* works, as well as the related buying club *Philadelphia Winter Harvest*.) Another option is that purchasers would pay only by check. Nancy would like input from members who buy fruit and baked goods. If you have ideas about how work on the problem, please call Nancy at 610-565-8387. Thanks. Finally, Nancy still hopes that whoever has taken the money will make proper restitution by returning it.

Pint and Half-Pint Fiber Boxes—Both Nancy and the Red Hill Farm staff note that people are not returning the fiber boxes we provide for measuring out fruits & U-Pick

items. The boxes cost us money, so please return Nancy’s boxes to the top of the fruit fridge and the Farm boxes to the chair under the Farm’s blackboard sign.

Don’t forget the Potluck!!!—Our casual *potluck lunch* is at the Farm on **Saturday, 23rd Aug, at 1:00 pm**. Bring a dish & come meet the farmers & make new friends!!!

Workshare Fun!—Mira has noticed that the workshares seem to have such a great time together in the fields that she wonders if more members (even paying members) might enjoy coming out to meet each other, network, etc! People should always know that they’re welcome to come and pitch in. Help on Tuesday & Friday mornings is especially welcome, but anytime will do!

Potatoes!!!—Our potatoes have begun & they look & taste great! There is a scale next to the potato bins on the shelf so each member can weigh out their own share of the taters. Amounts are noted on the blackboards. Btw, this is not a “pre-order” item—all of you are entitled to the potatoes as part of your Farm share!

News from the Furrow

Mira Kilpatrick’s Report



“We tilled in a lot of the fields on the farm and started planting out some of our fall crops. We are trying to keep the flea beetles at bay with row cover, a lightweight fabric that lets air, light, and water in and (ideally) keeps bugs out. The harvests have been pretty big and therefore time-consuming, but we’re happy to have good production on summer squash and the hoophouse tomatoes. We ordered some garlic, which will get delivered & planted in October for a July harvest next year. I love all the different garlics, especially hardnecks (more flavor, easier to peel, but don’t store as well as softnecks), so we’re hoping for a nice harvest next summer. Other than that, we’re just trying to stay on top of weeding, irrigation, and things like that.” (photo: *Hardneck garlic left; Softneck garlic right; [photo credit](#)*)



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The Tale of My Role as a Rookie Workshare

By Mary Dewitt

"I've lived in...Media...for years, but I'd never heard of Red Hill Farm until I was checking out at the Swarthmore Coop early this spring. The checkout guy had worked at the farm the previous summer. Based on my purchases, he seemed to feel that I should become a member. For some reason, the idea struck me as significant.

My first visits as a workshare member were too solitary for me. And I was ambivalent about weeding anywhere but in my own back yard. I had never heard of a 'CSA' either. (I recall the surprised look Mira gave when I asked her what the initials 'CSA' stood for, and I still forget.)

Now I share with my buddy Joanne, and this has made all the difference. We meet at 8 a.m. every Friday and work together on the farm for 3 hours. Our first week together ushered in the tenor of weeks to come: Bruce, the magical purple martin man, cranked the colony of gourd birdhouses down and lovingly removed one of the eggs. We were happy enough observing that event in itself, when the egg hatched in his hand [see above photo of hatching egg, taken by Mary Dewitt!].



Last week, Joanne and I, with the help of Mimi, transformed one of the hoopouses, thanks to our committed and vigorous weeding. During water breaks, we routinely raid the Sungold tomatoes, raspberries, and blackberries, gobbling and giggling like bad girls. This week we learned about various original ways to save on our PECO bills from the energy-saver guy, Sean, while we beautified the Swiss chard patch.

In my quest to find a new and meaningful way to spend some free time, I wanted to have fun; I didn't want to drive to the shore so much. I wanted to do something that was free and always accessible, something I could do down the road, literally and figuratively. My instinct this spring that working at Red Hill Farm would be significant has proven to be true. If you're looking too, I recommend becoming a workshare member at Red Hill. You may, like me, enjoy doing it with a pal you love, but wouldn't otherwise see." *Great essay—thanks Mary!!!!*

Grateful Harvests

I know we're all grateful for the fabulous harvests we've gotten so far this year, but were matters otherwise, we still could fall back on buying produce at the stores. But in ancient and mediaeval times, that alternative was not an option—if you didn't get a good harvest, you starved.

In the northern hemisphere, there were several harvest festivals. The first, called *Lammas* (an abbreviation of "Loaf-Mass"), occurred in early August, when the first grains were harvested. Usually these were wheat (called "corn" in mediaeval Europe), barley (think beer!), and rye. (Here at Red Hill, though we don't grow grain, we recently "harvested" our sweet corn!) Churches were decorated with fruits and flowers, and people brought their



first loaf of bread made from the new grain to church to be blessed. (Hence the term loaf-mass.) Because grains were literally (and spiritually) the staff of life in the Middle Ages, much ceremony and feasting accompanied Loaf-Mass. One lovely ritual involved making "*corn dollies*"—little figures made of wheat (i.e. "corn"), which were blessed in church, then kept and honored in hope of another fertile and productive harvest. (at left, wheaten corn dolly; [credit](#))

You could try making corn dollies with your kids, using



the husks from our sweet corn! For the historical, folkloric, and mythical roots of Lammas, see [here](#). For traditional corn dollies made of wheat, see [here](#); for how to make sweet-corn dollies, see

[here](#) or [here](#) (the latter also for photo credit).

Sage Frittata—4-6 servings

- ❖ 6 eggs
- ❖ 1 tbsp grated Parmesan
- ❖ 2 tbsp day-old breadcrumbs, soaked in ½ cup milk
- ❖ 12 sage leaves [we have 2 types of sage in our perennial herb beds]
- ❖ salt
- ❖ 2 tbsp olive oil

In bowl, beat eggs w/ fork. Add cheese, breadcrumbs, & sage & beat well, w/ a pinch of salt. Put oil in 10" skillet on medium-high; add egg mix & cook till sides are brown

& top almost firm, ~8 min. Turn; slide frittata onto plate, cover it w/ another plate, invert plates, & slide frittata back into pan. Turn off heat immediately & serve hot, warm, or room temp. (from *La Zucca Magica*, Nice)

Zucchini-Mozzarella Patties—This delicious recipe was sent by member **Kim Auger**, who found it on the internet (see [here](#))! Great for using up large zucchini!

- ❖ 4 cups coarsely grated zucchini, packed
- ❖ 2 large eggs, slightly beaten
- ❖ 1 small onion, chopped (or use an amount to taste)
- ❖ ½ cup all-purpose flour
- ❖ 2-3 tsp fresh minced garlic (or to taste, or use ½ tsp garlic powder)
- ❖ 1/3 to ½ cup grated Parmesan cheese
- ❖ 1 cup shredded mozzarella (or cheddar)
- ❖ 1 tsp seasoning salt
- ❖ 1-2 tsp fresh ground pepper (or to taste)
- ❖ olive oil for frying (or try canola)

Squeeze out as much of the moisture in the zucchini as possible (really important—I spread grated zuke on a hand towel & placed another towel on top & blotted really well). Put the zuke in large bowl. Add all remaining ingredients except oil. Mix well to combine & adjust salt & pepper to taste. Heat oil in skillet on medium-high. Drop zuke mix by heaping tbsps into hot oil & flatten. Fry on both sides till golden brown. **Thanks Kim!**

Roasted Zucchini or Summer Squash

- ❖ one large or several normal zucchini or other squash
- ❖ olive oil, salt, pepper
- ❖ minced garlic to taste
- ❖ mixed herbs of your choice
- ❖ balsamic vinegar or fresh lemon juice

Preheat oven to 425. Remove squash stem & slice squash diagonally, ½" thick. Drizzle & coat w/ oil, salt, pepper. Put on greased baking pan & roast 25-30 min, turning once halfway thru. Add garlic in last 5 min. Sprinkle w/ chopped dill, rosemary, thyme, tarragon, or parsley [or whatever!]. Drizzle w/ balsamic or lemon juice when done cooking & serve.

(Moskowitz & Romero, *Veganomicon*) **By the way, to preserve fresh zucchini easily, simply grate & freeze in plastic zipper bags** (for that hint & more recipes, see [here](#); for zucchini photo above—[here](#)!).



Spicy Sautéed Dandelion Greens—Soon you'll be getting a very *special type of dandelion*, "**Italian Red Ribbed**," in your share. Aby & Mira encourage us to try it. Here's what another CSA manager said about it: "*These and other greens like it...are referred to as bitter greens. They are a great addition to salads and offer huge health benefits. A cup of raw dandelion greens has the same calcium as half a glass of milk. It also has 14,000 IU of vitamin A, plus 19 mg of thiamin, 26 mg of riboflavin & 35 mg of ascorbic acid [vitamin C]. That's more than most multivitamins.... Also, if you open your heart a bit, they are delicious, just not in that melted butter on the year's first sweet corn kind of way. Most of the recipes you find will call for adding these sharp greens to a salad or wilting them. A simple method for wilting is to bring a pan of water to nearly boiling, then steep the greens quickly & rinse in ice water. Wilting will greatly reduce the bitterness of these greens. My family served these with warm bacon dressing & though I...hesitate to include recipes which have no easy...vegetarian alternative, I have tasted some reasonable bacon facsimiles in the recent past....*" (See [here](#) for quote & for this recipe.)

- ❖ 1 bunch dandelion greens, tough stems removed & leaves cut crosswise into 4" pieces [don't remove all the red ribs]
- ❖ ¼ cup olive oil
- ❖ 2 large cloves garlic, smashed
- ❖ ½ tsp dried hot red pepper flakes [or to taste]
- ❖ ½ tsp salt

Cook greens in 6-8 qt pot of boiling salted water till ribs are tender, 4-5 min, then drain in colander. Rinse under cold water to stop cooking & drain well, pressing out



excess water. Heat oil in 12" skillet over medium till hot but not smoking, then cook garlic, stirring, till pale golden, ~30 sec. Increase heat to medium high, then add greens, pepper flakes, & salt, & sauté, stirring, till liquid the greens give off is evaporated,

~4 min. Makes 4 side servings. ([photo credit](#))

"Summer is delicious, rain is refreshing, wind braces up, snow is exhilarating; there is no such thing as bad weather, only different kinds of good weather." John Ruskin