

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 September 8, 2008

week # 13 of 18

How's it GROWin'?

by Mark Printz

It is an excellent year for our root crops – carrots, beets and potatoes. It is in our root crops that people often notice the biggest difference between what they buy at the store and what we grow naturally at Canticle Farm. The carrots are sweeter, the potatoes denser, and the beets tastier. A lot of this has to do with fact that we are not using chemical fertilizers. We rely on building healthy soil to grow healthy, disease-free crops. Because the root crops are in direct contact with the soil, they often speak most directly to the health of the soil. Healthy soil = healthy roots.

Speaking of those roots, our carrots are coming in strong and you will see them in several different colors at distribution. Don't be afraid of the different colors. They all have a good carrot taste to them with the whites and yellows being a bit sweeter and the purples slightly spicier. Mixing and matching is a good way to get a nice, subtle variety.

Our fall Brassicas plants are looking good. We are probably 2-3 weeks from our first harvest of fall Brassicas.

The long-awaited tomato season is coming to an end. Our high tunnel tomatoes, which fare better against diseases, allow us to lengthen the season, but do not offer the larger quantities that field tomatoes do. We'll start gleaning on the field tomatoes this week or next. If you are interested in making sauce or canning this will be your opportunity to pick up some blemished but beautiful tomatoes after we have pulled out what we need.

Fall Asters

by Elizabeth Thompson

When we moved into our home two years ago I planted perennial flowers in beds hugging the perimeter of the house. I chose flowers that bloomed at different times so that we would enjoy color throughout the brief but brilliant western New York growing season. At this time of year everything seems to be fading, the black-eyed susans are in full bloom, the zucchini is beginning its quick taper off, the goldenrod is painting the roadsides and open fields with its deep yellow color and the call of Canadian geese as they v-line for the south is a beautiful, but sobering song. We heed the song of the geese as a

reminder that this summer, with all its gifts and pleasures is acquiescing to the nip of Autumn. Winter's chill will soon greet our mornings.

But, in the beds around my front porch, one plant still grows skyward, not even budding out yet, acting as if we are still dancing in the giddiness of May, rather than stocking up and battening down in the soberness of September. My fall asters are now taller than my porch rail, their foliage a deep summer green vibrating off of the white paint of the porch. These fall asters give me hope. All is not fully ripened. The blooming season, harvest season, sun season is not complete, but promises much brilliance, like a final hurrah, in these next months. The fall asters will bloom well into November, offering floral beauty and peace of mind that these western New York winters are not really as long as they seem.

Likewise, the Canticle Farm season is far from over. There are still five more weeks left in the summer season, then 5 more weeks of bounty in the fall share. It may seem like the bloom of summer is gone, but fall is also a blooming, a ripening. Especially where vegetable plants are concerned, now is the time when fruit is maturing and greens are putting more foliage forth in the reprieve from summer's heat. Winter squash, kale, onions, potatoes, carrots, beets, spinach, and fall Brassicas are yet to come, as well as good things from our high tunnels, lettuce, chard, tomatoes. Elsewhere, the apples are ripening, and the smell of cider is in the air.

Yes, the school year has begun, the mornings are beginning to require a sweater, and all the festivals of summer are closing their doors; it can seem like a somber time of year. But it is also a beautiful and bountiful time of year, and I hope you will experience its gifts each time you pick up your share this Autumn, each time you enjoy the vegetables in a meal or the flowers on your table. All is not bloomed out – the fall asters tell me this, the apple trees tell me this, Canticle Farm tells me this. So I celebrate the rest of this season's bounty and beauty, even if I have to do it wearing a sweater and boots.

FALL SHARES

There are a few fall shares still available; get them while you can!

HARVEST RECIPES

Pungent Green Beans and Tomatoes with Cumin, Garlic, and Ginger

from *Farmer's John's Cookbook* by Farmer John Peterson and Angelica Organics

- 10 cloves garlic, smashed
- 1 piece ginger (about 1 inch long) peeled, chopped
- 1 ½ cups chicken or vegetable stock, divided
- 1 tsp ground cumin
- ¼ cup mild flavored vegetable oil
- 2 tsp whole cumin seeds
- 1 whole dried red chile pepper (optional)
- 2-4 fresh tomatoes, stems removed, peeled and finely chopped
- 2 tsp ground coriander
- 1 ½ lbs green beans, cut in half (about 8 cups)
- 1 ¼ tsp salt
- 3 TBL freshly squeezed lemon juice
- freshly ground black pepper

Put garlic, ginger and 1½ cups of stock in a blender or food processor; process until a smooth paste forms. Next, place a large wok (or a large pot) over medium heat. When the wok is hot add the ground cumin and toast just until it becomes fragrant. (This will take only a few seconds – be careful not to overtoast as it will burn quickly.) Immediately scrape cumin onto small dish and set aside.

Quickly wipe wok or pot with a damp cloth or paper towel to remove any remaining spice. Return wok or pot to heat and add the oil, letting it heat up for about 20 seconds before adding the whole cumin seeds. After 5 seconds, add the dried chile pepper. After another 25 seconds, add the ginger-garlic paste. Cook and stir the ingredients for 2 minutes. Stir in the tomatoes and coriander; cook, stirring, for 3 minutes.

Add the green beans, salt and remaining stock. Stir the ingredients until they come to a gentle boil. Reduce heat to low and cover, simmering and stirring once or twice until the beans are tender, 6-8 minutes or less. Remove cover from wok or pot. Stir in the lemon juice and the toasted ground cumin. Increase the heat and bring the mixture to a boil. Boil, stirring occasionally until all the liquid has been cooked off. Remove the wok from the heat. Remove the chile pepper. Season with plenty of freshly ground black pepper to taste.

Green Bean Soup

from *More-with-Less Cookbook*
by Doris Janzen Longacre

- 3 TBL butter
- 1 large onion, diced
- 6 cups water or stock
- 1 cup carrots, shredded
- 1 cup potatoes, diced
- 4 cups fresh or frozen green beans, cut up
- fresh parsley, chopped

- 1 bunch summer savory, tied for easy removal
- ½ cup cream or evaporated milk
- salt and pepper
- diced hard-boiled eggs

In a heavy skillet, melt the butter and add the diced onion. Saute until golden. Add the water or stock, carrots, potatoes, beans, parsley and savory. Cook until vegetables are tender. Just before serving, remove savory. Add the cream or evaporated milk and salt and pepper to taste. Ladle into bowls and sprinkle each serving with the diced, hard-boiled eggs.

Tired of eating green beans right now? Try freezing some for the winter months when you will miss them! Beans are very simple to freeze. For good, illustrated instructions, check out the following website: <http://www.pickyourown.org/beansfreezing.htm>.

Distribution Policy Reminder

Distribution occurs bi-weekly, on Tuesdays and Fridays. At the beginning of the season we assign each shareholder a pick-up day, balancing Tuesday and Friday so that there are equal numbers of shares going out on each day. This allows us to harvest throughout the week and not have to hold produce over for very long. This also allows us to plan. We know how many shares are going out on a given day. If you know you will be out of town on a given pickup day, you may switch pickup days for that week if you give Mark at least 48 hours notice. We cannot switch pickup days with less notice than that as the produce may already have been picked. We are happy, however, to bag your share and store it in the cooler until the next pickup day or anytime before the next pickup day when you can make it down to pick it up. Thank you for your understanding; this policy helps us provide the freshest produce to our shareholders.

VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES

- onion topping – once the onion tops have dried, they need to be removed and the onions put into onion bags for storage
- bean picking – our volunteer help has been crucial in giving us the steady supply of beans we have enjoyed. Thank you to all bean pickers for this!
- cleaning up the high tunnels – weeding, etc to get ready for the fall planting

WISHLIST

- BAGS! We need your clean, dry, plastic grocery bags for distribution pickup. Please bring ONLY clean, dry bags of grocery store size. Bread bags, dry cleaning bags and bags that are dirty or not of use for vegetable pickup. Thank you!
- Pint and quart containers that berries and cherry tomatoes come in for PYO
- wicker baskets, trays etc. for displays at market and at distribution
- peck, half peck, bushel and half bushel baskets
- plastic bowls to line bushel baskets
- Old towels & coolers