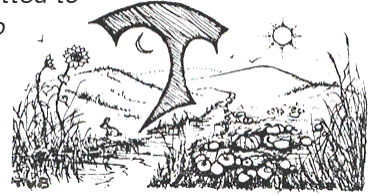


the  
Canticle Farm  
newsletter

# HARVEST TIMES



Canticle Farm is a Certified Naturally Grown farm and is a ministry sponsored by the Franciscan Sisters of Allegany (FSA). Its mission is to reverence, protect, and honor the sacredness of God's Creation. Canticle Farm, a Community Supported Agriculture (CSA) Farm, is committed to connect all peoples, to practice Earth-friendly habits, and to come to a realization of a Creation-centered spirituality.



week of June 22, 2009

week # 3 of 18

## How's it GROWIN'?

by Mark Printz

The weeds have taken off. However, the problem can be turned into an opportunity.

It's true we've reached a critical point in the season where weeding will play a big part in the future yield of vegetables.

Weeds are harder than the vegetable plants and win hands down when it comes to competition for sun, water and nutrients in the soil. For farm crops to produce to the best of their ability they need the wild plants removed.

Not only are these invasive plants dominant, they are very good at multiplying, too. Did you know that one Pigweed can have up to 10,000 seeds? Did you know that the fields are filled with this and other weeds like Lamb's Quarter and Purslane? Did you know that all three of them are edible and that the two latter weeds are some of the most nutritious greens you can eat?

There's an opportunity.

If you are interested in weeding these weeds/greens can be pointed out to you. You can take them home and try them out. Rhonda says you can use them as you would spinach.

But as nutritious as these wild edibles may be we still don't want them in the garden beds because they just take over.

So, if you've been thinking about trying your hand at some fieldwork, weeding might be for you. If you can push a mop or floor broom you might like to try scuffle hoeing where you stand while you weed. If

you would rather just get down on the ground, then hand weeding is needed too.

Now, it's true that the word weeding can sometimes conjure up a less than favorable idea in the minds of many. In fact, some people will tell you that they don't like to weed when they've never actually tried it. Weeding gets a bum rap for some reason.

If you give weeding a chance you might find you like it. With that, here's another opportunity coming your way: **Take the weeding challenge.**

Dress accordingly and then, like exercising, give yourself five minutes or so to get into it. Once you settle into the groove you just seem to go. It clears your mind and if you are weeding with others it seems to bring out the best conversations.

Beyond that, there's something about looking back at a row of vegetables you've weeded. There's a sense of accomplishment and you may find purpose in helping that row of vegetables.

Weeding. Whether you do it to be adventurous by eating something new or if the chance to slow down a bit appeals to you, the opportunities are many because the weeds are plentiful.

## Who's that helping Mark?

To keep the crops coming at a steady pace Farm Manager Mark Printz needs a hand in the field, hence the term field hand.

When you're a field hand no two days are the same. The planting cycle, weather, and any number of surprises determine the day's work. Planting seedlings and harvesting are jobs you'd probably expect. But if you look around you begin to realize that someone has to wash dishes, mow the grass and take care of the compost buckets. That someone is a field hand.

Everyone's a field hand, but many have additional specialties that keep the farm flourishing.

You may have already met some of the people Mark is counting on to ensure this season's success.

Molly Wagner returns for a second season and will work through mid-July. She became involved with the farm because her parents were shareholders. This University of Michigan student knows the ropes and can fill in anywhere at the farm.

(continued on next page)

## Recipe ROUNDUP

by Rhonda Berman

Howdy Partner!

You may have noticed that I do not add salt to any of my recipes. When preparing my recipes, you may add salt to taste.

I believe the average American consumes too much salt in their diet. To limit the amount of salt that I eat, I do not add salt when cooking and I try to avoid it where possible. I encourage you to be aware of the amount of sodium that you eat and try to reduce it.

If it's flavor you are looking for, try this herb instead of salt.

(continued on next page)

*(Recipes, continued from page 1)*

The herb basil is commonly used to make pesto, but other greens can be used as well.

Below is a recipe for pesto that uses spinach or Swiss chard.

Once prepared, pesto can be used in many ways. Use it with pasta, potatoes, rice, on toasted bread, on crackers, or on homemade pizza. I have successfully frozen this also (with or without the cheese).

### **Simple Pesto Recipe**

2 cups washed spinach or leafy part of Swiss chard (pack into measuring cup - ripped into large pieces - big stems removed)

2-4 cloves of chopped garlic OR 2 tbsp. chopped garlic scapes

¼ cup chopped walnuts

¼ cup extra virgin olive oil

Put all ingredients into food processor. Whirl until finely chopped. This can be done in a blender too.

Makes about 1¼ cup.

*Variation:* May also add ½ cup good quality shredded Parmesan cheese. I find it equally good with and without the Parmesan cheese.

*Variation:* For extra flavor, may add a few basil leaves if available.

Other recipes can be found under "Cookbook" at [www.canticlefarm.org](http://www.canticlefarm.org). Look for Italian-Style Swiss Chard; Honeyed Beets and Beet Greens; and Radish and Olive Salad.

Until next week, eat well, live well!

## **What do I do with my vegetable scraps?**

Composting is a great way to return important nutrients to the soil, it lightens the load on landfills and it's easy.

Canticle Farm composts. If you wish, as part of your distribution day routine bring the following to the farm:

- Vegetable scraps
- Egg shells
- Coffee grounds, etc.

*Note: Please no meat, dairy or leftover casseroles*

We have cat litter pails available for anyone to use. We just ask that you bring it back full, lid sealed tightly and then drop it off by the big compost barrels next to the barn. Don't forget to take a clean pail with you for your next round of scraps. If you bring your own container or bring loose items, please put them directly in the compost barrels.

## **Wish List**

If you have any of the following items, in good working condition and would like to see them put to use at the farm please feel free to bring them along on distribution day. We'll put them to work!

- A mailbox. This will be used in the reflection area to house and make readily available information on the labyrinth and peace pole.
- Kneeling pads, used for weeding.

*(Helpers, continued from page 1)*

Bet you've met Rhonda Berman on distribution day. She's quick with a tip or two on what to do with your vegetables. Look for her Recipe Roundup in each edition of the *Harvest Times*. Also check out the extensive work she's done on the Canticle Farm website. And Rhonda has a real knack for greenhouse seeding.

The mother/daughter team of Judy and Joanna Abraham started last fall. They were shareholders who decided that they wanted to do more. Home-schooled by Judy, Joanna just graduated high school and is headed to Grove City College in the fall.

Lori Peterson is a full-time mom with a young family. Fortunately for the farm, she can fit in some time to help in the Canticle Farm office. In addition, she's known as "the retail gal" because she's terrific at working the Farm Stand and the Farmers' Market.

Donald Brockel lives locally. He's a big help with the heavy work. The fields are supported by a whole host of structures and equipment that have many demands. So we're glad Donald is in charge of maintenance.

And just like each one has a special talent at the farm, they each have their favorite vegetable at the farm. Lori likes radishes. Donald's pick are potatoes. Judy thinks beans are best, while Joanna prefers peas. Rhonda is partial to a bunch of basil and Molly sides with Swiss chard.

## **THANK YOU!**

- Thank you, Warming House Coordinators who help with field work two days a week.
- Thank you to the seven novices and their two directors who worked in the fields last Wednesday, Thursday and Friday mornings. Novices are men and women who are on the path to becoming vowed religious Franciscan sisters and brothers.

## **Volunteer Opportunities This Week**

Mark has an ongoing need for *Harvest Helpers* on Monday and Thursday mornings. That's prime time for bringing in the crops for distribution days.

Check boards at the barn on distribution day for volunteer opportunities for the week.

This week you could try your hand at:

- Hand weeding
- Scuffle hoeing

To set up a time, catch up with Mark during your weekly stop or contact him by his cell phone.

## **Coming Events**

- **Saturday, Jul 18** – Garlic Harvest at Canticle Farm
- **Sunday, July 26** – Canticle Farm at the Taste of Olean – JCC Campus