



# THE RED HILL ROOT



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

Volume V, Number 25

26 Oct 2008

## Farm and Member News



**Many thanks to those who made the Harvest Fest possible**—When you come for the Harvest Fest, you’ve spent time making your wonderful food, and *we thank all of you* for that! But there are folks who performed behind the scenes that made the whole Fest come together. In particular, we thank the *farmers, seasonal employees, and workshares* for providing us with a bountiful harvest in the first place! But our hard-working *Core Group* contributed greatly to making the Fest happen, as did our *workshares*. **MANY THANKS TO ALL!**

**Flower bulbs anyone?**—If any of you have flower bulbs you could donate to the Farm for our expansion of the *Children’s Garden*, we would so appreciate it! Perhaps you have plantings of tulips, daffodils, irises, or other flowers whose bulbs need dividing, and you may have leftovers....? Did you know that bulbs are actually underground food-storage facilities for the plant that grows above ground? For more on bulbs, see [here](#).



## News from the Furrow

By Mira Kilpatrick



“This week on the Farm, 5 became 3, with just me, Aby, and Josandra on the Farm. We did have our trusty workshares out though. Lee and Mariann joined us on Wednesday, and we were able to take down the entire hoophouse. My amazing husband, Gerard, took the day off on Wednesday to help us with the tunnel as well. It was so nice to have him on the farm with us for a day. I’m still waiting for him to quit that brewing job and become a full-time farmer. => The area where we want to put the hoophouse up is definitely in need of some major leveling, so that is our next focus before trying to get it back up.

Andrea and Taylor, Lee’s wife and son, also came out to help towards the end of the day. Unfortunately that was at the point in the leveling discussions that most of us were

tired, and basically just scratching our heads, but Andrea and Taylor still had energy to expend, so they helped us by pulling some of the last irrigation drip lines out of the fields. Thanks guys!

We also had a group of students from Neumann come out.



They didn’t seem quite as thrilled as some of the younger kids that have visited the Farm, but once we started planting garlic,



and chatting more casually, they opened up a bit.



It was a pretty afternoon, they got a lot of garlic in, and we hope they had some fun!” **Thanks Mira!** (garlic, at left)

## The “Animal Vote”—a Semblance of Life

It’s obviously important—more so than in many years—that we all vote on Tuesday the 4<sup>th</sup>, no matter where we live. But in California, beyond the usual election choices, there’s **a radical animal-rights proposition (Prop 2) on the agenda**. While (sadly) it doesn’t call for free range for all animals, it does at least mandate more spacious quarters for caged sows, veal calves, and poultry (current cage size for egg-laying chickens is about 8 square inches). Opinion is heated on both sides. The anti-Prop-2 “Californians for Safe Food” claim not only that Prop 2 will create major economic problems for egg producers



and raise consumer costs (at an especially bad time), but also that larger cages make for dirtier, sicker birds. The former claim is surely true; I’m quite



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dubious about the latter. Proponents of Prop 2 say simply that ***“If animals are going to be killed for food, the least we can do is treat them with decency and give them a semblance of life.”*** For more, see NYT [here](#) & [here](#).

### All Hallow’s Eve (or Hallowe'en)

The end of October is celebrated as a time of the dead in many different cultures. Why this time of year? In the northern hemisphere, people speculate that it’s because this begins the dark days of winter, the time when we wait for light to come again. The darkness provokes thoughts of death and the dead, fostering commemorations of those who have passed on. In the Roman Catholic church, 1<sup>st</sup> November is ***All Saints’ Day***, to honor all the saints, known and unknown (see [here](#)); hence the night before is the eve of the “Hallows” (those things that are holy). 2<sup>nd</sup> November is the church’s ***All Souls’ Day***, to celebrate the souls of all loved ones who are gone and visit their graves (see [here](#)). In the Eastern Orthodox church, there are several such days thru the year, celebrated on ***Soul Saturdays*** because that day was when Christ lay in the tomb ([here](#)). (image: Bouguereau, *All Souls’*, 1859)



Mexicans and many Mexican-Americans celebrate ***Dia de los Muertos*** (Day of the Dead) on 1<sup>st</sup>-2<sup>nd</sup> November, holidays dating back to Mexico’s pre-Christian indigenous peoples as well as to Mexico’s Catholic heritage. On these days, people honor their dead by creating altars at home or in cemeteries (see left; [source](#)), covering them with food and flowers (***ofrendas*** or offerings). They believe that at this time of year—a “thin place” in the year’s cycle—it’s easier for the souls of the dead to come back and visit their families. The ***ofrendas*** are to encourage the souls’ return and their communion with loved ones.

As one writer says, *“While death is a topic largely avoided in the USA, the remembrance of deceased ancestors and loved ones is traditional among diverse cultures around the globe, often marked by lighting candles or lamps and laying out offerings of food and drink. Such celebrations can be traced back as far as the glory days of ancient Egypt when departed souls were honored during the great festival of Osiris.”* (See [here](#).)



Similar beliefs about “thin places” and the permeability of the veil separating material and spiritual worlds are found in Celtic cultures, especially the holiday called ***Samhain*** (pronounced “sow-an”) on 1<sup>st</sup> November ([here](#)). This can be traced back to a mediaeval Celtic festival (Samhain Assembly) marking summers’ end, the oncoming winter darkness, and the end of the old year’s harvest. (The Saxons called it ***Winter’s Eve***.) At this time bonfires were lit atop hills throughout Ireland, Gaul, Scotland, Wales, Brittany, and other Celtic lands. In many of these places, ***Samhain customs were entwined with those of All Souls’, and the resulting mix probably influenced our own, secular Halloween celebrations.***

Because Celtic days commence the preceding twilight, ***31<sup>st</sup> October is the start of Samhain***, dedicated to the last harvest. In some Celtic areas, souls of the dead are invited to share in the celebrations (just as in Mexico). Harvest-wise, animals were chosen at this time to be slaughtered for winter consumption. Seasonal foods like apples and nuts were served at the festivals, and the bones of animals were thrown on the bonfires (“bone-fires”).



Like Samhain, our ***Halloween***, also on 31<sup>st</sup> October (the eve of All Saints), includes bonfires and an emphasis on ghosts and spirits. Carved ***Halloween pumpkins*** probably originated with the Celtic belief that a person’s soul and knowledge resided in their

head. Hence carved turnips or rutabagas were used as protection when going out at night, especially at such transitional, “thin” times of the year. Later, pumpkins or other squash were used. ***Masking*** oneself served a similar function, both to invite spirits and to protect oneself from evil spirits. ***Trick-or-treating*** is like the mediaeval custom of “souling,” when poor people went house to house begging for food, in return for prayers for the dead on All Souls’ Day ([source](#)). For more on Halloween’s relation to early traditions, see [here](#). For family-friendly ideas & info, see [here](#). (Jack Skellington mask, above, from the *Nightmare Before Christmas*, [here](#))



## Green Tomatoes Anyone??

By Marcy Magness (we miss you Marcy!)

“Although green tomatoes have not been found to have the high lycopene content of red tomatoes, they are still very edible. Green tomatoes can be sautéed in a nice veggie mix, pickled, fried, or used in chutney. *Cooking* green tomatoes is a great way of utilizing harvested food while introducing oneself to new tastes and textures. So go ahead, cook away!!! And enjoy the new flavors.

[However,] *eating raw green tomatoes in large quantity should be avoided*, as they contain a toxin called solanine (also found in green potatoes).” *Thanks Marcy!*

**Broiled Green Tomatoes with Goat Cheese**—Farm member Karen Mayer sent this recipe—*thanks Karen!*

- ❖ 4 medium green tomatoes (best if beginning to turn pale pink)
- ❖ 1 tbsp balsamic vinegar
- ❖ 2 tsp minced fresh oregano leaves
- ❖ 4 tsp minced fresh basil leaves
- ❖ 1 cup crumbled goat cheese (feta or chevre)
- ❖ 4 tsp olive oil
- ❖ salt & coarsely ground black pepper

Cut tomatoes in 1/4" slices. Coat a shallow baking dish or cookie sheet w/ oil. Put tomatoes in single layer on bottom of baking sheet. Sprinkle w/ vinegar & scatter minced oregano & basil over top. Top all w/ crumbled cheese & drizzle w/ olive oil. If you have time, let marinate for 1/2 hr or more. Broil 5-8" below preheated broiler, cooking till tomatoes are hot & cheese is just starting to brown, ~7-8 min. Season w/ salt/pepper & serve. May need to adjust distance from broiler or timing so cheese doesn't burn. (Derived from C. Sicard's recipe on fabulousfood.com)

**Fried Green Tomatoes**—a classic southern recipe!



- ❖ 3-4 green tomatoes, sliced
- ❖ 1 1/2 cups flour
- ❖ 1/2 cup corn meal
- ❖ 1/2 tsp salt & pepper
- ❖ milk
- ❖ vegetable oil

Mix flour, corn meal, & salt/pepper. Add enough milk to create a thick batter. Heat 2" oil in large skillet. Batter each tomato slice & wipe off excess. Carefully place in hot oil, browning on both sides (may or may not need turning, depending on oil depth). To cool, drain in colander to keep tomatoes from getting soggy. ([source](#))

**1944 Green Tomato Pie**—frugal War-time recipe

- ❖ pastry for double-crust pie
- ❖ 1/2 cup sugar
- ❖ 2 tsp flour
- ❖ grated rind of 1 lemon
- ❖ 1/4 tsp ground allspice
- ❖ 1/4 tsp salt
- ❖ 4 cups green tomato, peeled & sliced [I wouldn't peel nowadays]
- ❖ 1 tsp lemon juice
- ❖ 3 tsp butter

Line pie pan w/ 1 crust. Mix sugar, flour, rind, allspice, & salt. Sprinkle a little at on bottom pie shell. Arrange tomato slices, a layer at a time, as you cover each layer w/ the sugar mix, lemon juice, & a dot of butter on each slice. Keep layering till you reach the top of pie tin. Cover w/ top crust cut into lattice slices [or cover & cut slashes in top crust] & bake at 350 for 45 min. ([source](#))

*For 105 green tomato recipes, see [here!!!](#)*

**Broccoli Raab & Garbanzo Pita Pizzas**

- ❖ 2 large garlic cloves, sliced thin
- ❖ 1/4 cup olive oil
- ❖ one 19-oz can garbanzos (chick peas), rinsed and drained
- ❖ 1/2 cup water
- ❖ 1 lb broccoli raab, including leaves and tender stems, rinsed & roughly chopped
- ❖ 1/2 tsp dried hot red pepper flakes [or to taste]
- ❖ three 6" whole wheat or other pita breads, halved horizontally to form 6 rounds
- ❖ 1/2 cup freshly grated Parmesan cheese (~2 oz)



Preheat oven to 400. In large, heavy skillet, cook garlic in oil on moderate heat, stirring, till pale golden. Transfer garlic & 1 tbsp oil to food processor. Add chickpeas, 1/4 cup water, & salt/pepper to taste & blend until smooth. Heat oil remaining in skillet on medium-high until hot but not smoking & cook broccoli raab till wilted. Add remaining 1/4 cup water & pepper flakes & simmer, partially covered, till greens are crisp-tender & most of liquid is evaporated, ~2 min. Spread rough sides of pita w/ chickpea purée & top w/ raab and Parmesan. Arrange pita pizzas on large baking sheet & bake in the middle of oven 10 min, or till edges are golden. Serves 6 as entrée or 10-12 as hors d'oeuvre. ([source](#), with more raab recipes!)