



THE RED HILL ROOT



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

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Farm News



Volunteerism Victorious!!!—As Mira notes, “The volunteer workday with members went great!!! Thanks so much to everyone who came out! It was a beautiful day, lots of fun, and we got A LOT OF WORK DONE! Tomatoes in the tunnel were suckered and clipped; we weeded squash, lettuce, okra, and the Children’s Garden; and we harvested hundreds of pounds of garlic and onions!! It was such a huge difference to have so many people out. We may try doing this on a monthly basis; we’ll keep you posted!”



Katie’s Hot Cooking-Demo—Katie Cavuto Boyle’s cooking demo was also well-attended (at least half the audience were non-members who heard about it through the media!). Katie put on another great show! It was fun, informative, and the final products were delicious—two cooked summer-squash dishes and a lovely goat-cheese spread w/ fresh herbs and shredded beets. As Mira points out, it’s really nice to have these demos utilizing Red Hill Farm’s produce, and learn more ways to use the bountiful harvests. Thanks to Katie and her husband Andy for coming out and putting on another really nice event!!!



Friday-Night Chillaxing* at the Farm—Aby’s issued the following invitation! “We’re having a casual Friday Night at the Farm next Friday (17th July) from 6 to whenever. Come chillax with us on the barn porch. Bring a drink or snack or hors d’oeuvre to share. Maybe even a game! See you there!” ***Thanks for taking the initiative Aby!*** *For those of you over 40-ish, chillaxing is a cross between relaxing and chilling out. Honest, I googled it! (ed.)

Red Hill Revelations

By Mira Kilpatrick

As you may recall, I wrote about onions last week. Garlic, another one of my loves, is in the same family, the Allium family (which also includes leeks, scallions, chives, etc).

We plant the garlic cloves in the fall, mulch them with straw or leaves, and let them do their thing until spring. They sprout in fall or spring, and then in May or June they

send up scapes which we cut off to eat and to keep the



plant’s energy directed toward the bulb. Around the 4th of July it is time to harvest garlic. We have harvested a lot of garlic (see photo of it, left, hanging in the barn). Now we will store it for some time, curing it as we do with storage onions and winter squash. As a result it will keep better when we share it out.

This fall, you will sample many hardneck garlics: rocamboles, porcelains, and purple stripes. See their descriptions below. Hardnecks are known for having more flavor and being easier to peel, though they do not typically store as long as softnecks.



Rocamboles [see left] are rich, full flavored gourmet garlic. They have large, easy to peel cloves which make them a joy in the kitchen, and have an excellent raw taste. [\(photo credit\)](#)



Porcelains (left) are very impressive in appearance, both as a tall and elegant plant and as a striking white bulb. They have the fewest and largest cloves of any variety. They also have the highest allicin content of the garlic varieties. [\(photo credit\)](#)



Purple Stripes (see one variety, left) have beautiful clove colors and often win baked garlic contests. They are a big hit at farmers’ markets due to their size and vivid colors. [\(photo\)](#) Within those types are strains with their own characteristics and fun names like Brown Tempest, Killarney Red, Music Pink. Just a little something

to look forward to.



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With that, I'll leave you with this interesting quote:
“*My final, considered judgment is that the hardy bulb [garlic] blesses and ennobles everything it touches – with the possible exception of ice cream and pie.*”
Angelo Pellegrini, *The Unprejudiced Palate* (1948)

How We Grow Our Fruit at Indian Orchards

By Nancy Bernhardt

“Berries: Once the flower buds begin to swell, no sprays are applied. Before bud swell, lime sulfur and/or insecticidal soap sprays may be applied if needed. Weed control is by tillage and hand-weeding.

Tree Fruits: Low-toxicity sprays are used to control fungi and insect damage. Some but not all sprays are used in organic production. Mating-disruption lures are also used. No herbicides are used, and weeds are controlled only by tillage and mowing. Fruit is thinned by hand; no chemical thinners are used.



Weather and Fruit: The fruit at Indian Orchards was greatly impacted by the spring weather. Two major factors contributed to an interesting picture of fruit formation. One was the low temperatures during flowering and fruit set. The result was damage to the fruit and, in some varieties, killing of the flowers. The second factor was the almost continuous rainfall, which helped to prevent adequate pollination of the flowers. Bees don't like to fly in the rain. Also, these conditions are very good for fungal infection of the flower, which will show up inside the fruit at maturity. That is to say, when the fruit is picked it looks fine, but then soon it starts to rot from the inside towards the surface of the fruit.

You may notice fruit variations in shape and texture. The side of the fruit that was cold-damaged, for instance, may have a different texture from the undamaged side but look normal on the surface. Some of the fruit will not keep as well as usual, so eat it promptly or refrigerate it.”

Tidbits

Integrated Fruit Production (IFP)—In a follow-up to Nancy Bernhardt's article about how they grow their fruit at Indian Orchards, as well as particular problems with

humidity in the Northeast, there's an excellent article from the *Rodale Institute's New Farm*. As the author notes, “[IFP] can be thought of as an innovative hybrid system, packaging the best elements of organic fruit production, such as integrated pest management and recalcitrant (long-lasting) mulches, with the minimal use of the least-toxic chemicals (by EPA standards) needed to produce a marketable crop within a whole-farm approach.” That sounds a lot like what Nancy and Bob do over at the Orchards, and apparently, more and more orchardists are moving away from hard-core, conventionally toxic approaches toward this least-toxic, most “fruitful” (sorry!) mode. See [here](#) for essay.

Food as a Right of Citizenship—*Frances Moore Lappé*, author of *Diet for a Small Planet* and other eco-food books, recently wrote “The City That Ended Hunger,” an article about the Brazilian city of Belo Horizonte. Prior to 1993, the city's poor were legion, and 20% of children



were going hungry. Then a new administration declared that food was a right of citizenship, instituting a range of new policies bringing farmers and their products directly to the people at affordable prices.

Their successes have not been replicated in ANY U.S. city—it's worth taking a look at their strategies, which really are so easy; you need only *adopt the right attitude and get everyone involved, as both a right and a duty of citizenship!* For Lappé's fascinating article, see [here](#) (this site, [Yes Magazine](#), is a great resource for food & many other economic issues).

Katie's Demo Recipes!

Summer Squash/Zucchini w/ Mint & Ricotta Salata

- ❖ 1 ½ tbsp extra-virgin olive oil
- ❖ 1 clove garlic
- ❖ 1 medium onion, chopped
- ❖ 5 cups cubed zucchini/summer squash
- ❖ 1 tbsp chopped fresh flat-leaf parsley
- ❖ 2 tbsp torn mint leaves
- ❖ 6 tbsp freshly crumbled ricotta salata cheese (check the cheese section of a good supermarket)
- ❖ salt/pepper to taste

Heat oil in large nonstick skillet on medium-high. Add onions to pan; sauté 1 min, stirring often. Add squash, parsley, & salt. Reduce heat to medium-low; cook 10-15 min, till squash is tender, stirring often. Add garlic, mint,

& ricotta salata; cook 1 min, till cheese softens. Season to taste. Adapted by Katie from “Cooking Light.”



Left: Katie demonstrating; right: squash w/ mint & ricotta salata

Summer Squash/Zucchini w/ White Beans

- ❖ 1 ½ tbsp olive oil
- ❖ 1 clove garlic
- ❖ 2 cups zucchini, cubed
- ❖ 2 cups summer squash, cubed
- ❖ 1 cup diced tomato
- ❖ 1 can white beans, drained
- ❖ 2 tbsp fresh basil, chopped
- ❖ 2 tbsp fresh parsley, chopped
- ❖ 2 tbsp parmesan cheese
- ❖ salt/pepper to taste

Heat oil in large, nonstick skillet on medium-high. Add squash/zucchini & sauté 3-5 min. Reduce heat to medium-low; cook another 5-10 min, till squashes are tender, stirring often. Add tomato, beans, herbs, garlic, & cook 3-5 min to warm thru. Season w/ salt, pepper, parmesan; toss together and serve. (Katie says she generally likes to add fresh herbs & garlic near the end of cooking.)

Herbed Goat Cheese Crostini w/ Shaved Beets

- ❖ 1/3 cup chopped fresh basil
- ❖ 1 tsp grated lemon rind—Katie uses a microplane for grating/zesting (see [here](#) for microplanes)
- ❖ 2 tbsp fresh lemon juice
- ❖ 1 tbsp olive oil
- ❖ 1 tbsp chopped fresh chives
- ❖ 1 tbsp chopped fresh parsley
- ❖ 1 (3 oz) pkg goat cheese
- ❖ 1 (8 oz) French baguette, cut in 16 slices, toasted
- ❖ 2 cups shaved (finely grated) raw beets (or substitute radishes, turnips, carrots, etc.)—Katie says you can peel the beets, or not! Just grate up the skin w/ everything else.
- ❖ salt/pepper to taste

Combine first 7 ingredients in small bowl (mashing together by hand) or food processor. Cover and refrigerate at least 2 hrs. Spread cheese on each bread slice, season w/ salt/pepper to taste, top with beets, and serve. Delicious!!!

Escarole: It’s a member of the endive family (see [here](#)), though w/ broader and less bitter-tasting leaves (the least bitter leaves are the lightest ones in the middle). It’s great braised (sautéed in oil or butter), or steamed and dressed w/ citrus, or in soups/stews.



Escarole and Beans—serve w/ crusty bread!

- ❖ 3 tbsp olive oil, divided
- ❖ 2 large heads escarole, torn into pieces
- ❖ salt/pepper to taste
- ❖ ¼ tsp crushed red pepper flakes (or to taste)
- ❖ 1 clove garlic, minced
- ❖ 2 (16 oz) cans cannellini beans, undrained
- ❖ 3 sprigs fresh parsley, chopped

Heat 2 tbsp oil in large skillet on medium. Add escarole, turning to coat w/ oil. Season to taste w/ salt, pepper, red pepper. Cook ~10 min, till tender. In separate skillet, heat remaining 1 tbsp oil on medium. Stir in garlic; pour in beans w/ juices & simmer till creamy, ~10 min. Stir in escarole & parsley; simmer 10 min. more. ([source](#))

Italian Wedding Soup (but don’t wait for a wedding!)

- ❖ 3 tbsp olive oil
- ❖ 3 cloves garlic
- ❖ 3 cups escarole, chopped [or more if you like]
- ❖ 3 tbsp shredded basil
- ❖ zest of 1 lemon
- ❖ 2 tbsp grated parmesan cheese (plus more)
- ❖ ½ lb lean ground beef (or turkey or chicken)
- ❖ 1 egg, lightly beaten
- ❖ 3 tbsp Italian breadcrumbs
- ❖ 1 cup orzo (tiny pasta)
- ❖ 1 can cannellini beans, drained & rinsed
- ❖ 6-7 cups chicken broth

Mix together meat, egg, crumbs, cheese, & basil, shaping into ½ to ¾ inch balls. Put broth in large pot on high heat & bring to boil; drop in meatballs. Meantime, heat oil in heavy large pot on medium; add garlic; sauté till fragrant, ~20-30 sec. Add escarole & sauté till wilted, ~2-3 min. Add escarole to pot w/ meatballs, along w/ beans, zest, & orzo. Return to boil, reduce heat to medium. Cook at slow boil ~10 min, till beans are heated thru & orzo is tender, stirring often. Salt/pepper to taste; sprinkle w/ grated parmesan cheese (preferably fresh-grated). ([source](#))

“Farming looks mighty easy when your plow is a pencil, and you’re a thousand miles from the corn field...” Dwight D. Eisenhower