



NEWS FROM PROVIDENT ORGANIC FARM

www.providentfarm.org



Season 2, Week 32

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

November 17, 2003

NOTES FROM THE FIELD...

Patting yourself on the back is a good way to pull a muscle, but we'll risk it this week.

from "Beyond the Pale Green" by Michelle Nijhuis, *grist magazine*

Organic food has hit the big time. The Whole Foods Market chain, the largest natural-foods retailer in the world, boasts 145 stores throughout North America; its leading competitor, Wild Oats, has 101 stores in 25 states and Canada. Last year, the U.S. Department of Agriculture put in place a set of national standards for organic food, smoothing the way for organic processors who buy ingredients from multiple states. Organic products -- fresh produce, frozen pizzas, and everything in between -- are now part of a multi-billion-dollar industry that's growing by 20 to 25 percent each year.

But if you're reading this over an organic banana or a pesticide-free seaweed salad, don't sigh with satisfaction just yet. On average, 10 calories of fossil-fuel energy are used in producing, processing, transporting, and preparing every calorie of food we consume in the United States, according to studies by David Pimentel of Cornell University. While organic farming methods can save some energy in the production department, they don't have the same healthy effect on transportation; organic or not, oranges burn a lot of fuel on their way to Minneapolis.

Some critics say there's only one way for shoppers, restaurants, and grocery stores to correct this massive resource drain: Go one step "beyond organic" and buy fresh, pesticide-free food from local growers.

Eliot Coleman, who has raised produce in Maine for more than three decades, sells all of his fruits and vegetables within 25 miles of his year-round farm. He says the dominant, USDA-endorsed definition of organic doesn't fully describe what he does. "It just disavows the negatives -- pesticides and chemicals -- without embracing the positives," he says. Coleman argues that shopping locally not only conserves natural resources, but also helps protect small-scale farms like his.

Coleman is part of a loose network of farmers, consumers, and advocacy groups that is trying to push organic agriculture a step closer to sustainability. These activists use a variety of labels to describe what they're promoting -- beyond-organic food, authentic food, even slow food -- but they're all engaged in the surprisingly difficult task of getting local food on local tables.

"Let's figure out how to serve the local community so that foods are not shipped such long distances," California farmer and author Michael Ableman said in the recent documentary film "Beyond Organic." "Let's create an energy revolution in agriculture."

read the article in full at <http://www.workingforchange.com/article.cfm?itemid=15985>



Activists have always battled the odds. But it's not a matter of Sisyphus rolling that stone up the hill. It's not Beckett's blind Pozzo staggering on. It's more like a legion of Davids, with all sorts of slingshots. It's not one slingshot that will do it. Nor will it happen at once. It's a long haul. It's step by step. As Mahalia Jackson sang out, "We're on our way"—not to Canaanland, perhaps, but to the world as a better place than it has been before. ---Studs Terkel

Food for Thought, Thought for Food

...in reference to recent and pending energy legislation

There is a better way. Numerous reports, including ones by the Energy Future Coalition, the Apollo Project, the NRDC, and even the Department of Energy have advanced comprehensive energy policies that would emphasize technological innovation, promote clean, sustainable energy production, and make major reductions in pollution. A responsible energy solution lies in developing more efficient buildings, appliances and factories, tapping domestic renewable energy potential, modernizing our electrical infrastructure, and deploying both near and long-term advanced transportation technologies. We should take the groundwork of these organizations to begin an inclusive national discussion about the future of energy policy and its direct impacts on our economy, our security, and our health. It is an issue that will profoundly effect all Americans and one in which all Americans should be included. Dispensing with the current energy bill, the deeply flawed product of a deeply flawed process, is a crucial first step.

excerpted from "Negative Energy" by John Podesta, TomPaine.com,

Irish Turnips with Carmelized Onions

Turnips became popular in Ireland as human food during the great famine and have remained popular.

1 1/3 lbs turnips, peeled and cut into 3/4 inch cubes
salt
fresh ground pepper
2 2/3-5 1/3 tablespoons butter
Carmelized Onions
2/3 lb onions
1 1/3-2 tablespoons olive oil
Garnish with finely chopped parsley

1. Heat Olive oil in a heavy skillet add the onions, cook over low heat for approximately 45 minutes or until they are golden and carmelized.
2. Meanwhile boil the turnips in salted water, cook until soft, drain and mash well then beat in the butter.
3. Stir in the carmelized onions, taste and adjust seasoning.
4. Serve piping hot (reheat in the oven if necessary).

COMMENTS AND CONTRIBUTIONS

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

Good Stuff, Cool Stuff

The "Park and Flea" is giving CSA members 50% off their table fees. Please take advantage of their generosity.

Please let Farmer Jay compost your leaves. He needs them in abundance! Call or e-mail the farm to make arrangements.

Recipes!

Sweet and Spicy Turnips

Sweet oven fries!! Adapted from Cooking light

1 tablespoon brown sugar
2 teaspoons butter, melted
1/4 teaspoon salt
1/4 teaspoon crushed red pepper flakes
1/8 teaspoon ground ginger
1 dash ground allspice
3 turnips, peeled and each cut into 6 wedges (6 ounces each)
cooking spray

1. Preheat oven to 400f degrees.
2. Combine first 7 ingredients in a jelly roll pan or shallow roasting pan coated with cooking spray, toss to coat.
3. Bake at 400f degrees for 35 minutes or until tender, stirring every 10 minutes.



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