



# News from Provident Organic Farm



www.providentfarm.org

Season 2, Week 11

"dedicated to a safe, just and sustainable food system"

June 23rd, 2003

## NOTES FROM THE FIELD #11...

*What's in your share this week will be what's pick-able that same morning!*

It was the best of times, it was the worst of times.

The volunteer harvest crews are amazing! We are getting from 6 to 10 people here on harvest days. Having enough help really makes the job go smoothly. In spite of rainy day harvests, offering blood sacrifices to the Mosquito Gods, and labor intense crops to pick, they carry on, and apparently have fun in the process. As they learn more about the harvest and post-harvest handling of the different crops, my job becomes easier. This will free me up to do some of the other tasks that are becoming so pressing given the weather we have had lately. We all owe a sincere thanks to all of the people who help with the harvests.

As you are probably aware, the excessive rains and lack of sunshine are causing problems with many of this year's crops. The early crops that were well established before the ground became saturated have not been severely damaged. With the exception of the sugar snaps all have yielded very well so far. The sugar snaps would have done much better, but most of the trellis stakes snapped in the heavy wind we had a few weeks ago. We were able to re-stake them and stand them up, but did a lot of damage to the vine in the process. We should have been able to pick them 3 times, but they are a done deal after only one picking.

I have been unable to properly tend some of the later plantings. When the ground is too wet, as it has been for weeks, it is impossible to cultivate, side-dress with fertilizer or apply any insecticides necessary to protect the crops. It has also been impossible to prepare any ground for the succession plantings of beans, squash, watermelons, canteloupes and others. Some of the seed I have sown has either rotted or washed out.

As I have surveyed the damage to existing crops, been frustrated by my inability to properly care for some of the crops, or been unable to plant others, I have thought about the commitment between farmer and consumer in the CSA model. Simply put, we accept responsibility for each other's well being. I take my side of this commitment very seriously, hence my frustration with the present situation.

I have heard reports from other CSA's in the Mid-Atlantic region. Some have not delivered anything in 3-4 weeks, some are delivering very light shares, some are even buying in produce for their members. By comparison, I think we are doing well so far. I will continue to do my best to honor my commitment to you and I sincerely thank you for your commitment to me.

Onward,  
Jay



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*If you're perplexed by some of the produce that arrives in your share, the Food Lover's Companion, published by Barron's, is an excellent resource. It offers clear definitions of what something is, how to pronounce it, and how it is frequently and best used.*

Michael Ableman, executive director of the Center for Urban Agriculture at Fairview Gardens in Goleta, California:

"People will tell you that the organic-farming revolution that's taking place is about food safety or ecological concerns, but I think that if you dig down deep, you'll find that the revolution is really about what people are missing in their lives: good food and a connection to the land, both of which put us in touch with basic spiritual values."

### Potato-Kale Gratin

1 lb potatoes, redskin, Yukon gold, russet, sliced 1/4" thick  
1 tbsp oil  
1 lg bunch kale, about 1 lb  
butter or oil  
1 c cream  
salt and pepper  
1/3 c grated Parmesan



Bring a large pot of water to a boil and add a tablespoon of salt. Add potatoes, return to a boil. Lower heat and cook for 5 minutes. Drain and set aside.

Remove stems from kale and cut into 1" ribbons. In large sauté or frying pan, heat oil over medium heat. Add kale and cook and stir until it loses crispness, about 5 minutes.

Butter or oil a 7x11" gratin dish or an 8-9" pie pan or casserole. Arrange half of potatoes evenly in pan; season with salt and pepper. Cover with kale. Layer rest of potatoes, overlapping like shingles, around the outside edge of the pan only. Pour cream over top and season with pepper. Sprinkle with Parmesan and bake at 425° until heated through and golden brown, about 25-30 minutes.



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### Good Stuff, Cool Stuff

- \* CSA members still get 50% off their "Park And Flea" tables, so be sure to take advantage!
- \* We still need coolers if you have any
- \* If you're going on vacation, let Amy know and she can donate your share for that week - [aliebman@intercom.net](mailto:aliebman@intercom.net)
- \* Plastic bags that never contained meat are still being accepted for donations - you bring 'em, we'll use 'em!

### COMMENTS AND CONTRIBUTIONS

We welcome your comments and contributions, including recipes! Please send to [ubuubok@dmv.com](mailto:ubuubok@dmv.com) or Provident Organic Farm CSA, PO Box 62, Bivalve, MD 21814.

### Beet Greens with Ginger and Hot Peppers

1 lg bunch beet greens, about 3/4 lb  
half to whole hot green pepper, about 2"-3" long  
1" piece fresh ginger root  
1 tbsp oil, peanut or vegetable  
4 tbsp water  
salt



Wash greens thoroughly and shake but do not dry. Remove stems and keep leaves whole or cut into thin ribbons.

Slice pepper in half and remove stem, seeds and white pith. Mince finely to make about 2 - 3 teaspoons.

Peel ginger and slice very thinly. Stack slices together and cut into small matchsticks.

In a large, nonstick pan, heat oil over medium-high heat until hot but not smoking. Add ginger and hot pepper. Stir-fry for about a minute. Add beet greens and heat and stir until wilted. If no liquid remains in the pan, add a tablespoon or two of water; cover pan. Steam for another few minutes until greens are tender. Remove lid and stir to evaporate liquid, watching carefully so that greens do not burn. Season with salt, if desired.  
-Adapted from Madhur Jaffrey's *World Vegetarian*, Madhur Jaffrey.