



NEWS FROM PROVIDENT ORGANIC FARM



"Dedicated to a safe, just and sustainable food system."

Season 6, Volume 3

www.providentfarm.com

May 27 - June 2, 2007

LEADING THE WAY ON THE SHORE

Last year LESSON (Lower Eastern Shore Sustainable Organic Network) applied for and received a grant from the Town Creek Foundation to begin work on expanding the number of organic farmers and acreage dedicated to sustainable farming practices on the Shore. I started my work on the grant in November. We had a bit of difficulty identifying interested growers early on, but after a piece aired on WESM's "On the Farm Radio" program, an announcement in the "Delmarva Farmer" and a couple of articles in local newspapers about our efforts, Laura Hunsberger and I hosted a meeting in March at the Wicomico County Extension Office in Salisbury. Seventeen people attended representing 13 farms. Within the group there are established farmers interested in transitioning at least a portion of their farm to organic growing, start up farmers in need of assistance with marketing and/or technical advise and a couple of potential market gardeners who will also need technical and marketing assistance.

Since the first meeting, 3 other potential growers have contacted us. We are in the process of determining how we can assist them. On Wednesday evening, we are offering a workshop on various irrigation systems. Greg Zaczekiewicz, who recently moved to his family's farm in Mount Vernon from Brooklyn, NY. has done small-scale irrigation workshops in New York where he was involved with community gardens. He will demonstrate the use of different components for the gardeners and I will demonstrate the components for larger acreage.

Thus far we have set up 2 new growers to supply us with crops this year. Mark Pruitt, a beginning farmer in Whitehaven will be growing our sweet potatoes. Mark is a full time refrigeration and air conditioning serviceman with about 8 acres he would like to farm part time. Because sweet potatoes are not a very demanding crop, he should be able to manage them in his spare time. John Taylor, a farmer in Berlin, is experimenting with growing soup beans. Laura and I combed the catalogs for a selection of soup beans that could be compatibly grown to make a soup bean mix we would like to offer the members in the fall.

Ted Wycall, who worked with me last year, is hesitant to make a commitment on any particular crop. He is growing a wide variety of crops that he intends to market at his farm and at the Princess Anne farmers market. I have told Ted that I may be able to market his overflow for him and to let me know what he has available.

Most of the asparagus you have gotten came from Craig East in Westover. Craig intended to transition a portion of his 3.5 acres of asparagus to organic and contract out the balance. I was assisting him with the transition when he found out the fruit stand he had contracted with backed out on the deal. Craig did his best to manage the 3.5 acres, but could not do it all by himself. We were able to provide you with asparagus for 5 weeks and sell all he could cut to restaurants and at farmers markets.

That's about it for now. It is 6:30 a.m. and time to fire up the irrigation pump and see what we can pick for your shares. Any of you rain dancers out there.....it's time for a grand performance.

Onward,
Jay

IN YOUR SHARE

Arugula
Spinach
Beet Greens or Swiss Chard
Lettuce
Squash
Carrots

Some crops may not pick enough for all the shares. In this case, we will put some of them in the share bin. Please feel free to take what you can use or leave anything you can't use for others.

Starting next week, if you do not pick up your share for 3 consecutive weeks without explanation, we will discontinue packing a share for you until we hear from you.

RECIPES AND OTHER NEWS

Arugula and Grilled Tempeh Salad

Tempeh:

2 cloves garlic, pressed
1 tablespoon lime juice
1/2 teaspoon powdered coriander
1 teaspoon organic dehydrated cane sugar
1/2 teaspoon sea salt
1/2 cup water
1 8 ounce package soy tempeh cut into fingers, 1/2 inch wide

Salad:

1 bunch arugula, coarsely chopped
2 ribs celery, chopped
1/2 cup mayonnaise or tofu mayonnaise
3 scallions, chopped
3 tablespoons chopped dill pickles
sea salt and pepper to taste

Whisk together garlic, lime juice, coriander, sugar, salt and water. Pour into a shallow bowl. Add tempeh and let marinate for 5 minutes, turning once or 8 to 24 hours refrigerated. Grill or broil on medium heat for 5 minutes or until browned. Turn and grill other side for about 4 minutes or until browned. When cool to the touch, dice into 1/2 inch cubes. Blend tempeh and other ingredients. Dice tempeh, blend with other ingredients. Allow to stand for 15 minutes. Place on lettuce bed. Serves 2 to 4.

Cajun Summer Squash

1/2 teaspoon salt
3/4 teaspoon sweet paprika
1/2 teaspoon ground white pepper
1/4 to 1/2 teaspoon cayenne pepper, to taste
1/2 teaspoon ground black pepper
1/4 teaspoon dried thyme leaves
1 1/2 pounds summer squash or zucchini, cut in rounds
1/2 cup whole wheat pastry flour
1/2 cup cornmeal
1/2 cup milk
1 egg
Safflower or peanut oil for frying

1. Combine the salt, spices, and thyme in a small bowl. Sprinkle the squash rounds with a teaspoon of the mix.
2. Divide the remaining spice mix in half and stir one half into the flour and the other half into the cornmeal.
3. Beat together the egg and milk.
4. Heat 1 inch of safflower or peanut oil in a deep saucepan or frying pan to 350 degrees.
5. Using your hands, quickly toss the squash in the flour and shake off excess. Toss in the milk and egg, then dip in the cornmeal to coat, shaking off excess. Deep-fry for about 2 minutes. Drain on paper towels and serve at once. Serves 4.

Wondering what to do with all this wonderful food? How to store it? How to cook it? Try our website at www.providentfarm.com. There is a great section on produce and recipes. www.providentfarm.com

MARK YOUR CALENDAR!

Spring Fling

Early in the season, the farm hosts an open house for new and veteran members to tour the farm, meet Jay and the farm crew and get acquainted with each other.

Mater Mania

Has become our most popular event. It is held at Cedar Hill Park which adjoins the farm in beautiful downtown Bivalve. Mater Mania is celebrated in late July or early August when the tomato crop is in its full glory, potential dates are August 5th or August 11th.

Punkin' Pickin' Party

Punkin' Pickin' is a CSA event that occurs around the pumpkin harvest, where CSA families can come out and pick out their pumpkins leading up to Halloween and pumpkin pie season. It is a fun event featuring activities for the kids and fellowship with other CSA members.

Gleaning and Pot Luck Dinner

Gleaning n. 1. The act of gathering after reapers; that which is collected by gleaning.

Gleaning and Pot Luck Dinner. CSA members gather at the end of the harvest season to share in a pot luck dinner featuring great seasonal vegetables followed by a final "gleaning" in the fields to gather in those vegetables that escaped the notice of the pickers.

A fun time and members walk away with delicious fall vegetables. A great family activity and a way to acquaint children with the source of our food. The final pot luck will be Sunday, November 18th.