



THE RED HILL ROOT



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

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Farm and Member News



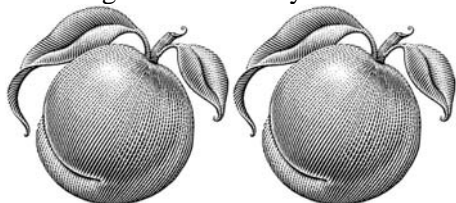
Please Pardon the Root's Hiatus—I apologize that the *Roots* have been a little “thin on the ground” lately. My husband and I, having accumulated 30 or 40 years of STUFF (!), just purchased a house and have spent the last several weeks doing all the paperwork, boxing up all the STUFF (my aching back!), actually moving all the STUFF, trying to get our old place ready to sell, and working as well—it’s been quite a summer. But now we’re back online and revving up again!

We Invite Guest Writers—The *Root* always has been intended as a communal venture, just like the Farm. I would love it if any of you feel moved to write something (or do a drawing or a photo or anything of your own) for publication in the *Root*! This invitation is aimed at members of all ages, no matter how young or young at heart. We’d also love you to send in your favorite recipes! Please send anything to me, Melinda, at this email: m.boydp@gmail.com. Thanks!

Hail and Fare Thee Well, Victoria!—Well! Our Farm intern, *Victoria Pearson*, has taken a new position at the Westtown School, teaching farming. Best of luck in your new endeavor, Victoria! We’ll miss your cheerful presence.

Raspberries, the Jewels of Nature—Heavens to Betsy, we’ve got our own raspberries! What further bounty could we possibly receive??!!

Indian Orchards—Nancy and Bob Bernhardt’s fruit available in the fridge in the barn now includes *fabulous peaches and blueberries*. Man, it sure is a good ole summer! Please try to make exact change when you buy fruit from the refrigerator. Thank you!



Scratchboard illustration by Michael Halbert ([source](#))

Foods to Anticipate—Upcoming soon is *okra*, that great Southern “world-divider”—that is, people seem either to love it or hate it. But you’ve got to give it a try before you know which camp you fall into! Stay tuned for okra recipes and more.



More Crops to Look Forward To!—Growing along are more yellow squash, zucchini, cucumbers, and a new round of greens—lettuces, kale, collards (*so* good for you)! Plus more of our wonderful tomatoes, onions, garlic, and so forth, and so forth! It’s been a bounteous season so far, and I know we all appreciate having such lovely, *local, organic, safe food!!!!*

The Farm as a Creaturely Being

Back in the January 07 *Root* (click [here](#)), I spoke of the “*enveloping community*” that is Red Hill Farm: farmers, Sisters, members, rich earth, plants, water, clouds, wind, sun, rain, pollinators, critters of various sorts. All of these parts comprise the Farm. But they aren’t separate parts! Each is a “member” of a “body”—a being—that is the Farm. *In other words, the Farm as a whole thing is a living creature.* Chris was speaking to me of this the other day—he is so right!

Like any creature, the Farm has moods and rhythms: it has difficulties and times of glorious harmony, struggles and victories, disappointments and joys. Sustainable farmers—as we are—are used to these daily swings in the temperament of their farm. Most times, crops come along and are harvested just as planned! Sometimes crops fail for no apparent reason, and sometimes they fail due to obvious causes. Occasionally crops succeed against all expectation (how lovely!). Farms have their ups and downs, just as all creaturely beings do.

When Chris and I talked about the Farm as a whole being, it brought to mind an essay by Verlyn Klinkenborg in the *New York Times*, 11 September 2005, titled “*The Rural Life; the Real Inventory.*” The essay addresses how all the beings on a farm live “in relation” (a very Franciscan



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idea, by the way). Klinkenborg says he'd emailed his brother a list of the animals he raises on his farm, and that list got him thinking about all the other animals who live *in relation* to the farm but are "directly responsible for themselves"—woodpeckers, phoebes, foxes, wild turkeys, hawks, hummingbirds, etc. He senses, however, that they do not comprise "the real inventory" of his farm but, rather, only "a circle of animals that seem scaled to human powers of observation."

What he goes on to write is quite lovely, conjuring a sense of the *creaturely being* of a farm and *all* its "members," a true "deep ecology": *"What makes the real inventory interesting is all the rest of the organisms that live on this place, whether I notice them or they notice me. There are times when I get a vague sense of how vast that inventory might be—nights when the crickets sound like a ringing in my ears, evenings when the low sun is refracted in the wings of the thousands of insects in flight over the pasture. But it is still only a vague sense, a catalog of life forms whose numbers I have to guess at. Somehow I instinctively imagine the abundance of life here in the shape of a pyramid—the kind of illustration that might appear in a schoolbook—with a pair of humans at the peak and the legions of soil bacteria at the base.*

But one of the things I've learned from living in the country is that life is not a pyramid with humans at the peak. It's an interrelationship that is far too complex to diagram so anthropocentrically and so simply. There is a map of need that I cannot read but that governs me as well. I go about the endless tasks, the chores,...and I pretend that somehow I'm separate and in charge.... I have to remember that if I wrote up the real inventory, it would include myself as well."

Hence, though we can feel frustrated when a farm doesn't behave the way it "should," we have to remember "the real inventory": the farm is an entity, of which we humans are only one part, not necessarily at the top!!!

Garlic-Roasted Tomatoes—serves 8

- ❖ 4 large tomatoes, cored & halved crosswise
- ❖ 2 tbsp butter, cut in 8 slices, or 8 tsp olive oil
- ❖ 4 garlic cloves, thinly sliced
- ❖ coarse salt & ground pepper

Preheat oven to 400. Put tomato halves, cut side up, on rimmed baking sheet. Top w/ butter or oil & garlic. Season w/ salt & pepper. Bake till tender, 40-45 min. (from *Everyday Food Magazine*, Sept 2007)

Raspberry-Yogurt Ice Pops—makes 6

- ❖ 2 cups plain, low-fat yogurt
- ❖ ½ cup sugar
- ❖ ½ cup raspberries

Whisk yogurt & sugar to combine. In blender, put 1 cup yogurt-sugar mix (reserve the rest) w/ raspberries; purée till well blended. [If you don't like raspberry seeds, you can press it all thru a fine-mesh sieve now.] Dividing evenly, layer yogurt mixtures (the one w/ raspberries & the cup without) in six 3-oz ice-pop molds [or small paper cups]. Insert popsicle sticks & freeze till solid. To unmold, run warm water briefly over molds. (*Everyday Food*, 9/07)



(source)

Lindsay Wagner's Couscous with Tomato-Eggplant

Sauce—6 servings

- ❖ 1 tsp olive oil [or a bit more]
- ❖ 1 medium onion, chopped
- ❖ 2 large garlic cloves, minced
- ❖ 1 eggplant, cut in ½" cubes
- ❖ 1 green pepper, finely sliced
- ❖ 2 cups fresh chopped tomatoes
- ❖ ½ tsp salt
- ❖ ½ tsp pepper
- ❖ ¼ tsp each of dried paprika, basil, rosemary, oregano (for fresh, triple amounts)
- ❖ ¼ cup chopped parsley
- ❖ 1 cup water
- ❖ 1 lb whole wheat couscous, cooked according to package directions

Heat oil in skillet. Add onion & sauté till golden. Add garlic & cook 1 min. Add eggplant & green pepper & cook 10 min. Add tomatoes, salt, pepper, herbs, & water. Cook, covered, for 30 min, stirring often to prevent sticking. Serve over couscous. (source)

"This was one of those perfect New England days in late summer where the spirit of autumn takes a first stealing flight, like a spy, through the ripening countryside, and, with feigned sympathy for those who droop with August heat, puts her cool cloak of bracing air about leaf and flower and human shoulders."

Sarah Orne Jewett, *The Courting of Sister Wisby*, 1887