



# News from Provident Organic Farm



[www.providentfarm.org](http://www.providentfarm.org)

Season 4, Pre-Season

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

May 16<sup>th</sup>-22<sup>nd</sup>, 2005

## Pre-Season Notes from the Field to the “Faithful Fifty”

This is the last week of our pre-season and I want to thank all of you for taking that extra leap of faith to sign up for the high risk early season crops. As the first share week approached I wondered what I would be able to give you those first few weeks. Everything was looking like it would be late and the over-wintered crops weren't looking very strong. The spinach was looking hopeless, the leeks had been damaged by the cold and I knew the carrots would not produce a crop at all.

I had to alter the passive house plan to be able to grow the carrots inside and also to accommodate the transplants that I had decided to grow here instead of having them grown for me at Silver Seed. Having to do this reduced the amount of space available for lettuce, bok choy and the other early crops that I grow in the passive house.

Having made these adjustments in the passive house forced me to make some adjustments in the garden schedule too. I had to plant some of the intended passive house crops in the gardens earlier than I would have otherwise. Thankfully, the soil in the gardens was not too wet to work, as is usually the case in late February and early March, so we were able to work the beds and get the balance of the early plantings sown and transplanted in the garden. We covered them all with Ree-May, a fibrous material used to protect early crops from frost and wind damage. The micro-environment under the covers is at least 4-6 degrees warmer than ambient temperature and can advance a crop by a couple of weeks.

I try to see problems like this as learning opportunities in drag and as it turned out I did learn some lessons. Even in a cold late spring, as this year has been, I can plant the gardens earlier than I had thought possible, providing the soil can be

worked, and be able to harvest much earlier than I thought. To insure against not being able to work the soil early, I can prepare it in the fall, mulch it heavily and remove the mulch when I am ready to plant.

I would also like to thank you all for beating the bushes for new members. As of last week, we have reached our goal of 140 members. We even have a waiting list!! Eleven of those will be recipients of the Medora Harvest Fund. A special thanks to Patti Erickson, Jim Cockey, Ray Vorus, Jane Hager, and Paul Mysak, for their help in doubling the number of Medora shares. CSA's are often accused of being elitist by the mouthy mules that represent the corporate agribusiness interests, in that they typically serve upper income families. Having the Medora Harvest Fund component built into our CSA dispels this myth.

We got a lot of exposure this year. Ron Pilling, president of the Assateague Coastal Trust asked me to speak at their annual dinner. I am still not sure which one of us was more nervous about that delivery. I had an ace in the hole, though, with Charlotte England making my words make sense. Ann Dorbin wrote an excellent article about us that appeared in the May issue of “Shore Living”. Andy Pica asked me to speak to the Unitarian Universalist Fellowship in Salisbury to celebrate Earth Day. Don Singleton, Joel Roache and Shelton Lankford produced a segment focusing on the Medora Fund for Democracy for America to be aired on PAC 14. Lynn Parks is working on a piece about us for “Delmarva Quarterly”.

All of this and a little bit of farming thrown in, and we are off to a great start.

Onward,  
Jay

*“Shall I not have intelligence with the earth?  
Am I not partly leaves and vegetable mould myself.”*  
- Henry David Thoreau

## Risotto with Carrots and Feta

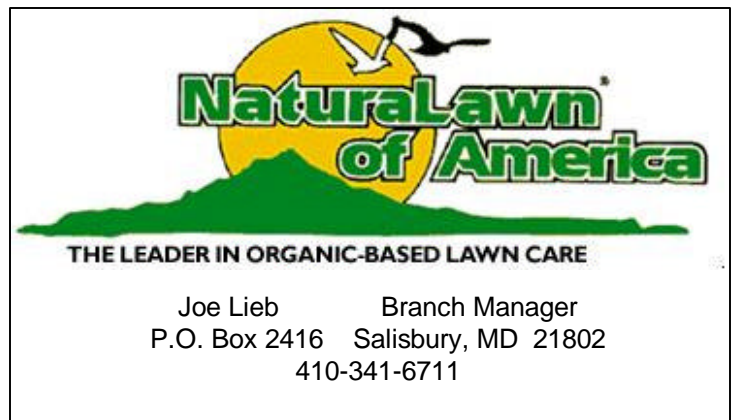
5 c vegetable stock, or 1-2 vegetable bouillon cubes and 5 c water  
4 c carrots, cut into matchsticks  
1 onion, diced  
1 tbsp olive oil  
1 1/2 c arborio rice  
1 tbsp chopped fresh dill (1 tsp dried)  
juice of one lemon  
1 c crumbled feta cheese  
2 tbsp chopped fresh parsley (optional)

Bring the stock to a boil in a covered pot. Ease the carrots into the boiling stock, lower the heat, and very gently simmer.

In a large saucepan, sauté the onions in the oil for about 5 minutes on medium heat, until softened but not browned. Add the rice, stirring gently until it is thoroughly coated with oil. Add the dill. Ladle 1 cup of the simmering stock and carrots into the saucepan and stir it into the rice. When the rice has absorbed the liquid, stir in another cup of the stock. Stir in the stock and carrots, a cup at a time every few minutes, until all of the stock has been absorbed and the rice is tender but al dente. This will take 15-20 minutes.

When the risotto is ready, remove it from the heat and stir in the lemon juice, feta, and optional parsley. Serve immediately.

From *Moosewood Restaurant Cooks at Home*, The Moosewood Collective, Simon & Schuster, 1994.



## Comments & Contributions

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