

the  
Canticle Farm  
newsletter

# HARVEST TIMES

*The Canticle Farm is a Certified Naturally Grown farm and Community Supported Agriculture project sponsored by the Franciscan Sisters of Allegany. The farm is committed to connecting all peoples, practicing Earth-friendly habits, and realizing a Creation-centered spirituality.*



week of July 7, 2008

week # 4 of 18

## Canticle Farm: 2008 Season Update

by **Garrett Dudley**,  
2007 Canticle Farm Assistant Farmer

What's that? Thought you were through with me once and for all, is that it? Figured you wouldn't have to suffer though any more of my meaningless articles, eh? Well folks, I'm sorry to break your hearts, but Mark has secretly contracted me to pound out a bit more for the Canticle newsletter. I'll be doing much less of the hands and knees work this season, but I'm happy to contribute the talents I can to my home farm in Allegany. Last week your farm manager and I caught up on the goings-on at Canticle for the 2008 season. So enough nonsense – lets get down to business.

Mark reports that the biggest change for 2008 is his unfettered access to Juan – that new John Deere 5103 that we hooked him up with last season. When a year ago Mark was still dependent on someone else to do his tilling, he is now self sufficient in his soil preparation, tillage, and his mowing. Not only does this increase Mark's efficiency by leaps and bounds, it also makes his planting schedule less susceptible to the whims of Mother Nature – so he feels less pressure when he falls behind.

Another important change, and one that affects you shareholders, was the shortening of the summer shares. In an effort to keep your share price at the \$300-\$400 level, summer season has been cut by two weeks. Those two extra weeks have been added to the spring shares, so you now see a true representation of the summer growing season. This eases things on Mark's end – he doesn't have to worry about mixing spring harvest with planting season – and works well on your end because the first two weeks of distribution are typically the lightest on a produce ready basis. In other words – double whammy!

Other changes will be apparent when you come to pick up your vegetables. As always, I encourage you to take a walk around and make your own observations. But in case you don't have time for this, here are a few things to look out for:

1. Our cooler is now enclosed on the side of the barn! Not only does this help create a neat-and-tidy appearance on the grounds, it also makes life easier come distribution time. No more running into those pull-carts when you're trying to pick up your vegetables!

2. You'll also see our greenhouse is coming together quite well. Though behind schedule on construction, Mark has no doubt that this next improvement will be worth the wait. Need to fill some volunteer hours?

## How's it GROWin'?

How 'bout those PEAS? Who doesn't love a fresh-picked pea, the pod popped open and those glistening, pea-green perfect spheres dropped right into an open mouth. They're nature's candy and this year's crop is looking beautiful! We hope to be enjoying these treats for a couple more weeks, with the PYO (Pick Your Own) beds opening up this week! Check out the board in the distribution center for PYO quantities. Containers for PYO are also available in the center.

PYO beds also depend on our shareholders for their vitality. This year peas, cherry tomatoes, herbs and flowers have been planted for self-picking. Mark and company, however, don't have much time to devote to tending these beds and are asking shareholders to consider spending a little time before or after self-picking to pluck a few weeds. The less weeds there are, the higher the yield of our plants, and the more fruits we will enjoy.

This year's crop of beans is budding out nicely, foreshadowing a good crop of green, yellow and maybe even purple beans! Thanks to staff and volunteer efforts, we have kept up with the cultivation and have also managed to keep most of the woodchucks away.

Peas and beans are popular crops, but can be enjoyed only after a good bit of effort on the picker's part. Pickin' is very labor intensive, especially when picking 130-200 pounds a week, as we do at Canticle Farm. This is an area where we rely heavily on volunteer help. So, don a wide-brim and bring a friend for conversation over the bean beds. It might be a welcome change from your usual coffee.

Talk to Mark if you think you can handle some light construction duties!

Canticle Farm is now able to hire high school students, so you might encounter a few new recruits out in the field. Mark is hoping that his farm can help build a strong work ethic among local students. Joining him this season are Alex Fellows, Dominic Passerino, Mike Walters, and Helen Ventura from Allegany High School.

I hope you are as excited for the 2008 growing season as I am! If not, at least enjoy those great vegetables that Mark and company take such care in preparing. And like it or not, you'll be hearing more from me as I continue my trek through the agricultural jungle of Western New York. See you at the farm!

# HARVEST RECIPES

How about that Swiss chard? She's proving to be the best crop we've ever had, and we hope to be able to provide Swiss chard consistently for the rest of the summer season. Swiss chard, besides being delicious, is a nutritional powerhouse. Her brilliant green color announces her nutritional excellence, however here are a few of the specific scientific findings. Swiss chard provides an outstanding source of vitamins K, A, E and C as well as magnesium, manganese, potassium, iron, and dietary fiber. Swiss chard is also a significant source of copper, calcium, phosphorus, zinc, folate, biotin, niacin, and vitamins B1, B2, and B6. Freshness is key to preserving nutrients, so enjoy your chard sooner than later, but if you do store it for a couple of days, keep it in a plastic bag in the crisper drawer. Here are a few recipe ideas to help you make the most of this tender, nutritious green!

## Classic Swiss Chard Sauté

In a heavy saucepan, with the heat on medium, sauté some sliced garlic and crushed red pepper or grated ginger (depending on the flavor you're craving) in 2 to 4 tablespoons olive oil. After about one minute add chopped Swiss chard leaves and raisins (if desired). Cover and let cook about 5 minutes. Check and add a little water if it appears dry. Stir, so that all leaves are evenly cooked. Cover and cook another five minutes. Check for doneness by tasting a piece. When cooked to your taste, add salt and a little butter. Serve. YUM!

## Rainbow Swiss Chard Appetizer

from *From Asparagus to Zucchini, a guide to cooking farm-fresh seasonal produce*, third edition from the Madison Area Community Supported Agriculture Coalition

3TBL butter  
2 TBL minced shallots or scallions  
4 stems chives, chopped  
¼ tsp ground, dried thyme  
1 bunch rainbow Swiss card, leaves removed (use these in another recipe) and stems finely chopped  
cream cheese, softened  
toasted, sliced French bread or whole grain gourmet crackers

Melt butter in pan over medium heat. Add shallot or scallions and sauté 2 minutes. Add chives, thyme and chopped chard stalks. Sauté until stalks are tender, tossing to coat with butter. Transfer to a bowl and let cool, patting with a paper towel to absorb extra butter. Spread cream cheese on toasted bread or crackers. Spoon some of the cooled chard on each cracker or bread slice.

## Volunteer Opportunities

• pea and bean picking • AM harvest helpers, especially Mondays and Thursdays • garlic harvest party (date and time TBA) • cultivation (hand weeding and its non-back-breaking cousin scuffle hoeing, the newest exercise craze hitting farms across the nation)

Thursday, July 17  
at Canticle Farm (time TBA)

*"Building Community and the Spirituality of Supporting Local Agriculture"*  
by shareholder **Anthony Lipnicki**

Come hear this fascinating and multi-dimensional talk by Anthony Lipnicki, member of Canticle Farm's Education Committee and Cornell University Cooperative Extension's Agriculture Committee. Innkeepers of the Mustard Seed Inn and B&B in Andover, NY with his wife Mary, and community organizer, Anthony started FIRST FRIDAYS, a community oriented discussion group, two years ago. FIRST FRIDAYS' intention is to bring people together from a variety of backgrounds with the hope to find a common ground of understanding and to address issues relating to the community that are close to everyone's heart but need to be better understood so that a responsible response can be made in everyone's best interest. Anthony and Mary are parishioners of Blessed Sacrament Church in Andover and moved to Allegany County five years ago from the NYC area to simplify their lives in a Christian and Franciscan ethical philosophy, focused on prayer, Creation Centered spirituality and social responsibility.

## Help improve the Reflection Area

The Spiritual/Social Committee received a generous donation of a bike that will be raffled off to support the Committee's work in the Reflection Area.

We're planting flowers, weeding, improving signage, clearing space, and performing other tasks in our effort to make the Reflection Area and labyrinth more inviting to visitors.

The bike is a Next PowerClimber, teen or small-adult sized (24" wheels) mountain bike with 18 speeds, full (front and back) suspension, and a lock and chain. It retails for about \$75 new. This bike is in very gently used condition and will be inspected and tuned by one of our shareholders. Tickets are \$1 each or 7 for \$5 and can be purchased during distribution.

Tickets will also be sold at the Wednesday, August 6, Canticle Farm Ice Cream Social, during which the winning ticket will be drawn (you need not be present to win).

If you have any questions about the bike or the raffle, email Kris Later at [chogrook@aol.com](mailto:chogrook@aol.com). Take a chance for a great cause and maybe we'll see you on the bike trails!

