



# News from Provident Organic Farm



www.providentfarm.org

Season 2, Week #27

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

Oct. 13th, 2003

## NOTES FROM THE FIELD #27...

I have dreaded writing this "notes from the field" for weeks now, but the time has come to inform you more fully of the situation here on the farm. As you are aware, the recent shares have been very light. I have been trying to "scratch out" shares from the crops that I have been able to save. I know this is impossible, but it feels like I lost more than I planted. The remaining crops for the season will not be sufficient to share throughout the membership. I have been buying some crops from an organic farmer in Marion to help fill out the shares. I know this is not in keeping with the spirit of a CSA, but it was a business decision I made to help preserve as many of the members as possible. At this point, he is in no better shape than I am and I will not be able to access anything else from him.

After much deliberation, Kathy and I have decided the best option is to offer you a "coupon" for the value of the balance of your share cost which you can redeem at the farmers' markets in Berlin and Salisbury. The coupon will be redeemable until June 1, 2004. If you decide to join the CSA next year, the balance of the coupon will be in addition to your share. If you decide not to join next year, I will redeem the coupon until the June 1 deadline. To be fair to those who re-join, there must be a deadline. I am confident there will be sufficient crops available by June 1 to fully redeem the coupons.

If we were operating on the "pure" CSA model (in which the consumers hire the farmer), I would not be making these types of business decisions. But we are not a "pure" CSA; we are a subscription CSA, and therefore I have to make some decisions based on what I feel will best preserve and grow the CSA to a level of membership that will sustain my family.

You have heard enough of my complaints about the weather, last year with the drought and this year with the floods, and I do not like to dwell in the negative. We have tried to start up a CSA in two of the worst growing years in a very long time. I would like to be able to tell you it will get better, but I really can't. Mother Nature is running this show, I just have a bit part in the play.

Some of you are aware of some of the larger goals we have for this venture. Involving the Go-Getters at the distribution sites was one that I believe has worked very well. Being able to donate 3 shares to folks in need is a credit to your sense of community. There are many others, including involving school kids in educational farm tours, offering value-added products, training seriously interested young people in the craft of growing food, just to name a few.

After Wes Jackson had delivered his inspiring vision for agriculture 100 years hence at the Prairie Festival, he offered to take questions from the audience. There were quite a few young people there, which is something that always excites me when I go to conferences. One of them asked Wes how long he thought it would take to reach the goals of what he calls "Natural Systems Agriculture" with a sense of impatience in her voice. His answer was quick and concise, "If you think you will complete your life's work in your lifetime, you're not thinking big enough". I will never forget that statement and will continue to think "BIG".

Onward,  
Jay

*In this week's share:*

*Lettuce \* Scallions \* Beets \* Leeks (?) \* Sweet potatoes (?) \* Peppers*

"Peace will come when every nation is content to shine and to let others shine, when no nation will seek exclusive control for its own program but will allow, indeed, encourage, each nation to develop itself and its particular program for the benefit of its people."

- Rabbi Mendell Lewittes

## Beets with Walnut Vinaigrette

1 lb small beets, trimmed, leaving 1" stem  
1 Tbsp sherry vinegar  
1-2 tsp balsamic vinegar  
1/4 tsp salt  
1 Tbsp walnut oil  
3-4 Tbsp olive oil, divided  
2 Tbsp walnuts, toasted, finely chopped  
2 Tbsp Italian parsley, chopped  
pepper, to taste



Preheat oven to 400. Scrub beets, and oil lightly with about 1 tbsp. olive oil. Wrap in foil and seal tightly. Bake until tender, about 45 minutes. Beets will offer a little resistance when pierced with a knife. Cool until easy to handle, then peel and quarter.

Combine vinegars and salt; gradually whisk in oils.

While beets are still warm, dress with vinaigrette. Stir in parsley and walnuts, and season with freshly ground black pepper. Taste and add a bit more balsamic vinegar, if desired.

Serves 3-4. Adapted from the *Greens Cookbook*, Deborah Madison with Edward Espe Brown, Bantam Books, 1987.



Joe Lieb  
Branch Manager

P.O. Box 2316  
Salisbury, MD 21802  
(410) 341-6711

### Good Stuff, Cool Stuff

**Don't forget the CSA Octoberfest!**  
Saturday the 18th at 2 PM at the farm in Bivalve. If you're coming and haven't yet told Lori, please let her know - [lilly@ezy.net](mailto:lilly@ezy.net)

And last but not least - a note from Jay: *If you rake 'em, I'll take 'em. Leaves make great compost. I will take all you have. Call or e-mail me to make arrangements.*

### 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.

### Food for Thought, Thought for Food

Listen up, Dubya.

After 23 years of field studies on organic farming practices, researchers at The Rodale Institute have announced exciting new findings with profound implications in the battle against global warming. The researchers have documented that organic soils actually scrub the atmosphere of global warming gases by capturing atmospheric carbon dioxide and converting it into soil material. This is the first study to differentiate organic farming techniques from conventional farming practices for their ability to serve as carbon "sinks". Through a process called carbon sequestration, plants and soils act as "sinks" for atmospheric carbon dioxide. Carbon sequestered in vegetation and soil is not readily released as carbon dioxide, providing a significant boost in the efforts to reduce greenhouse gases. While carbon helps stimulate plant growth, scientists estimate carbon dioxide may be responsible for more than 80% of global warming. The Rodale Institute has monitored soil carbon and nitrogen levels in scientifically controlled test fields using organic as well as a wide range of other farming methods. In the organic systems, soil carbon increased 15 to 28 %. The field trials can be beneficial to all farmers by helping to increase crop yields while decreasing energy, fuel and irrigation costs.