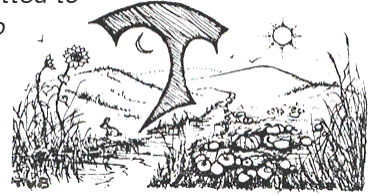


the
Canticle Farm
newsletter

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 July 6, 2009

week # 4 of 18

How's it GROWIN'?

by Mark Printz

Shorter summer days are the push needed to pump up some of our summer favorites.

While we feel like the summer has just begun, our onions see it differently. Shorter day-length tells the plant that fun in the sun is waning and it's time to pass the torch to the next generation.

Procreation is the name of the game for all the plants we grow here and for the onions it's like someone threw a switch. Less daylight tells the plant ready-or-not it's time to put energy into what's going on in the ground. It's time to build up a reserve for the next plant cycle.

The cycle began as the days grew longer. That's when many of our plants grew above ground. Fortunately, this year the fields are full of plants that have done a good job of developing top growth. This prepares them for potentially producing great reserves/results under ground.

To us an onion, carrot, potato or beet is something delicious to be enjoyed the moment that first bite is taken. But the plant had another plan for itself. It was thinking beyond today and preparing for the future when it created that onion, carrot, potato or beet.

The garlic is a good example of a root vegetable that is almost ready with its reserves.

Recipe ROUNDUP

by Rhonda Berman

Howdy Partner!

I can remember as a child my grandmother saying "Peas by the 4th of July." During the holiday weekend we were out in the hot sun picking baskets of peas.

Canticle Farm peas are ready, so I guess we are right on schedule. Enjoy the little pearls of sweet goodness.

Peas are best if eaten quickly as the sugars convert to starch and they become less sweet. Just break open the shell and eat the peas inside. If you have any peas left to store, put them in an enclosed bag in your refrigerator.

Here are some suggestions for the peas:

- Eat them raw out of the shell. Savor the flavor of fresh, home grown peas.

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Take a walk out into the fields and look at the garlic. The stalks are big. This is a good sign that the bulb under ground will be big, although there are no guarantees when you're working with Mother Nature.

The rain, as long as we don't get too much, is weighing in the favor of the 12 varieties of garlic planted in the fields. Whether they are Russian Red or Music varieties they all seem to be primed for a bumper crop this year.

The moment of truth is coming soon. The Garlic Harvest party is coming up July 18th. If you want to see the end result of shorter days join us in the fields. Some say harvesting garlic is a highlight of the summer, even if the plant being pulled from the ground has long passed the summer season of its life cycle.

Farming Naturally - Better for the Earth

by Sheryl Anderson

This is the first installment in a series.

More and more, we're developing a heightened sensitivity to Mother Earth. How can we minimize our impact upon her? Small, gradual steps taken by individuals toward adopting Earth-friendly habits can make a big difference.

One way we "vote green" is to buy local, naturally produced food. Since you're reading this, you've already taken this sacred step as a Canticle Farm shareholder, participating in a "creation-centered spirituality" that celebrates Earth's bounty.

Various religious traditions hold that "to till and to keep" the Earth returns it in fullness to our Creator, not in dominion over all life. When you support local farmers, you too are a good steward of the land: someone who values gifts of fertile soil, clean water and air. A rural countryside, a patchwork of fields, meadows, woods, streams, ponds and barns, is a perfect habitat for many beloved species of wildlife, including birds, deer, bats, owls, and rabbits.

When you partner with local farmers, you bypass the energy-extractive and polluting transportation from farm to fork. Together with local farmers, you can honor Mother Nature through the miracle of raising food with concern and care-

(continued on next page)

(Recipes, continued from page 1)

- Sprinkle the peas on your lettuce salad.
- Cook the peas slightly in a saucepan with butter, salt and pepper. My grandmother always added a dash of cream if she had it.

- Other recipes are available under "Cookbook" at www.canticlefarm.org. Look for Grandma Edson's Creamed Peas and Potatoes, Quick Summer Salad, and Spaghetti with Peas.

Meanwhile the Swiss chard keeps coming. Are you running out of ideas for Swiss chard? Here is another one of my favorite recipes for Swiss chard.

Swiss Chard and Potatoes with Spices

- 3 to 4 medium sized potatoes
- 15 oz. can of crushed tomatoes
- 15 oz. can of drained, rinsed garbanzo beans/
chic peas
- 3 big or 4 smaller chopped scallions
- 2 tsp ground cumin
- ½ tsp ground coriander
- ½ tsp ground cardamom
- ½ tsp turmeric
- Cayenne pepper to your taste (optional)
- 1 bunch of washed, chopped Swiss chard (separate stems and leaves)

Cut 3 to 4 medium sized potatoes into small to medium sized cubes. Uniformly sized pieces will take about the same amount of cooking time. Smaller pieces take less cooking time than larger ones. Put the potatoes in a medium- to large-sized pot. Barely cover the potatoes with water. Bring to a boil. Cook until just barely done. Prick with a fork to test. Mine took about 10 to 20 minutes depending on size of pieces. Drain potatoes in a colander. Put back into the same pot.

Add crushed tomatoes. Rinse can out with a little water and add this to the pot. Then add garbanzo beans/chic peas, chopped scallions and all of the spices. Stir this all together. Bring to a boil.

Add chopped Swiss chard stems to pot. Cook about 5 minutes. Add chopped Swiss chard leaves to pot. Put lid on pot and cook about 10 minutes more.

Variations:

- Use spinach instead of Swiss chard. Just reduce cooking time to about 5 minutes after adding the spinach.

- Substitute beet greens for the Swiss chard.
Until next week, eat well, live well!

THANK YOU!

• Thank you, to Paula Scraba for keeping up the reflection area. It makes it easy to enjoy the labyrinth and peace pole.

• Thank you, to the education committee for the cooking demo last Tuesday on distribution day. It helps to see first hand, that making a meal with Swiss chard can be quick and easy. The samples tasted great and the recipe card was a plus.

Available Farm shares:

Fall Shares: Both large and small

(Farming Naturally, continued from page 1)

ful stewardship. Come now with your children to Canticle Farm to see that here is, indeed, a place where love can grow, today and into the future!

Farming Naturally. Canticle Farm's natural practices benefit our environment in very specific ways.

While conventional farmers apply chemical fertilizers to the soil, we feed and build soil with natural fertilizer (think "compost!"). Rather than insecticides, we use insect predators (think "knock-off beetle patrol") and barriers to fight insects and disease. To control weeds, we rotate crops, hand-weed (think "scuffle hoe"), plant cover crops, and mulch generously rather than applying synthetic herbicides.

Such care is important, as it eliminates chemical residues not just from food but from air, soil, and water runoff. The EPA considers 30% of insecticides, 60% of herbicides, and 90% of fungicides carcinogenic, and the toxic brews resulting from their various combinations damage life beyond an industrial farm. Scientists are seeing deformed amphibians and fish downstream of conventional farms, for example.

Natural practices heal the soil. Good soil goes far beyond just dirt! Soil is a rich mixture of minerals, air, water, roots, decaying plants, fungi, earthworms, bacteria, and microorganisms. An acre of healthy topsoil can contain 900 pounds of worms, 2,400 pounds of fungi, 1,500 pounds of bacteria, 133 pounds of protozoa, and 890 pounds of arthropods and algae.

When you bring your full compost bins back to our farm, you contribute to the happiness of our large, thriving subterranean community. By continually working in nutrient-rich compost into the land, we actually enhance and preserve it so that future generations can grow food on it too. Native Americans have a saying that the land is not ours; we only borrow it from our children.

When did society get away from natural farming? Find out in the next installment.

Find Canticle Farm vegetables at these times and places

- The Farm Stand located at the farm is open during distribution on Tuesdays and Fridays from 2 pm to 6:30 pm.
- Canticle Farm is part of the Olean Farmers' Market located at the JCC downtown parking lot Saturdays from 8 am to 2 pm.

Coming Events

- **Saturday, July 18** – Garlic Harvest at Canticle Farm begins 10 a.m.
- **Monday, July 20** – "Radical Amazement" book-study, at 7-8 pm at Canticle Farm (during this time there will be sharing on the entire book)
- **Sunday, July 26** – Canticle Farm at the Taste of Olean, JCC Campus
- **Monday, July 27** – Ice Cream Social and Kid's Crafts, Canticle Farm