



News from Provident Organic Farm



www.providentfarm.org

Season 2, Week 25

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

Sept. 29th, 2003

NOTES FROM THE FIELD #25...

Jay was gone to a meeting/conference in the Midwest this past weekend, so Notes from the Field will instead be channeled to us via Wendell Barry, one of Jay's favorite authors, ecologists, and thinkers...

Field Observations: An Interview with Ecologist Wendell Barry
by Jordan Fisher-Smith



This interview with ecologist Wendell Barry, excerpted here from *The Sun* (1994), originally appeared in *Orion*:

Barry: The Amish . . . have succeeded simply by asking one question of any proposed innovation, namely: 'What will this do to our community?'

"That, to me, is an extremely wise question, and most of us have never learned to ask it. If we wanted to be truly progressive, if we were truly committed to improving ourselves as creatures and as members of communities, we would *always* ask it. The question isn't often spoken outright, but it lies behind a lot of these grass-roots movements to save forests and rivers and neighborhoods and communities and so on.

Fisher-Smith: Much of this environmental action seems to focus on legal remedies: lawmaking if there's time, or lawsuits if there's not. In the long run, our attempts to control the effects of economic activity on culture and on nature seem to result in a body of regulations and an expensive bureaucracy to manage them. Is there an alternative way of controlling what is done for profit?

Barry: The alternative is revival of the idea of community.

"I don't think you ought ever to give up on the law and on the public effort to improve law and to improve the effectiveness of it to try to see that the government acts truly and effectively in the interest of the people. But that kind of effort obviously isn't enough.

"The real way for these bad innovations to be prevented is for the communities to refuse them, and that's happening to some extent. Communities do refuse bad innovations. There's a lot of scorn now toward people who say, 'Not in my back yard,' but the not-in-my-back-yard sentiment is one of the most valuable that we have. If enough people said, 'Not in my back yard,' these bad innovations wouldn't be in anybody's back yard. It's your own back yard you're required to protect. Of course, it's better if you defend your own back yard with the understanding that in doing so, you're defending everybody's back yard. Or with the understanding that you may need help in defending your back yard, or that you may need to help others defend theirs. But the not-in-my-back-yard sentiment is an altogether healthy and salutary and useful one, and I'm for it.

"However, a community has to understand that if it refuses the public proposal, then it has to come up with something better. And if the government or a corporation comes in and says, 'We want you to have this obnoxious installation because it will employ your people; it will bring jobs,' then the community has to have an answer to the question, Where are we going to find jobs? Sometimes it won't be an easy question. Sometimes it will be a devastating question, but the community nevertheless has to begin to look at itself. It has to look to itself for the answers, not to the government and not to these corporations that come in posing as saviors of the local community, because they don't come in to save the local community.

"So the communities have to begin to ask what they need that can be produced locally, by local people and from the local landscape, and how it can be produced in a way that doesn't damage the local landscape or the local community. And by local community, obviously, you can't mean just the people. You mean the people and the natural communities that are supposed to exist there the trees, the grasses, the animals, the birds, and so on. Everything has to be included and considered. . . .

"Fisher-Smith: Thus this question, 'What is possible here?'

"Barry: What's the nature of the place? The proper approach to any kind of land use begins with that question. What is the nature of this place? And then: What will nature permit me to do here?"

Good Stuff, Cool Stuff

There is going to be an Octoberfest celebration & potluck on the 18th of Oct. down in the Bivalve area. Let us know what you are bringing to eat and how many of you there will be by filling out a sign-up sheet and sending it in to the Octoberfest-coordinating team. If you've lost your sheet (or never got one in the first place) look on the website, www.providentorganic.com for one instead!

Our thoughts, prayers, and condolences to Jim Hatley on the loss of his mother.



THE LEADER IN ORGANIC-BASED LAWN CARE

Joe Lieb
Branch Manager

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

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.

Fresh shiitakes are a rare and wonderful thing, and as such when they come along in our share it is best to treat them with the respect they deserve. Don't bury them in a sauce or hide them amongst too many ingredients - here is a recipe that allows their unique and delicious taste to shine through.

Stir-Fried Fresh Shiitake Mushrooms

These exquisite mushrooms may be served as a first course or as part of a meal. You may even serve them on buttered toast. As they cook very fast, it is best to make this at the last minute. **Serves 2 to 3.**



12 fresh	shiitake mushrooms
1/4 cup	olive oil
1 tsp.	whole brown mustard seeds
15 fresh	basil leaves
1-2	garlic cloves, peeled & lightly crushed
1-2 tsp.	fresh lemon juice
salt (about 1/4 tsp)	
freshly ground black pepper	

Cut off mushroom stems and wipe the caps with a damp cloth.

Put the oil in a large frying pan and set it over medium-high heat. When it is very hot, put in the mustard seeds. As soon as they begin to pop (a matter of seconds) put in the basil leaves. Stir for a few seconds and then add the garlic. Stir until the garlic turns golden and then add the mushrooms. Stir the mushrooms around for 1-2 minutes, or until they soften and are just cooked through. Add the salt, black pepper, and lemon juice according to your taste. Toss to mix. Remove the garlic before serving, if desired. Taken from Madhur Jaffrey's *World Vegetarian*, Clarkson Potter Publishers, 1999.