

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 21, 2008

week # 6 of 18

How's it GROWin'?

with Mark Prinz

The warm evenings of late have brought on our vine crops. The squash is looking excellent and we should have over a month of a variety of summer squash. The cucumbers are looking very hopeful and we hope that our cucumber season will last longer than last year. However, downy mildew has been a consistent cucumber impediment in the past and may threaten to shorten our cucumber season again. This is another example of the balancing act with play with Mother Nature. Enjoy those crisp cukes while they're here!

The sweet onions are looking good and you will start to see them on the distribution table this week. It looks like we will have a good onion family (Allium) year, so look for plenty of tasty onions and garlic to flavor your dishes with. Join us for our garlic harvest party this Saturday and help bring in that pungent and healthful garlic!

As for the broccoli, the Swede midge infestation proved worse than expected and we had to till under our second spring planting in order to save our fall crop. Unfortunately, it was necessary to prey the plants in order to kill the predator. Hopefully this will enable our fall planting of broccoli to thrive and flourish.

Only time will tell.

MARK YOUR CALENDARS

Canticle Farm
Annual Ice Cream Social
Wednesday, August 6
at 6:30 p.m.

Free entertainment by Steve Duprey, folk
singer and composer from Penn Yan

Music for all ages
Bicycle Raffle

Delicious Ice Cream Sundaes!
Price: \$3 or \$2 for children 10-and-under
3835 So. Nine Mile Road • Allegany, NY

VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES

GARLIC HARVEST PARTY THIS SATURDAY, July 26th from 10am - 1pm

No Experience Necessary - Fun for All!

Pulling, stacking, and clipping - there's a job for everyone, including sit-down jobs. We had a great turnout and a lot of fun last year. Let's do it again! Help with refreshments needed. Can you bring a drink or snack during the party? Let Mark know or just bring it by.

DISTRIBUTION HOSTS for Friday, July 25th (between the hours of 2 and 6:30pm) as Rhonda will be off that day.

EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES

Are you looking for an opportunity to work outside doing fulfilling work within a meaningful community? Canticle Farm is looking for full and part-time help starting in mid-August when our college and high school hires leave through November when the season ends. The responsibilities are mainly field work (planting, cultivating, harvesting and prepping vegetables), and applicants must be able to lift a good thirty pounds, work on their hands and knees and enjoy (or at least tolerate) the morning hours. No experience necessary, but motivation required! Please pass this information along to anyone you know who may be interested, perhaps a neighbor or a college student. See Mark for an application.

HARVEST RECIPES

This week starts the cabbage harvest and you will carry home a head or two of green, red or Napa cabbage for a number of weeks this season. A superb way to use and preserve your cabbage is to naturally ferment it, an ancient yet simple way to preserve and actually enhance the nutritional content of the cabbage. Before frozen, canned and imported foods, naturally fermented foods provided an important source of vegetables and nutrition during the winter months in northern climates. Naturally fermented cabbage has significant amounts of vitamin C. In fact, Captain James Cook and other sea captains took sauerkraut on their voyages to combat scurvy. Naturally fermented cabbage is also a powerhouse of lactobacilli and enzymes, which help us to digest both the cabbage and other foods we eat with the cabbage. Chinese medicine recognizes that

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HARVEST RECIPES

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the root of health is digestion; when we are able to easily digest and assimilate foods our systems are less taxed and our bodies absorb more nutrients.

If you are not use to eating much naturally fermented foods (which includes things like yogurt), start with a small amount to let your system adjust to the new influx of beneficial bacteria. Soon you'll be able to eat jars full!

Here is a detailed yet easy to follow description by contemporary fermentation guru Sandor Katz of how to make naturally fermented sauerkraut. This recipe hails from his popular and fascinating book, *Wild Fermentation*. Next week we'll cover kimchi, sauerkraut's Asian counterpart, which uses Napa cabbage. We may be offering a fermentation workshop in the fall to cover these techniques and more, as there are endless possibilities for fermentation.

Sauerkraut

Timeframe: 1 to 4 weeks (or more)

Equipment: Ceramic crock or food-grade plastic bucket or Ball jars

Ingredients: Cabbage (and other vegetables, fruits, herbs, and spices), Salt

Process: Chop or grate cabbage, finely or coarsely, with hearts or not. Sprinkle salt on cabbage as you go. Salt pulls water out of cabbage (through osmosis – breaking down cell walls), and this creates the brine in which the cabbage ferments – which creates an unfavorable

environment for unwanted organisms. Use about 3 tablespoons of salt for 5 pounds of cabbage.

Add other vegetables: carrots, onions, garlic, seaweed, greens, turnips, beets, etc. Also add fruits (apples), herbs, and spices (caraway seeds for a classic sauerkraut flavor, but dill seeds, celery seeds, juniper berries are also nice) – experiment and make your own unique culture!

Mix ingredients together with hands bruising the cabbage to release the juices. Pack into jar/crock, a little at a time, and tamp it down hard using fists or utensil. Cover kraut with plate or some other lid that fits snugly into crock – or cover jar with lid. **Make sure the cabbage remains submerged under the brine.**

Press down periodically for about 24 hours or until the brine covers as the salt draws water out of cabbage. If you need to make your own brine because not enough water is being pulled out of cabbage add 1 tablespoon of salt to 1 cup of water, stir until dissolved and add to crock/jar. Leave the crock or jar to ferment. The warmer the room temperature the faster the fermentation will go.

Check the kraut every day or two. Sometimes mold appears on surface. No need to worry, it's just a surface phenomenon resulting from contact with the air. The kraut itself is under the anaerobic protection of the brine. Just scrape the mold away and make sure all the cabbage is submerged. You can keep it for months in a cool place as the flavor improves with age. Put in fridge when you like the flavor or scoop out of crock and put some into a jar in the fridge.

The Spiritual Dimension of Canticle Farm

by Joe Kotala, OFM

The Mission Statement of Canticle Farm includes a line that calls us to a realization of a creation-centered spirituality. This raises a big question: what is creation spirituality? Creation spirituality is a mystical philosophy, celebrating the universe, emphasizing creativity as a key component of the universe, and believing that all people have a divine creative impulse. Creation spirituality starts with original blessing, rather than with original sin. It regains the understanding that the true nature of all things is "very good." Redemption is seen as an integral part of divine creation, rather than as a separate divine activity necessitated by the reality of sin. In other words, God would have become human even if humans had not sinned. God became human out of love.

The story in Genesis tells us that everything God created was "good." Creation spirituality is rooted in God and expressed in the teachings of Jesus, which informed St. Francis's spirituality. Franciscan spirituality is incarnational as is creation spirituality. Throughout his lifetime St. Francis grew in understanding and experience of his relationship with all of God's creation, and at the end of his life he wrote the *Canticle Of Creatures*, calling everything brother and sister. We, too, are called into rela-

tionship with God and all of God's creation.

It seems to me that through participation in Canticle Farm one experiences creation spirituality through the value of naturally grown produce, the value of community involvement, and the value of locally grown produce. We recognize that all things are connected – vegetable plants, weeds, sun, soil, water, air, humans. We are reminded of Chief Seattle's words, "This we know, all things are connected." We also see the need to provide healthy produce to those who can't afford to purchase it. Canticle Farm opens a door to reflect on our own spiritual journey.

Ten Principles of Creation Spirituality

1. The universe is a blessing, that is, something God created and we experience as "very good."

2. Humans need to relate to the universe as a whole as we are a microcosm of that macrocosm.

3. Everyone is a mystic, born full of wonder and capable of recovering it at any age and of not taking the awe and wonder of existence for granted.

4. Everyone is a prophet, a 'mystic in action' who is called to interfere with what interrupts authentic life. We are called to the margins of the status quo to interrupt systems that marginalize other humans, creatures and our Father, the Earth.

5. Everyone is an artist. Art as meditation is a primary form of prayer for releasing our images and empowering the community and each of us. Art finds its fulfillment in ritual, the community's art.

6. Everyone and everything expresses divinity. All humans are all children of God; therefore, we have Divine blood in our veins and the Divine breath in our lungs; and the basic work of God is Compassion.

7. Divinity is as much Mother as Father, as much Child as Parent, as much Godhead [mystery] as God [history], as much beyond all beings as in all beings.

8. We experience the Divine in all things and all things are in the Divine. This mystical experience supplants the experience of the Divine as separate and unattainable.

9. Humans have to dig and work at finding the deep self, the true self, the spirit self. This is the spiritual journey. It is not so much about "adding on" as it is "letting go." If we do not undergo the spiritual journey, we live superficially out of fear or greed or addiction or someone else's expectations of us.

10. The spiritual journey is an ever-expanding spiral encompassing four paths. · *Via Positiva: Befriending Creation – wonder, delight, revelry* · *Via Negativa: Befriending Darkness – emptiness, sinking, suffering* · *Via Creativa: Befriending Our Sacredness – creating, awakening, birthing* · *Via Transformativa: Befriending New Creation – coming home, doing, justice*

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