



THE RED HILL ROOT



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

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Farm & Member News

Second Payments Due—If you only paid half of your Red Hill Farm membership fee earlier in the year, then *the second half of your payment is due now*, this week! Please bring a checkbook with you to the Farm when you come to pick up, as we can only take checks (no cash accepted). Thanks for your consideration!

Paying for off-Farm products—Off-Farm products can be paid for either with cash or checks (no credit cards). Foods available for purchase in our new market-system include beef, pork, raw cheese, raw milk, chicken, eggs, bison, and fruit. Remember, check or cash only—thanks!

BAGS!—Please stock up on bags to bring to the farm for use in the share room. Paper and/or plastic are fine.

5-Gallon Food-Grade Buckets—Please look for food-grade, 5-gallon buckets for use on the farm. They must have contained *only* food items previously *Thanks!*

Katie Cavuto Boyle—She made it thru the first round of Food Network competitions 7th June! *Congrats Katie!*

Red Hill Revelations

By Mira Kilpatrick

“The Birds and the Bees”

“No, that’s not what I’m talking about! I’m talking about the real birds and bees at our farm! We are so grateful to our volunteers, Bruce and Warren, because birds and insects are very important to the farm: birds eat pests that might otherwise destroy our crops, bees pollinate our crops, and the presence of both are indicators that we have a healthy, diverse environment on the farm.

We have written about Bruce in other newsletters; he is our main man when it comes to caring for, counting, and just generally monitoring our purple martin population. Purple martins migrate all the way from Brazil, and are a very special and unique bird. They won’t just nest

anywhere, and this winter we had to move the purple martin houses (the painted white gourds you see near the new tunnel), which Bruce thought might deter them. But we timed it well, and Bruce spruced up their homes quite a bit, and they came back with a vengeance! Their population is bigger than ever and we’re so pleased! Thanks Bruce.

There used to be active beehives at RHF, but not the past couple of years due to colony collapse disorder and the transition of farmers. We wanted to get them up and running again, and our new bee guy, Warren, came to the rescue! He also does the hives at Indian Orchards; thanks for giving us the tip Nancy! He has been coming out to the farm pretty regularly and has maybe about 4 hives going so far. Aby often goes out with him to check out what he’s doing/what’s going on.



He recently brought back a swarm from Kennett Square [see typical bee swarm, left [\(picture credit\)](#)]. He said it was so high up in the tree no one but

him would go up and get the swarm. He winked and said he just flew up to capture the swarm, no sweat. That new colony is now in a cool peaked-roof hive. If you would like to check out the hives, you are welcome. They are along the fence, on the opposite side of the farm as Legion Road/U-Pick Garden. Just take caution as you approach and do not go too close to the hives/flight path. Hopefully in time we will be able to offer honey for sale from the RHF honeybees, we’ll let you know! Until next week, enjoy the spring produce!” [For a lovely essay on bees and their swarming, see [here](#).]

Hail on Our Parade

By Aby Wright

“We’ve been marching right along this spring. All of the planning Mira and I did this winter has been paying off. Sure there have been little hiccups along the way—low germination here and there, extra trips to Ace Hardware during reconstruction of the hoop house, rain setbacks, etc. But all that’s normal in the farming world and despite it



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all, the farm and all of our crops were looking mighty fine when we closed the gates last Friday.



Left and right: Tomato and spinach perfection, before hail (photos by Mira)

And then came the hail storm.....when I saw the tomato field Saturday morning, the one where *we had just spent two days planting and staking 1300 tomato transplants,*



my jaw dropped and my head started spinning. There were transplants snapped in half, broken stakes, signs of flooding... neither Mira nor I had ever seen anything like it. As we kept walking we saw

that the Swiss chard was destroyed and the beautiful spinach, kale and lettuce heads for the first week's share were all ripped up. [post-hail tomatoes, above & below; Mira's photos]

Even with all the damage, it didn't take long for our



despair to lift as we called our farmer friends and felt the love. Local farming is truly a community and we welcomed the support of fellow farmers, **Tom Paduano, Amy Johnson, Rick Fonda, Nancy & Bob Bernhardt, Sally &**

Jim Hammerman, who all offered their extra transplants. Melinda helped us arrange a great deal with **Wolff's Apple House** on more plants. When we showed up, **Peter and Fran Wolff improved their offer and gave us the plants for free!** We were overwhelmed.

In addition to the sense of community, this experience proves why small, diversified farms are the way to go. With such a variety of crops, the shares looked great

despite holes in a few of the veggies. *By the end of the week, we could still remember all those broken tomatoes, but at least our fields were replenished and our spirits lifted.*" [For Wolff's as farmers'-market/plant nursery & general friendly gathering-spot—now 100 years old!—see [here](#). For the store's history, see [here](#).]

Tidbits

Women "Ecopreneurs" Turn to Farming—As more folks are laid off from corporate jobs, they're turning in increasing numbers to self-employment—especially women, and especially in farming and other food-related occupations! **40% of North-American farms are women-owned and run!** *Those successful women are now sponsoring seminars and courses to help other women succeed as "ecopreneurs"*—why that term? Because most of these women say that making a profit is not the most important aspect of their endeavor. Rather, they're concerned about blending work with family, partnering with & nurturing other women, working to shift the environmental balance, and living a "green" life. For the article in the *Monroe Times*, 7 June 09, see [here](#). For a blog about "*See Jane Grow: How Women Ecopreneurs are Leading America's Rural Renaissance,*" see [here](#).

Corporate-Farming Land Grab



In a disturbing counterpoint to the women ecopreneurs discussed above, industrial-agricultural corporations in wealthy and emerging economies are buying up huge tracts of land (15-20 million hectares so far) in Africa and Latin America—not to benefit Africans and Latin-Americans, but to make money by growing food and biofuels for sale in their home countries. For the story from Inter Press Service (IPS), see [here](#). [[photo credit](#)]

Keeping Greens Fresh—For a video from *Gourmet* about keeping greens fresh for several days, see [here](#). (Wash them in clean sink or bowl, wrap loosely in paper or cotton toweling, & store in a plastic bag in the fridge.)

Like Southern Cooking?—Check out Food Network's show, *Down Home with the Neelys*, featuring the owners of *Neely's Bar-B-Que in Memphis, TN* ([here](#)). Having lived in Memphis for 20 years, I'm fond of southern food!

The Neely's Broccoli-Cheddar Cornbread—serves 6

- ❖ ½ cup unsalted butter [or oil]
- ❖ 1 medium onion, chopped
- ❖ 2 garlic cloves, minced
- ❖ 2½ cups steamed broccoli
- ❖ two 8½-oz boxes cornbread mix
- ❖ ½ cup milk (or vegan substitute)
- ❖ one 8-oz container cottage cheese
- ❖ 4 large eggs
- ❖ 1 tbsp salt [or less—much less!—to taste]
- ❖ 1 cup grated sharp cheddar (+ more for topping)

Preheat oven to 375. Heat butter in cast-iron skillet on medium-high. Add onion & sauté till soft, ~4 min. Add garlic & broccoli & sauté 2 min. In bowl, mix cornbread mix, milk, cottage cheese, eggs, salt, & 1 cup cheddar till smooth, then pour batter into skillet over veggies & stir to blend. Sprinkle top w/ a bit more cheddar. Bake cornbread in skillet in oven ~30 min, till light gold & toothpick inserted in center comes out clean. Cool 5-10 min & eat! ([source](#) & [photo credit](#))



Tofu Broccoli Cashew Peanut Madness—Aby & Mira once worked at Brookfield Farm; this is from their site.

- ❖ 1 tbsp butter/oil
- ❖ 1 large onion, chopped
- ❖ 1 garlic clove, minced
- ❖ 1 lb herbed tofu, cubed
- ❖ 2 tbsp tamari or soy sauce
- ❖ ½ - ¾ cup crunchy peanut butter
- ❖ 2-3 tsp lemon juice
- ❖ ¼ tsp cumin powder
- ❖ cayenne to taste
- ❖ 1 medium head broccoli, chopped
- ❖ hot, cooked brown rice
- ❖ handful of roasted cashews, chopped

Heat butter or oil in skillet; add onion & garlic; sauté till soft. Add tofu & 1 tbsp tamari; sauté till brown. Remove from pan. In same pan, mix peanut butter, lemon juice, remaining tamari, cumin, & cayenne. Thin w/ up to 1 cup water to get gravy-like texture. Stir in tofu mix. Steam broccoli. Serve sauce over broc. & rice, topped w/ cashews. ([source](#); close-up, broccoli florets, [photo credit](#))



Garlic Scapes—This beautiful “food art” can be stored in the fridge for up to a month. You can chop them to use in stir-fries, shred them finely and mix with butter for EXTREME garlic-bread, or try

Garlic Scape Pesto:

- ❖ 1 cup grated Parmesan or Pecorino
- ❖ 1 tbsp fresh lemon or lime juice
- ❖ ¼ lb scapes [if you haven't got ¼ lb, add a couple garlic cloves too]
- ❖ ½ cup olive oil
- ❖ salt to taste

Purée scapes and oil in blender or food processor till smooth. Stir in remaining ingredients and serve in any way you can think of!!! ([source](#))

Chicken, Arugula, Wild Rice, & Pecan Salad

- ❖ 3 cups chicken broth
- ❖ 4 oz wild rice
- ❖ 1 lb cooked chicken
- ❖ 1 bunch arugula, chopped
- ❖ ¼ cup green onions, chopped
- ❖ 2 tbsp soy sauce
- ❖ 2 tbsp rice vinegar
- ❖ 2 tbsp sesame oil
- ❖ 1 cup pecans or walnuts, toasted & chopped
- ❖ 1 large or 2 small heads romaine lettuce, or 3 cups lettuce greens

Chicken should be skinned, boned, & cut in 1" pieces. Bring broth to boil in medium pan; add rice & bring to boil again. Reduce heat to low, cover & cook till tender, ~50 min. Drain well. Transfer rice to large bowl. Mix in chicken, arugula, & green onions. Stir soy sauce, vinegar, & oil together & pour over rice mix, tossing to coat. Season to taste. Sprinkle nuts into salad. Spoon over torn lettuce greens & mix, adding a bit more oil & vinegar if desired. (recipe modified from [here](#))

Spicy Rice & Kale

- ❖ 2 ¼ cups broth
- ❖ 1 ½ tsp creole or Cajun seasoning
- ❖ 1 cup non-instant white rice
- ❖ 2 cups packed, chopped kale

Bring broth & seasoning to boil in large saucepan. Stir in rice & kale and bring to boil. Reduce heat to low, cover & cook till rice is tender & liquid absorbed ~20 min. ([source](#))

“There are no garden mistakes, only experiments!”—Janet Kilburn Phillips