



NEWS FROM PROVIDENT ORGANIC FARM

www.providentfarm.org



Season 2, Week 6

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

May 19, 2003

In Your Share:

Collard Greens
Spinach
Lettuce
Scallions
Radishes
Parsley
Leeks
Strawberries



Food for Thought, Thought for Food

At the end of April the United Nations voted on whether all people have a "Right to Food". Although 51 nations voted "aye", one nation did give a resounding "nay". If you haven't guessed already, it was the United States of America.

Amy's Corner:

When the power of love overcomes the love of power, the world will know peace.

Jimi Hendrix

Jay is being a father this weekend and traveling with Heather to New England. My request for newsletter contributions went out a little too late. So you're stuck with me this week. Many of you know me through my volunteer recruiting and organizing efforts with the CSA. But I do, believe it or not, have a day job as a consultant. Much of my work involves environmental health and farmworkers as well as children. It is often farmworker children (and yes there are thousands of children who still toil in our fields) that I work to protect. So I thought as we enjoy our sweet springtime red treasures (aka Jay's strawberries) that I would remind you of the importance of eating organic strawberries and tell you what's really happening in the strawberry fields.

Conventionally grown strawberries are one most toxic crops grown with synthetic pesticides. The enhanced red color comes from the fungicide captan, a probable human carcinogen that can irritate the skin and eyes. Strawberries are also one of the largest single crop users of methyl bromide, an extremely toxic pesticide that is injected into soil before planting. Other crops that use methyl bromide include grapes, sweet potatoes and watermelons. Methyl bromide is also used to kill pests in stored commodities, in agricultural shipments and in buildings. Colorless and odorless, methyl bromide is a silent killer. It is highly toxic to a wide spectrum of organisms, including people, and it is a powerful ozone depleter. Due to its lethal nature -- its proficiency in causing neurological damage, reproductive harm and other types of poisonings -- the US Environmental Protection Agency classifies methyl bromide as a Toxicity Category I compound, the most deadly category of substances. The good news is that methyl bromide will be banned in industrialized countries (including the U.S.) in 2005 under the international Montreal Protocol treaty.

In the meantime, to give you an idea of how much methyl bromide is used, let's look to our largest agricultural state in the country and the largest producer of strawberries—California. In 1998 in California, over 4 million pounds of methyl bromide were applied to strawberry fields, accounting for 30% of the state's total use of this pesticide.

The people most severely affected by methyl bromide's toxic impacts are the migrant and seasonal farmworkers, who work in and live near fields where strawberries are grown, and which are regularly fumigated by methyl bromide. One task that involves particularly high exposure to methyl bromide occurs after the pesticide is injected into the ground and plastic tarps are placed over the treated areas. It is often a farmworker who shovels dirt over the edges of these tarps immediately after they are placed on the ground. One man who held that job for several weeks said he had to stop due to severe and recurring vision problems. "If you're not fast enough, you get hit in the face with little blasts of poison." (Morales, 1997).

While methyl bromide is being phased out, there has been powerful lobby of transnational chemical companies and agribusiness that has long opposed this phase out. It is up to us to make sure the phase out takes place and to work for its elimination beyond just the industrialized countries.

On a more positive note, CSA member Susan Shavel shared this great website with me--www.edibleschoolyard.org. The Edible Schoolyard provides public school students with an organic garden and a kitchen classroom. "Using food systems as a unifying concept, students learn how to grow, harvest, and prepare nutritious seasonal produce. Experiences (over)

(continued from front)

in the kitchen and garden foster a better understanding of how the natural world sustains us, and promote the environmental and social well being of our school community." Hey we started a CSA on the Eastern Shore, why not an edible schoolyard?

Enjoy the red treasures of Spring!

Amy

Sources include: CorpWatch--www.corpwatch.org; Pesticide Action Network of North American--www.panna.org; Morales Alba, "First Hand Experience," *Political Ecology Group* March 31, 1997 (from www.corpwatch.org); *The Green Guide* #80, June 2000.

Mien Bo:

8 ounces bean thread noodles
10 cups canned beef broth
2 medium onions, thickly sliced
4 half-inch-thick slices fresh ginger
(about 1 1/4 ounces)
2 tablespoons fish sauce (nam pla)
3 large garlic cloves, halved
2 star anise
1-1/2 teaspoons whole cloves
1 pound flank steak, trimmed, thinly sliced
crosswise
1 head lettuce, thinly sliced
3 green onions, thinly sliced
Lemon Wedges

Bring large pot of water to a boil. Remove from heat. Add noodles to pot; let stand until tender and pliable, about 15 minutes. Drain. Using scissors, cut noodles into 2-inch lengths. Transfer to bowl.

Combine beef broth, sliced onions, sliced ginger, fish sauce, garlic, star anise and whole cloves into heavy, large, dutch oven and bring to boil. Reduce heat; simmer thirty minutes. Strain broth into large bowl; discard solids. Return beef broth to dutch oven and bring to boil. Remove beef broth from heat. Mix steak slices into broth (the hot broth will cook steak slices). Place noodles, soup, sliced lettuce, sliced green onions and lemon wedges in center of table. Spoon noodles, steak slices and broth into large soup bowls, then top with generous amounts of sliced lettuce and green onions and squeeze in lemon juice.

This recipe was taken from the March 1995 issue of Bon Appétit.



Good Stuff, Cool Stuff

There will be a core group meeting at the farm at 1:30 on May 31st. The core group is a type of advisory group that helps Jay with certain issues. This month we are drafting a mission statement for our non-profit status entitlement. Everyone is welcome!

Jim and Erin Kennedy are collecting yard sale items for a table at the "park and flea." All profits will be donated to the farm.. Please bring any items to 407 Poplar Hill Avenue by Friday May 23. You can call for directions or for more information. 410.341.3394. Special thanks to Michael Day for donating a table!

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

The farm is in need of coolers. Donations can be left at your pick-up location.

For folks going on vacation, if you want to donate your share, please e-mail Amy (aliebman@intercom.net) the dates in advance and we will be sure to donate the share that week.

If you have plastic bags to spare, we need them. (Please be sure they are bags that did not contain meat.) Just bring them to your pick up location.



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COMMENTS AND CONTRIBUTIONS

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