



## Notes from the Bank Account - Second Edition by Jay Martin

### The State of the CSA Economy

I am assuming that you read last week's newsletter from Shawn McEntee, our bookkeeper. If not, please do.

I would like to follow up on her report with a few thoughts I have about how this year worked or didn't work. As Shawn said, I developed a crop plan for the 3 participating farms. This was based on what information we received from the survey. Each crop we felt confident we could deliver to you was given an amount to be delivered and a value by weight, bunch, quart, etc. The value assigned to each crop was based on the USDA reports on organic wholesale prices from 2007, The Rodale Institute's Organic Price Index and numerous discussions with other organic farmers in the Mid-Atlantic area. I added a moderate percentage based on a 3 year average to cover the increases in costs I anticipated. It was recommended to me that I keep the share price at \$575.00. To do so, I had to reduce the amount of some of our offerings.

The fundamental concept of the CSA model of farming is that both the farmers and the members are protected. The farmers are protected from devastating financial losses due to conditions beyond their control and the members are protected from the archaic laws of supply and demand. Yes, I mean archaic. In my opinion, supply and demand has absolutely nothing to do with value. Rather than using numbers from the above mentioned reports, individualized production costs for each farmer and each crop should be used as a guideline for determining the value assigned to the crops with a fair profit built in for the farmer. I have production cost worksheets for most of the crops I grow here but they are specific to this farm and not necessarily accurate for either Craig or Ted or anyone else.

There are production cost worksheets available for most crops from a variety of sources but they are only useful as a guide for farmers interested in a new enterprise. There are too many variables involved to make them reliable even for our CSA farmers -- these include land costs, taxes, labor costs, level of mechanization, and experience of the farmer to mention a few.

There are 3 weeks left in our CSA season. As you have probably figured out by now, some of the crops

we had hoped we could supply this fall are in short supply. I can tell you for certain that all of us, including the farm hands, have worked very hard to deliver "the goods". As Shawn explained last week, the full season members have received value for their share price. Those of you who joined us for partial season shares may not have received quite the variety we could have expected but you will receive quantity. If any of you are feeling short changed, let's talk it over before you bail out on the CSA. I know Ted, Craig and I are looking forward to THE END, but I also know each of us will be looking forward to the rich aroma of freshly turned soil in February when we get started again.

Onward,

Jay



## CSA Provident Farm Annual End-of-Harvest Pot Luck

**When: Sunday, November 23, 2 p.m.**

**Community Center, Bivalve**

Another year's gone by already? Which means it's time to gather for the annual pot luck and gleaning of the fields.

Join us for what's become a tradition of Provident Farm's extended family. As usual, we're asking for a selection of dishes to be shared. Last year, we just about ran out of food, so if you can **plan on making enough for 8-10**, that should do it. We also seemed to have a lot more desserts than we finished. **Please, please bring an index card that tells what the dish is and whether it's vegetarian or not. And don't forget a serving utensil!**

We need a couple of **extra tables**, so we will have enough space to put all the food! We also need to have a display about LESSON and the Medora

harvest Fund, plus some information about the farm and CSA activities. Also **extra extension cords and an adapter or two** that lets us plug in several crock pots and such into a single outlet.

For the non-culinary inclined, bringing drinks and breads are a great option. Fruit juices and ciders, milk, coffee and teas (and flavored creamers) are appreciated. **People are asked to bring their own plates, cutlery, glasses, and napkins.**

Please drop Fran Levy or Katherine Munson an e-mail, letting us know what you are bringing. [Fsevern@mindspring.com](mailto:Fsevern@mindspring.com) or [oct02mom@yahoo.com](mailto:oct02mom@yahoo.com). If you e-mail Fran, you'll get a nastygram from her server, telling you that your message ha been sent to Suspected Spam Limbo, but put "CSA Potluck" in the message, and it will reach her. Or call her at 443-260-2390.

## In Your Share This Week

Between shares and the share bin, likely items are winter squash, kale, broccoli, sweet potatoes, turnips, peppers, or leeks. The amount of any particular crop at this point in the season frequently will not support a full distribution. Members are asked to watch the share bin for those items.

### Recipe of the week (<http://allrecipes.com>)

## Broccoli Soup II

"Fast and delicious soup to warm up your bones on a chilly day!"

PREP TIME 15 Min; COOK TIME 25 Min; READY IN 40 Min

SERVINGS 4

### INGREDIENTS

- 3 tablespoons extra virgin olive oil
- 1 clove garlic, crushed
- 1 head broccoli, chopped
- 1 (32 fluid ounce) container chicken broth
- 1/2 cup uncooked white rice
- 1/2 cup shredded Cheddar cheese

### DIRECTIONS

1. Heat oil in a large pot over medium heat, and saute garlic 1 minute. Mix in broccoli, and cook 5 minutes. Pour in broth, and stir in rice. Bring to a boil. Reduce heat to low, cover, and simmer 20 minutes.
2. Strain the broccoli and cooked rice from the soup, and place in a blender with 1 cup of the soup liquid. Blend until smooth. Return to pot. Serve with Cheddar cheese.