



‘Mater Mania 2008 - The Celebration Continues

By Amy K. Liebman

Week of August 18th

Annual charity tomato festival at Bivalve brings out a crowd, raises more than 3000 for Medora Harvest fund.

In what some would consider the most dreadful year for the nation’s tomato, yesterday’s celebration of the Eastern Shores finest ‘maters delightfully revived its battered and bruised reputation.

Over 200 people joined our CSA and LESSON in a lovely event that grossed over \$3,000 for the Medora Harvest Fund, our charitable fund that helps us offer free and reduced cost shares to members in need.

Folks enjoyed outstanding music from Blue Light Special and Pugsly, as they savored culinary delights including tomato tasting, all kinds of homemade salsas served with chips, and a Tomato Sandwich Extravaganza, featuring sliced farm-fresh tomatoes. Who knew there were so many ‘maters? And did you notice all those kids? They had a great time and ate lots of ‘maters!

The rainbow of juicy tomatoes, including many heirloom varieties, bedecked the tasting table. It was hard to find a favorite among Brandywine, Cherokee Purple, Orange Blossom, Green Zebra, Sun Gold, Black Prince, Striped German, and Big Beef.

Words can never express our gratitude for the fleet of volunteers who made this event possible. Our hats go off to Katherine Munson and Pat Pilling for the outstanding efforts in organizing the event. Lauren Moriarty, our sandwich queen (as always), oversaw all the fine details needed to pull off much of the food served at the event. I would list all of the volunteers by name but can not even begin. We thank all those who graciously staffed our many stations at the event, who made salsa, baked goodies and donated their artwork, crafts and other items for our silent auction. And we thank those who came

early to set up and stayed late to clean up. Thank you.

Something very wonderful happened this year, perhaps a little too subtle for you all to notice. Jay, Patti Erickson and I and sat down and munched on chips and salsa together. Why is that wonderful you may ask? For the past three years, we’ve worked the event for start to finish, with few moments to soak in the joyous atmosphere of the day. This year we gently passed the baton to hardworking dedicated volunteers. It worked seamlessly and that gives us great hope for sustaining this important celebration.

In closing, on behalf of all of our CSA members and event goers, I give a very special thank you to our growers – Farmers Ted, Kelly and Jay. Thank you for the amazing ‘maters. As Neil Young says – “Home grown’s the way it ought to be”.

Onward,
Amy

PS - If you missed the event we welcome your donations all year long to the Medora Harvest Fund. Just visit our web site at <http://providentfarm.com/> for information on how to make a contribution.

In This Week’s Share

Tomatos - Heirloom

Squash

Eggplant

Potatos

Sunflowers

Peppers*

*Maybe - maybe not

Recipe of the week

Eggplant Tomato Bake (From allrecipes.com website)

"Eggplant, tomato, and cheeses are layered, baked, then served over pasta. An easy and delicious Italian meal."

Ingredients:

- 1/2 cup all-purpose flour
- 1/2 cup dry bread crumbs
- 2 tablespoons Italian seasoning
- 2 eggs
- 2 tablespoons water
- 1 small eggplant, sliced into 1/4 inch rounds
- 1 tablespoon peanut oil
- 1 (14 ounce) jar spaghetti sauce
- 1 cup ricotta cheese
- 1 cup grated Parmesan cheese
- 1 tomato, thinly sliced
- 1 (8 ounce) package angel hair pasta



Preparation

1. Preheat the oven to 350 degrees F (175 degrees C).
2. In a plastic bag, combine the flour, bread crumbs and Italian seasoning. Shake to mix. In a shallow bowl, whisk together the eggs and water. Heat the oil in a large skillet over medium-high heat. There should be enough oil to thinly coat the bottom of the skillet. Dip the eggplant slices in egg, then place in the bag and shake to coat. Fry the slices in the skillet until golden brown on each side. Remove, and drain on paper towels.
3. Spread a thin layer of spaghetti sauce in the bottom of a 9 inch square baking dish. Cover with the eggplant slices, then top with more sauce. Mix together the ricotta cheese and Parmesan cheese; spread over the eggplant. Spread sauce over the cheese, and top with tomato slices. Cover with more sauce, and spread remaining cheese over the top.
4. Bake for 30 minutes in the preheated oven, or until cheese is melted and sauce is bubbling.
5. Meanwhile, bring a large pot of lightly salted water to a boil. Add the pasta, and cook for about 3 minutes, or until tender. Drain. Serve the eggplant tomato bake over pasta. Serves 4.

A Note on the "Share Bin"

This time of year, the yield of each crop can become a little "iffy", and having enough to go around to all shares becomes uncertain. Crops that may not have enough for all shares in a particular week may go into the share bin, where members can pick up some of their favorites and/or leave some of their not-so-favorites. If you have veggies in your share that you know you won't use, drop them in, and, conversely, if you see a particular favorite in the bin, put it to good use. It isn't always necessary to leave something to take something - just be fair about it.

