



# News from Provident Organic Farm



www.providentfarm.org

Season 2, Week 29

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

Oct.27th , 2003

## NOTES FROM THE FIELD # 29...

First off, I must apologize to you all for thoroughly confusing you. It all made sense to me, but I had been thinking it over for quite awhile. Essentially what we have done is change the distribution system. Some of you have said this is preferred because it gives you choices. The risk with this system is that I will be composting food if you don't come to the markets. Whether you have chosen to destroy the coupons or intend to redeem them, please come to the markets. I plan to be there at least until mid-December, perhaps longer if the weather and the crops allow.

We are in the process of preparing the passive greenhouse to be covered with new plastic. I had to change the framing of the end walls to allow for better passive ventilation. When that is completed, I will begin sowing crops in the greenhouse for winter harvest. Playing in the dirt in the greenhouse is the most fun I have all year.

This is the time of year that we begin to turn our attention toward next year. Given the year this has been, it is rejuvenating to be able to do that. On Monday I went to the Ecosystem Farm in Accokeek to visit Shane and his crew and to pick up the seed garlic. Each year a group of growers purchase seed garlic from the Garlic Foundation, an organization of garlic growers dedicated to preserving the diversity of garlic. Shane coordinate the orders, takes delivery and distributes the bulbs for us. Because of the extremely wet year, and the resulting damage, all orders were short. I ordered 60 lbs. and got 48 lbs. I plan to prepare the beds and plant the cloves on Tuesday.

I have sown the cover crop of mixed rye and vetch in all of the available blocks in the field. I will sow rye in the balance of the available blocks because it is now too late for the vetch to germinate and get established before it gets cold. We were able to set out the over-winter leeks this week. By mid-November, I will sow spinach and carrots to over-winter. Last year, I experimented with a variety of broccoli called Marathon that is said to perform well in late fall in northern climates. I set the plants out late to see if it could over-winter here. The central head was beginning to develop when the temperatures dropped to the teens in mid-January. The head was damaged beyond marketability, so I cut them out to see if the side shoots could develop when temperatures warmed up. By mid-March we were cutting golf ball size florets. What a treat! This year I set out 600 plants in the most protected area on the farm (where the greenhouses used to be). If it doesn't get too cold this winter, I expect to harvest broccoli in March. Stay tuned.

I am very serious about providing a year-round supply of good food to as many people as possible. I see no reason why we can't do this with a root cellar, cold frames, passive greenhouses, and some careful strategic planning.



" To believe what has not occurred in history will not occur at all, is to argue disbelief in the dignity of man."

- Mahatma Gandhi  Indian politician 1917-1985

When I make plans I keep two principles in mind: “Work Backwards” and “Think in Circles”. Makes perfect sense to me! By working backwards I mean that one must consider the needs of the market first; the best plans are useless without a market. By thinking in circles I mean that in considering any enterprise, one has to consider how it will interact and enhance other enterprises already engaged in. If a new enterprise enhances an existing enterprise the costs of each are lower than if they stood alone. None of Mother Nature’s “enterprises” stand alone, and she provides the model for all that we do. “Thinking outside the box” is a good start, but you have to “live outside the box”. Then you don’t have the security of “the box” to return to when you stop thinking. **And you won’t stop thinking!**

Onward,  
Jay

### 2nd Annual Octoberfest Success!

Many thanks to all the volunteers and wonderful cooks out there who made the 2nd annual CSA Octoberfest such a tasty success! A lovely time was had by all, in no small part to the hard work and coordination of Lori Lilly and the other members of the Octoberfest committee. Thanks again to everyone, and see you next year!



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### **Food for Thought**

(taken from the Dec. '02 issue of *Savour*)

**“Someone has observed that a pig resembles a saint in that he is more honored after death than during his lifetime.”**

- Irma S. Rombauer and Marion Rombauer Becker,  
*Joy of Cooking.*



### **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.



### **Recipe Tips**

It’s that time of year! Winter squashes are now just starting to be in their prime, and as the name implies, their thick skins help them stay tasty all through the long cold winter.

However that same tough skin that comes in handy for storage purposes makes it very, VERY difficult to cut into or peel winter squash.



To speed up the process and make the procedure much easier (and thereby avoiding a knife that slips over a too-tough rind and into **your** too-tender fingers!) try this tip passed on from Jay - microwave your squash (with top or bottom removed) for 3-4 minutes and then let sit a good 5 minutes until cool enough to handle.

This brief but effective blast will ‘cook’ the squash just enough to tenderize the tough skin so that cutting and peeling it will be much easier & safer.