



News from Provident Organic Farm

www.providentfarm.org



Season 4, Week 3

“dedicated to a safe, just, and sustainable food system”

June 6th–12th, 2005

“Ahimsa” by guest writer, Lori Lilly

One of my favorite yogic concepts is that of *ahimsa*. *Ahimsa* means harmlessness or willfully abstaining from inflicting any sort of suffering or pain on any other living thing through word, thought or action. I.K. Taimni, in his interpretation of Patanjali’s *Yoga Sutras*, stated that, “An individual who has developed *Ahimsa* carries about him an invisible aura surcharged with love and compassion” and “...any individual who is imbued with such love is inwardly attuned to all living creatures and automatically inspires confidence and love in them.” How wonderful! If only we Americans could come *close* to bringing such a concept into our hearts and society, how much better we might be. Instead, we knowingly and unknowingly inflict suffering on countless numbers of people (including ourselves) through our wasteful and unsustainable living practices; by supporting suppressive industries and governments; by developing on much of our productive farmland; by filling our bodies with chemicals, preservatives, and unnecessary medications, and on and on. You know the story.

Just as attainment of *ahimsa* and practicing a yogic lifestyle seeks to balance our physical, emotional, and spiritual well-being, a basic ecological framework governs the balance of energy and nutrient dynamics in ecosystems. For example, too much sugar in one’s diet can have deleterious effects on a person’s health and disposition. Likewise, too much nitrogen in a body of water can lead to eutrophication of the system, that is, an excess of algae and plankton that depletes the water of oxygen and leads to the death of aquatic life. Plants, animals, and systems have developed mechanisms to either buffer the effects of environmental fluctuations or to physiologically conform to such external changes, that is, they seek to achieve homeostasis with the environment around them. The problem, however, is that the rate of anthropogenic (human) inputs to systems is so high, that plants and animals are unable to adjust. The earth might be able to regulate the tons of carbon dioxide spewed into the air by our automobiles, if not for the simultaneous rampant

destruction of forests (basic bio: trees take in CO₂ and release clean, healthy O₂). Agribusiness would not “need” to use so many chemicals if the focus was on developing a healthy soil (healthy soil=healthy plants).

In fact, James Lovelock postulates that it is life itself which regulates the whole Earth system (the Gaia hypothesis). In his theory, the biosphere has a self-regulating metabolism to counter fluctuations in the physical environment. So no need to worry about the excess nitrogen and forest destruction then, right? I don’t think so. There are many generations between now and when the Earth can effectively regulate all our extra inputs and they deserve an unspoiled place to live. Short term gains will never outweigh the benefits of long-term planning (ANWR comes to mind here). And, besides that, why not? Why not love and compassion over greed and selfishness? Listen to Gandhi, “Man as animal is violent, but as spirit is nonviolent. The moment he awakes to the spirit within, he cannot remain violent. Either he progresses toward *ahimsa*, or he rushes toward his doom....So let no one doubt that the salvation of all the exploited peoples of the earth, and therefore of the world, lies in the strictest reliance on the coin on whose face is written “truth,” and on the other “nonviolence,” in large letters. Sixty years of experience has taught me no other method.” Amen to that.

And amen to Provident Farm for allowing us to live life a little closer to the ideal, that is, with a little more *ahimsa*. For by supporting the farm, we are supporting a sustainable system, a system which more closely resembles a natural system in terms of energy and nutrient flow. We are proud proponents of the consumption of local produce, produce grown right here on Delmarva and not trucked in from Mexico (petroleum, petroleum, petroleum). We’ve harvested the vegetables ourselves (with loving care, I might add) and said “no” to the exploitation of farm laborers, who are often subject to less than humane treatment. We’ve helped to support a small farmer, an endangered species these days. We’ve filled our bodies and our children’s bodies with the best possible nourishment we could. All these wonderful things we have done. And we’ve done them with love and compassion in our hearts.

In Your Share: Sugar snap or English peas, lettuce, salad turnips, bok choy, German Butterball potatoes (and maybe some squash)

You are welcome to come down any day this week and glean the berries for your freezer.....2 quarts for you, 1 for me is the deal.

Orzo with Spinach and Feta Serves 4-6

1/2 lb	orzo
1 lb	fresh spinach, cleaned
2 tbsp	olive oil
2 tbsp	butter
1 tbsp	minced garlic
1/4 tsp	dried hot red pepper flakes
2/3 c	chopped scallions
1/2 c	feta cheese, crumbled
-	salt and pepper
-	lemon wedges, optional

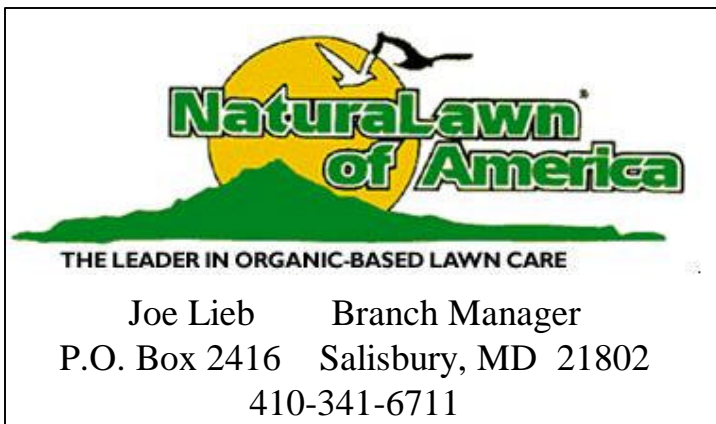
Cook orzo in a large pot of salted water, uncovered, until al dente, stirring occasionally; drain well. Cover and keep warm.

Remove any tough stems from spinach leaves and tear into medium pieces; set aside.

Heat oil and butter in a large heavy sauté pan or skillet over medium high heat until hot but not smoking. Add garlic, red pepper and scallions and sauté for several minutes until garlic is golden, stirring occasionally. Add spinach and cook, stirring, until spinach wilts and is heated through, about 5 minutes.

Toss orzo with spinach mixture and feta just until combined. Season with salt and pepper and serve with lemon wedges.

Notes: Good also with grains – quinoa, cous cous – or other tiny pastas, like *acini de pepe*, instead of the orzo.



Please Note:
The harvest happens rain
or shine - the only thing
that will stop us is
lightning or hurricanes!

More recipes from the first three years of
Provident Organic Farm CSA may be found
on our website: www.providentfarm.org
Recipes are indexed by individual vegetable.

Zucchini and Spinach Soup Serves 4-6

While we may tire of them later in the season, the first spring zucchini are a treat!

1 1/2 lb	zucchini	3/4 lb	russet or other baking potato
1/2 lb	fresh spinach, cleaned	1/4 c	olive oil
2 med	onions, chopped	4 1/2 c	vegetable or chicken stock, divided
1 1/2 tbsp	coarsely chopped cilantro	1/2 tsp	salt
-pepper			

Trim zucchini and cut into 1/2 inch thick rounds. Peel potato and slice thinly. Remove any tough stems from spinach leaves.

Heat oil in a large stock pot over medium heat. Add onions and sauté until soft but not brown. Add zucchini and potato and stir to coat with oil. Add 4 cups stock; bring to a boil over high heat. Reduce heat to medium-low, cover, and simmer until potato is cooked, about 15-20 minutes.

Working in batches, puree soup in blender until smooth, adding some spinach and cilantro to each batch. Return soup to pot over medium heat and thin with additional stock, if desired. Season soup with salt and pepper.

Notes: Delicious with a spoonful of plain yogurt and dusted with ground cumin. May be served hot or cold the next day.

Comments & 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.