



NOTES FROM THE FIELD...

This is the official end of our second season. For some of you the season ended when I stopped delivering shares to the distribution sites. There are many of you I have not seen since. Some of you decided to destroy the coupon, some have partially redeemed them. Some of you have not even gotten your coupons. What this means to the future of our CSA remains to be seen. Our business plan is taking shape, our budget looks workable and realistic. As the song goes "The future's so bright, we gotta wear shades".

I have been asked to be a part of a growers panel at the MOFFA (Md. Organic Food and Farming Association) winter meeting in January. I can even choose the topic I want to address. I would like to present data I collect on my hot bed and how to grow transplants with this system. I have presented many times before on transplant growing, but this is the next generation. It is not really the next generation, this is an update on how the "old timers" did it. The hot bed took about a week to bring the soil temperature above 65 degrees, but since then it has been consistently at least 20 degrees above the soil temperature outside the bed. One day last week the outside air temp. was 28, inside the greenhouse the air temp. was 34. The soil outside the hot bed was 37 degrees and the soil in the hot bed was 58. I know this may not excite you as much as it does me, but consider this: No fossil fuel, no toxins, no waste in a very cheap and simple system that germinates seed while making the media that will grow the seedlings to transplant stage. Anybody excited yet?

I looked at the over-winter spinach this week. We have a fairly strong stand of spinach. I planted 2400 row feet of Tye, a variety recommended for over-wintering, knowing that germination would not be optimal. If it is not too wet to side-dress the spinach in the early spring, we should start a nice picking of delicious spinach in mid-April. I put the asparagus to bed for the winter this week. I mowed the dead stalks, then rototilled the bed lightly to turn in a light dressing of compost and kill the winter annuals, and am working on mulching the rows with leaves and straw. In the early spring I will burn off the straw before the crowns start to send up their delicacy. The garlic has sprouted and is poking through the light mulch Dave and Lori put on just after it was planted. I will have to add more mulch to protect it and to thwart any winter annuals.

Even though the so-called delivery season is over for the year, there is still much to do. I will be cutting mushroom logs in January to be inoculated in February. I will be sowing seeds for transplants almost every week. I will be transplanting into the beds in the greenhouse. Working in the greenhouse in a t-shirt when it is 35 degrees outside is **at least 1000 funs**. There is fun here for all ages, if you would like to come help out for awhile, you are certainly welcome. The pace this time of year is reasonable, I have more time to explain the why's and what-for's if you are interested.

Last week I told you that you have sustained my family through what would otherwise have been a truly devastating year. I neglected to tell you how grateful I am for that.

Onward, while swimming in grace,
Jay

Peace to All in the New Year

Food for Thought, Thought for Food

Matthew Fox, a former Jesuit priest, gave a lecture titled "The Greening of Spirituality" at the "Voices of the Earth" conference in Boulder, Colorado in 1994.

In the lecture he blames Saint Augustine for setting apart nature from grace in the fourth century. Although theologians such as Hildegard von Bingen, Meister Eckhart and Thomas Aquinas have attempted to heal this breach, Western consciousness has been haunted by this split for 1600 years. Fox says "if you separate nature from grace, then nature is something to be afraid of". He explains the genocide of Native Americans by European Christians as an expression of this fear. He goes on to say that in separating grace from nature, we create a great scarcity of grace, as if "it is going to be handed out through the spigot of some ordained system that will give you some if you get far enough down on your knees".

"We are graced every day the sun comes up. We are constantly graced by nature. There is plenty of grace to go around. It's our problem that we are not receptive to all the grace we are swimming in, day in and day out".

Jay has the full text of this lecture if anyone would like to read it.



Sautéed Cauliflower

1 cup onion, chopped
2 tsp garlic, minced
1 tsp salt
1-2 tbsp butter
1 med cauliflower, broken into flowerets
dash thyme
1 tsp dried basil
black pepper and paprika to taste

Sauté onions and garlic with salt in butter for 5 minutes. Add cauliflower and herbs and cook, covered, over medium heat, about 10-15 minutes, stirring occasionally. Add black pepper to taste.

Dust with paprika to serve.

Serves 4 - 6

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!

Brussel Sprouts and Walnuts

1 pint fresh brussel sprouts, trimmed
3 tbsp butter
2 tsp chicken or vegetable bouillon granules dissolved in 1/3 cup water
2-3 tbsp walnuts, coarsely chopped, toasted to taste
salt and pepper
half fresh lemon (optional)

Heat butter in heavy medium saucepan (light-colored interior, not cast iron) over medium-low heat, shaking pan often, just until butter is light brown.

Add brussel sprouts and increase heat to medium. Sauté for 5-6 minutes. Add bouillon water and cook another five minutes or so. Remove from heat.

Add walnuts and salt and pepper to taste. Squeeze fresh lemon juice over just before serving.

Serves 2-4

Prep Tips: Delicious. Best when sprouts are small, about 1-1 1/2". Halve or quarter larger sprouts. Do not overcook – sprouts should be firm and tender, not mushy.

Adapted from **Chez Panisse Vegetables**, Alice Waters, HarperCollins Publ., Inc., 1996



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