

Farm & Member News



Mark Your Calendars—

SPRING PICNIC AND PLANT SALE!

Please join us to welcome new members and learn what's going on at the farm!

Take some plants home and start a garden!

- ❖ **Where:** Red Hill Farm
- ❖ **When:** Saturday May 16th, 2009
- ❖ **Time:** 1pm—4pm. Farmers will lead tours at 1pm and 3pm.

Make sure to attend one of the tours so you are oriented! Bring a picnic lunch; refreshments will be provided.

Send in your form for pre-ordered off-farm products! If you want fruit, corn, sweet potatoes, or turkey, be sure to send the form *soon* that came with your member receipt!

Red Hill Revelations

By Mira Kilpatrick



“Hi all. We have been very busy seeding away in the greenhouse (at left), starting our transplants. See photos of some of our baby

vegetables (close-ups, right and below, of cucumbers, lettuce, and broccoli).



We'll start seeding directly in the field, and transplanting into the tunnel in the next few weeks. Other activities at the farm will be pruning the raspberries and blackberries, putting the

second tunnel back up, and prepping beds.

We picked up a used disc this past week. It's a tractor implement that we bought to reduce the use of our rototiller. The rototiller does more harm to the soil, mixing up the different soil layers and pulverizing the soil. The disc (preceded by the chisel plow in the spring) helps aerate and break up the soil, and prepare beds for seeding and planting without disturbing the soil as much. We are very excited to start using this on the farm.



Left: Aby pulling the disc; right: close-up of the disc in the soil

Aby's been training me on the tractor, bit by bit, since last season, and I've been having a lot of fun learning more, and actually prepping some of the beds for this spring on the tractor. See photos (above) of the disc in action.



Mira on the tractor

We've also been interviewing a lot of people for our seasonal position. For those of you who don't know, Marcie, who worked with us last year, will be back again this year. She spent some time this winter volunteering at Heifer International in Arkansas, and we're looking forward to her return. I'm sure she'll give more details in the future. The part-time seasonal position has evolved

into full-time, and we've been meeting with many applicants since the fall. After we hire, we'll have them tell you all a little about themselves! We also visited Sr. Josandra, our seasonal volunteer last year. She has been busy plodding away at starting up her community garden in the Bernardine Franciscan Center in Chester [see [here](#)].



Beyond that, we're just trying to get our bodies and minds in gear for what's on the horizon. Hope you all are getting ready too!" *Thanks Mira!*

HR 875—The End of Organic Farming?

Short answer: No. But rumors are circulating on the internet about HR 875 (Food Safety Modernization Act of 2009—see [here](#)) and its Senate partner S 425. *These rumors claim that the bills, supported by agribusiness groups like Monsanto, will end both organic farming and availability of heirloom seeds.* See [here](#) (Ron Paul's site) and [here](#) (Linn Cohen-Cole's blog) for such opinion. The *Organic Consumers Association*, while noting that the bill isn't perfect, nevertheless believes such opinions are overreactions to the bill (see [here](#) and [here](#)).

As the OCA says, "Although the Bill certainly has its shortcomings, it is an exaggeration to say that is a secret plot by Monsanto and the USDA to destroy the nation's alternative food and farming system. In actuality, HR 875, the Food Safety Modernization Act of 2009, is a limited-vision attempt by moderate Democrats and Republicans to craft food safety legislation to address the out-of-control filth and contamination that are inherent in our industrialized, now globalized, "profit-at-any-cost" food system. This being said, OCA does not support HR 875 in its present form, given the fact that, if the Bill's regulations were applied in a one-size-fits-all manner to certified organic and farm-to-consumer operations, it could have a devastating impact on small farmers, especially raw milk producers who are already unfairly targeted by state food-safety regulators. Although the OCA deems this Bill as somewhat well-intentioned, we are calling on Congress to focus its attention on the real threats to food safety: globalized food sourcing from nations such as China where food safety is a joke, and domestic industrial-scale and factory farms whose collateral damage includes pesticide and antibiotic-tainted food, mad cow disease, E. coli contamination and salmonella poisoning. And, of course, Congress and the Obama Administration need to support a massive transition to organic farming practices."

Winter Tomatoes—“Florida’s Slave Trade”

How many of you thought slavery ended in the U.S. in 1865? Think again. Our taste for tropical fruit in winter has created “*ground zero for modern slavery*” in south Florida, according to Douglas Molloy, a U.S. Attorney.



Barry Estabrook, author of *Gourmet* magazine's excellent “*Politics of the Plate*” series, writes of this truly shocking phenomenon in “*The Price of Tomatoes*” (*Gourmet*, March 09;

[here](#); see also Estabrook's follow-up article, “Florida's Slave Trade,” [here](#)). 90% of U.S. winter tomatoes are grown in south Florida near Immokalee, and slavery is rampant there. “*When asked if it is reasonable to assume that an American who has eaten a fresh tomato from a grocery store or food-service company during the winter has eaten fruit picked by the hand of a slave, [Douglas] Molloy said, 'It is not an assumption. It is a fact.'*”

The workers in south Florida have formed the *Coalition of Immokalee Workers* to speak for them—see their website [here](#). (The need for “fair-trade” *within* our country is absolute.) *Is it possible to buy slave-free tomatoes here in winter?* Two recommendations: *Whole Foods* has signed an agreement with CIW to ban slave-labor tomatoes in their stores. And Pennsylvania-based *Lady Moon Farms*, with a branch in south Florida, employs all their own (very well treated) pickers and is deeply concerned about Florida slavery and other social-justice issues, according to *Tom Beddard, Lady Moon's owner* (with whom I corresponded about tomato slavery). For Lady Moon, see [here](#). (And in case you were wondering, worker conditions in Mexico are even worse than Florida.)

Tidbits

Kids' Summer Camp at IMBY CSA, Westtown—Sally and Jim Hammerman, of In My Back Yard (IMBY) CSA near Westtown, PA, are sponsoring a fabulous summer “Camp on the Farm” for kids age 3-7 this year. It starts 6th July and runs thru 24th July, Mon-Fri, 8:30 am-1:00 pm. The list of activities sounds fascinating and definitely worth participating in (there's space for 12 kids). For lots more info, contact Sally at IMBYmystyhollow@mac.com, or at 610-455-0981. See IMBY's homepage [here](#).

The Obamas' Organic Veggie Garden!!!!—Barack Obama and his family are creating a new, organic garden, on the White House grounds, with 55 varieties of veggies! The food will be used for family meals as well as served to visitors to the White House! According to the *New York Times*, “*Almost the entire Obama family, including the President, will pull weeds, whether they like it or not, Mrs. Obama said laughing.*” For much more on this great example of responsibility beginning at home, see *Kitchen Gardeners International*’s “Eat the View,” [here](#).



Image courtesy of Kitchen Gardeners International

Farm member Eric Lienhard sent the following list of environmental events to attend. ***Thanks Eric!***

Storm Drain Marking—Register by ***March 27*** to help protect Philadelphia’s Schuylkill River by marking storm drains with medallions that read, “*Yo! No Dumping! Drains to River.*” Call (800) 445-4935, extension 112, to register for this fun activity. Partnership for the Delaware Estuary will provide supplies & guidance to registered volunteers in mid-April at the Fairmount Water Works Interpretive Center behind the Philadelphia Museum.

Christina River Watershed Cleanup

April 18, from 8 a.m. to noon, throughout New Castle County, DE—The Christina River Watershed Cleanup is the perfect opportunity to do a favor for nature. Join the staff of the Partnership for the Delaware Estuary as they pick up riverside litter at the Shipyard Shops in Wilmington, or choose from other sites in New Castle County. For more information, see [here](#).

Wilmington Earth Day Celebration

April 22, from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m.—Visitors to Wilmington’s Rodney Square on Earth Day, April 22, will be welcomed with music, a free giveaway, and “green” vendors with advice on things from gardening to hybrid cars. Join us for this festive outdoor gathering hosted by

the Partnership for the Delaware Estuary! For more info, call Lisa Wool at (800) 445-4935, extension 105.



Eric also recommends some great DVDs and television shows: for instance, “*Crash: A Tale of Two Species*,” or “*Flow: For the Love of Water*.”—both 2008 films are widely available via online rental services. Also, try to catch PBS’s “*Liquid Assets: The Story of Our Water Infrastructure*.” “You’ll never look at horseshoe crabs, shorebirds, or even tap water the same way again!”

WINTER/EARLY-SPRING VEGGIES

Quick Kimchi

- ❖ One 3-lb head Napa cabbage
- ❖ 2 tbsp chopped garlic
- ❖ 1 tbsp chopped peeled ginger
- ❖ 2 tbsp Asian fish sauce [or soy sauce to taste]
- ❖ 2 tsp distilled white vinegar
- ❖ 1 bunch scallions, chopped
- ❖ 3 tbsp sesame seeds, toasted in dry, heavy skillet till 1 shade darker, ~3 min, then crushed w/ flat side of heavy knife
- ❖ 2-3 tbsp coarse Korean hot-pepper flakes
- ❖ ½ Asian pear

Quarter cabbage lengthwise, then crosswise into 2-3” pieces. Toss w/ 3 tbsp salt in large bowl & let stand, tossing occasionally, 2 hrs. Rinse cabbage well & drain. Squeeze out excess water w/ hands & transfer to large bowl. Purée garlic & ginger w/ fish sauce & vinegar in blender till smooth; pour over cabbage. Add scallions, sesame seeds, & pepper flakes & toss to coat. Peel pear & grate on large holes of box grater (avoid core & seeds). Add to cabbage mix & marinate 1 hr. or more. Will keep a month in fridge. (*Gourmet*, Mar 09)

Panfried Smashed Potatoes—serves 4

- ❖ 8 medium red potatoes, unpeeled
- ❖ ½ cup olive oil
- ❖ ½ cup grated Parmesan or Pecorino

Cover potatoes w/ water in 3-4 qt pot & add 1 tbsp salt [or to taste]. Boil till almost tender, ~10-15 min. Drain. Transfer potatoes to baking sheet & lightly crush to ~3/4” thick w/ potato masher, keeping potatoes intact as much as possible. Heat oil in 12” heavy skillet on medium-high till it shimmers. Transfer potatoes to skillet w/ spatula, lower heat to medium-low & cook, turning once, till golden brown, ~20 min total. Serve sprinkled w/ cheese & grated black pepper. (*Gourmet*, Mar 09)

Asian Chicken Salad w/ Bok Choi—serves 4

- ❖ 4 heads baby [or small] bok choy, trimmed & halved lengthwise
- ❖ 3 tbsp fresh lime juice
- ❖ 2 tbsp fish sauce (or 2 tsp soy sauce)
- ❖ 1 tsp sugar
- ❖ 1/8th tsp cayenne pepper
- ❖ 2 cooked, boned chicken breasts, sliced crosswise
- ❖ 3 oz snow peas, thinly sliced lengthwise
- ❖ 3 small shallots, peeled & thinly sliced
- ❖ ¼ cup fresh mint leaves, coarsely chopped



In large pot, bring 1" salted water to boil; add bok choy. Cover & cook till tender, ~3-5 min. Drain; let cool. In bowl, whisk together lime juice, fish (or soy) sauce, sugar & cayenne. Add chicken, snow peas, shallots; toss to combine. Top chicken mix w/ mint & serve alongside bok choy. (*Everyday Food*, Apr 09; [photo credit](#))

Pinto Bean & Spinach Salad—serves 4

- ❖ 3 tbsp olive oil
- ❖ 1 tbsp finely sliced lemon zest, + 2 tbsp fresh lemon juice
- ❖ ½ tsp Dijon mustard
- ❖ coarse salt & ground pepper
- ❖ 3 cups cooked [or canned, rinsed] pinto beans
- ❖ 8 oz flat-leaf spinach (4 cups), trimmed
- ❖ ½ cup parsley, chopped
- ❖ 1 tbsp capers
- ❖ 2 scallions, thinly sliced



In bowl, whisk together oil, lemon juice, & mustard; season w/ salt/pepper & stir in beans. In medium pot, bring 1" salted water to boil, add spinach, cover, & cook till wilted, ~2-4 min. Drain spinach & transfer to bowl w/ beans. Add parsley, capers, scallions, & zest; toss to combine.

(*Everyday Food*, Apr 2009) **Did you know**

that spinach is in the Amaranth family? For more info, plus the photo of spinach in bloom, see [here](#).

Kale, Sausage, & Mushroom Stew—serves 4

- ❖ 1 tbsp olive oil
- ❖ ¾ to 1 lb Italian sausage, hot or sweet, cut into 1" pieces (**Vegans!**—*substitute Tofurky Italian sausage, cut into 1" pieces*)
- ❖ 1 lb kale, leaves stripped from stems & stems reserved
- ❖ ¾ lb trimmed & sliced mushrooms
- ❖ 1 tbsp rough-chopped garlic
- ❖ 1 tbsp hot paprika or red chili flakes (or to taste)
- ❖ salt/pepper
- ❖ 2 cups chicken stock, water, or veggie stock

Put olive oil in deep skillet or casserole on medium-high heat. A minute later, add sausage & cook w/o stirring till well browned on one side, ~5 min. [Tofurky sausage may not take that long]. Meanwhile, chop kale stems in ½" lengths & shred leaves. Stir sausage & let it brown a bit more. Remove w/ slotted spoon (don't worry if it isn't cooked thru [Tofurky sausage is pre-cooked]). Cook mushrooms in remaining fat [add more olive oil if using Tofurky], stirring a bit, till lightly browned, ~10 min. Remove w/ slotted spoon & keep warm. Add kale stems & cook, stirring often, till they begin to brown, ~3-4 min. Turn heat to medium & add garlic, paprika or chili flakes, kale leaves, salt/pepper; stir & cook ~1 min. Return sausage to pan & add stock or water. Raise heat to high & cook ~5 min, stirring a bit & scraping bottom of pan w/ wooden spoon. Season to taste, ladle into bowls, & top w/ mushrooms. (*NYT*, Mark Bittman, see [here](#))

Green Mashed Potatoes—serves 4

- ❖ 2 large starchy or all-purpose potatoes (~1 lb), peeled & cut in quarters
- ❖ 1 lb dandelion or other greens, washed & trimmed of thick stems [check your yard—dandelions are coming up now!]
- ❖ ¼ to ½ cup olive oil
- ❖ 1 cup homemade breadcrumbs

Put potatoes in large, deep pot & cover w water. Add large pinch of salt & bring to boil. Cook till soft but not falling apart, ~15-30 min. Remove w/ slotted spoon & drain; add greens to water & cook ~1 min. Rinse, drain, & chop. Heat oven to 400; mash potatoes, adding enough oil to moisten them well. Mash in the greens, adding more oil as needed. Season w/ salt/pepper. Put in ovenproof dish & top w/ crumbs. Drizzle w/ more oil & bake till crumbs are golden brown, ~15 min. Serve. (*NYT*, Bittman, [here](#))

For possibly the funniest farm-art video ever made, check out this [YouTube!](#) Seriously hilarious!