



THE RED HILL ROOT



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

Volume VI, Number 17

31st Aug 2009

Farm News



Upcoming Cooking Demos—Our excellent member/chef, **Katie Cavuto Boyle**, will be giving a cold-food cooking demo utilizing autumn crops on **Tuesday, Sept. 8th, at 1:00pm**. The following week, our new members **Rahul and Shital Mehta** will be giving an Indian/Thai cooking demo—that's on **Wednesday, Sept. 16th, at 6:00pm**. Both demos sound great!

Red Hill Harvest Fest!—Our wonderful Harvest Fest will be **Saturday, October 24th, starting at 4:00pm**. More details are forthcoming; meanwhile, mark your calendar!

The Farmer John Movie—Our screening of *The Real Dirt on Farmer John* was a must-see! The movie was great—both funny and poignant—and we had a good turnout. While the weather was frightful, we were all tucked up nice and cozy in the barn, with popcorn and Mira's amazing homemade rose-petal/sage ale (wow). The weather obligingly cleared just as we were getting ready to leave—it was good times & good fellowship!



Red Hill Revelations

By Mira Kilpatrick

This week on the farm we had no rain and lovely weather!! Unbelievable! We planted out our fall arugula and kohlrabi, and will seed lettuce mix, radishes and turnips.

We also got a load of nice topsoil delivered for the raised beds we're making in the new tunnel. A big shipment of cinderblocks and rebar are coming today as well. They'll be used to make our bed frames.

We weeded a lot of brassicas: cabbages, broccoli, kale, collards, cauliflower, etc.

Aby took off for a tractor maintenance workshop on Wednesday. It was a WAgN (Women's Agricultural Network) event, so it was primarily women attending. She learned about general tractor maintenance and even small engine tools like mowers and weedwhackers. The hands-on part of the demo included changing the transmission

fluid and filter, the engine oil and filter, and the air filter. Aby's group worked on the transmission part.

Last but not least, Emily's fall semester started this week, so she'll be with us only part-time from now on. We're so grateful she was able to come on mid-season and that she can still give us some time while in school. However, we will be short staffed. ***We can use extra help if people are interested in volunteering. Just come on out. Tuesday and Friday mornings (8-12) when we are harvesting are good times, as well as Wednesdays all day (8-12 and 1-4). Much thanks in advance.***

Tidbits

So what is "WAgN"? It's the **Women's Agricultural Network**, with branches in a number of states. Aby attended their tractor maintenance workshop, but the group offers a range of other courses and workshops for women farmers, agricultural professionals, and educators.



The PA branch for instance, run by Penn State (see [here](#)), offers training in areas as various as cheese-making, controlling cucurbit pests, biodiesel production, cover-crop mulching, and veggie/berry growing. For the group's Summer 09 newsletter, see [here](#); for their E-News, [here](#). They also advertise job openings on their E-News.

How to Get Started with Canning Produce—*Gourmet Magazine* has a reassuring article about getting started with canning (see [here](#)). For beginners, they recommend making high-acid foods like fruit jams or pickles, which require only a boiling-water canner and canning jars and lids ("Deals" store in Media sells jars/lids inexpensively). Also see *Canning Across America*, [here](#).

A Note on Dairy vs. Non-Dairy Diets—Red Hill's Jim Kurz wanted us to note the compelling work of Cornell's Dr. Colin Campbell. Campbell authored the *China Study*, documenting detrimental effects of eating animal products (such as dairy) on health. See [here](#) for a brief review, & [here](#) for a video. Delco Library has the book.



Farmers: Abygail Wright and Mira Kilpatrick, awright@osfphila.org
Newsletter writer/editor: Melinda B. Parsons, m.boydp@gmail.com
Newsletter Archive: <http://www.osfphila.org/red/news>
Red Hill Farm, 609 Convent Road, Aston, PA, 19014 (610) 558-6799



Tomatillos—These delicious fruits are in the nightshade family (along w/ tomatoes, potatoes, eggplant, & peppers). To prepare them, remove the papery husk and wash the fruit with soap & water to get rid of its naturally occurring stickiness. They keep in fridge ~3 weeks, or you can freeze them raw in bags. They can be eaten green, yellow, or purple. Mira sent the next 2 recipes (from Brookfield Farm, where she & Aby worked). *Thanks Mira!*

Tex-Mex Casserole—serves 4-6

- ❖ 4 ears fresh corn
- ❖ ¼ cup butter
- ❖ 3 medium onions, thinly sliced
- ❖ 6 medium zucchini, thinly sliced
- ❖ 1 large tomato, seeded & chopped
- ❖ 1 cup fresh tomatillos, diced
- ❖ 2 Anaheim chiles (see photo), seeded & chopped
- ❖ 1 ½ tsp fresh oregano
- ❖ salt/pepper to taste
- ❖ 1 cup grated Monterey Jack or cheddar cheese

Preheat oven to 350. Using sharp knife, cut corn from cobs & set aside. In large skillet, heat 1 tbsp butter & sauté



onions & zukes for 3-5 min. on medium. Remove; add another tbsp butter & sauté tomato & tomatillos for 3-5 min. Lightly grease large casserole w/ butter. Combine all veggies together, including chiles; season w/ oregano, salt/pepper. Sprinkle w/ cheese & dot w/ remaining tbsp butter. Bake casserole, covered, for 30 min.

Remove lid & brown top briefly under the broiler. (source: *Recipes from a Kitchen Garden*) ([photo source](#))

Zucchini Tomatillo Bisque—makes ~10 cups

- ❖ 2 tbsp oil
- ❖ 2 tbsp butter
- ❖ 2 cloves garlic, chopped
- ❖ 2 onions, chopped
- ❖ 6 medium zucchini, chopped or grated
- ❖ 1 jalapeño pepper, seeded & chopped
- ❖ 6 tomatillos, husked & chopped
- ❖ 6 cups stock
- ❖ 5 corn tortillas
- ❖ ½ tbsp lime juice
- ❖ 1/3 cup chopped cilantro leaves
- ❖ salt, pepper
- ❖ sour cream, crumbled corn chips, cilantro leaves (optional garnishes)

In large saucepan, heat oil & butter, add garlic & onions & sauté till softened. Add zukes, chiles, & tomatillos, stirring till coated & heated thru. Add stock, bring to boil, then cover & simmer ~20 min, till zucchini is tender. Tear or shred tortillas & add to soup. Stir in lime juice & 1/3 cup cilantro. In blender or food processor, blend soup in batches till smooth. Salt/pepper to taste. Serve hot w/ suggested garnishes, if desired. This is thick soup; thin w/ stock if desired. (*More Recipes from a Kitchen Garden*)

Tomatillo Salsa Verde—Tomatillos can be roasted or boiled; roasting gives more flavor; boiling is faster & may use less energy.

- ❖ 1½ lbs tomatillos
- ❖ ½ cup chopped onion
- ❖ ½ cup cilantro leaves
- ❖ 1 tbsp fresh lime juice
- ❖ ¼ tsp sugar
- ❖ 2 jalapeño or Serrano peppers, seeded & chopped [or use dried chili pepper or Tabasco to taste]
- ❖ salt to taste



Roasting method: Cut tomatillos in half & put cut-side-down on foil-lined baking sheet. Put under broiler ~5-7 min. to lightly blacken skin.

Boiling method: Put tomatillos in pot, cover w/ water. Bring to boil & simmer 5 min. Remove w/ slotted spoon. Put tomatillos, lime juice, onions, cilantro, chili peppers, sugar in processor or blender & pulse till ingredients are finely chopped & mixed. Season w/ salt; cool in fridge. ([source](#) of recipe & photo)

Tomatillo Chicken Soup

- ❖ 1 chicken cut in 8 pieces
- ❖ 1 lb tomatillos, chopped coarsely
- ❖ 1 onion, finely chopped
- ❖ 3 cloves garlic, finely chopped
- ❖ 2 jalapeños, seeded & chopped
- ❖ 3 cups chicken broth
- ❖ 2 tbsp chopped cilantro

Salt & pepper chicken & brown pieces in pan, ~8-10 min. per side, then remove. Adjust fat & lightly sauté onions & garlic. Add broth, tomatillos, peppers & chicken to pan. When chicken is done (~15 min), remove to cool. Purée what's left in pan. Shred chicken & add back to pan w/ cilantro. Adjust seasoning & serve. ([source](#))