



# NEWS FROM PROVIDENT ORGANIC FARM

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



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Once again my key person on the farm has quit in mid season and I am struggling to recover from the unexpected blow. I guess after 3 years in a row, I should be used to it, but being used to it doesn't make it any easier. What does make it easier is having willing friends, family and CSA members who are able to come to the farm and lend a hand with the added workload. Many thanks to Verna and Shelton Lankford who happened along when we were digging the garlic; my daughters, Heather and Christina for giving me the extra hours; Kelly Carey for helping to get the beans picked in the early mornings before she goes to her real job; and Ted Wycall, who came down with a couple of his helpers to transplant the brussels sprouts and plant the fall potatoes.

## OUR PERVERSE FARM PLAN

In farm country, Christmas comes about every five years. The next visit of Santa Claus -- or in this case, Uncle Sam -- is due in 2007. The wish list of American agribusiness giants and their vassals at the U.S. Department of Agriculture is the same as always: many billions of federal dollars propping up an unnatural, anti-competitive, security-undermining, environment-destroying system that gluts the world with cheap grain and pig manure.

And any warm feeling taxpayers might get for thinking their money goes to support the traditional family farm springs from about as much reality as flying reindeer.

After 52 public forums from Florida to Alaska, many presided over personally by Agriculture Secretary Mike Johanns, and more than 4,000 public comments, the USDA clings to its willful misreading of the situation, promoting policies that endanger the planet and destroy farmsteads from Nebraska to Niger.

Some hold out hope that Congress, after decades of agreeing that the solution to every farm problem is larger production subsidies, might take another course. The ascension of the Democrats, specifically the fact that conservation-friendly Tom Harkin of Iowa will be chairman of the Senate Agriculture Committee, provides some encouragement.

But the USDA's own summary of the issues facing American agriculture -- "Strengthening the Foundation for Future Growth in U.S. Agriculture" -- still views farming as an industrial process needing to ramp up production and increase exports.

It's a sad missive that refers to the dependency of livestock and vegetable producers on straightjacketing production contracts with giant processors as "opportunities," and

calls the need for farm families to balance their budgets with off-farm jobs a "choice."

It's a business plan that assumes poor nations whose agricultural base is destroyed by America's market-glutting production will magically start having the kind of disposable income necessary to buy our grain and meat. Our government's refusal to deviate from this view was the key reason why the last round of World Trade Organization talks, once seen as a chance to bring poor nations into the fold, collapsed in July.

It's a blueprint for yet another round of taxpayer subsidies for the so-called "program crops" -- generally wheat, corn, rice, soybeans and cotton -- that push farmers to max out their production using all the fertilizer and pesticides they can afford.

The government dropped nearly \$144 billion on farm subsidies between 1995 and 2004, according to calculations by the Environmental Working Group. The bulk of that money went to an ever-shrinking number of giant companies and cooperatives that continue to soak up both the taxpayers' money and their neighbors' land.

The resulting cut-rate price of corn further encourages feedlot fattening of cattle, hogs and poultry rather than the more natural grazing. The nitrogen-heavy runoff from those massive feeding operations, combined with all the fertilizer that flows from wheat and corn fields in the Plains and upper Midwest, endangers municipal water supplies and once-teeming sealife downstream in the Gulf of Mexico.

*cont. on back*

### IN YOUR SHARE

Fresh Garlic  
Beets  
Squash: Zephyr, Zucchini and Magda  
Scallions  
Beans: Italian Flat, Green and Yellow Wax  
Chard

**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.**

***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.***

cont. from front

Soil conservation is always a part of farm legislation, but a small part. In Kansas, for example, federal farm payments over the decade ending in 2004 totaled \$6.2 billion for production subsidies and \$1 billion for conservation. When budget hawks start looking for savings, it is the conservation plans, not the subsidies, that are on the chopping block.

True conservation farming, where land is lovingly husbanded everywhere, not hyper-farmed here and left fallow there, is the key to sustainable, affordable food production. And we can have it for a fraction of what we now spend on production subsidies.

If we tell Congress that is what we want.

*George Pyle, an editorial writer for the Salt Lake Tribune, is author of "Raising Less Corn, More Hell: The Case for the Independent Farmer and Against Industrial Food." He wrote this comment for the Land Institute's Prairie Writers Circle, Salina, Kan.*

## SAVE A TREE

*If you wish to save some paper (and \$\$\$), you can read the newsletter online at*

*[www.providentfarm.com](http://www.providentfarm.com)*

*or request an email copy by emailing Kelly at [kelly@kcpandg.com](mailto:kelly@kcpandg.com).*

*We can then reduce the number of printed copies we make each week.*

***Wondering what to do with all this wonderful food? How to store it? How to cook it? Try our website at [www.providentfarm.com](http://www.providentfarm.com). There is a great section on produce and recipes. [www.providentfarm.com](http://www.providentfarm.com)***

## GARLIC

Garlic is one of my favorite seasonings. I use fresh garlic most of the time, but I always have garlic powder on hand to add to bread stick and pizza dough. I know many people are afraid of the smell and the strong taste, but there are so many variations to using garlic that can make it work for everyone. The longer garlic is cooked, the more mellow it becomes. James Beard's famous Chicken with 40 Cloves of Garlic proves this point well.

Store garlic in mesh onion bags, or in a cool place that is out of the sunlight. Never store whole garlic heads in the refrigerator or freezer. If you have leftover chopped or minced garlic, cover it with oil, refrigerate and use within a day or two.

Garlic is especially mellow in taste when roasted for long periods of time. To rid your breath of garlic chew fresh parsley, a slice of raw ginger or fresh mint.

The following recipe is easy and will get you started in experimenting with garlic.

### ***Roasted Garlic***

Ingredients:

1 garlic head

1/2 cup olive oil

3 sprigs fresh thyme

salt and freshly ground pepper

Preheat oven to 250 degrees and break the head into cloves, but leave the skins on. Place them in a small ovenproof dish, and add the oil, thyme, salt and pepper. Bake about 45 minutes until the garlic is very tender-this may take an hour if the cloves are large. Stir the cloves occasionally to turn them. When done allow to cool enough to handle then squeeze onto toasted French bread or other crusty bread. You can also use in recipes such as dressings, sauces, soups etc.

*NOTES: You can also roast garlic by drizzling with olive oil, seasoning with salt and wrapping with foil. Do this when you are baking something else in the oven and you'll have it on hand for spur of the moment recipes. It will keep 2-3 days wrapped well in the refrigerator. If the oven is hotter than about-350 degree or so-only roast it 20 minutes or so.*



## MARK YOUR CALENDAR!

### ***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 it's full glory, This year it will be on August 19th.

