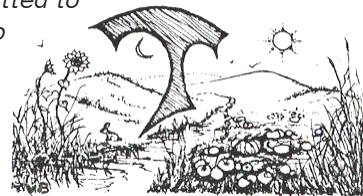


the
Canticle Farm
newsletter

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 20, 2009

week # 6 of 18

How's it **GROWIN'?**

with Mark Printz

by Ronni Gronemeier

Feast or famine? When it comes to the potato crop, time will tell.

At this time signs of a bumper crop of potatoes is the tale the fields are telling. This year about 1,300 pounds of potato seed, small 1½ to 2-inch diameter potatoes, went into the ground at Canticle Farm. 400 pounds of that came from the farm's own seed stock from last year's crop.

It's been two years running that the farm has been able to use some of its own potato seed stock. This is a great cost-cutter. Propagating potatoes is expensive. Of the roughly \$1,900 spent on all seed for Canticle Farm, \$300 of that typically goes to potatoes alone.

This year's crop may produce potatoes in abundance and might be the best year yet for seed stock. That's provided that the crop in the field doesn't get sick.

You may have heard that Late Blight is set to strike the Northeast and East Coast. This is the same disease responsible for the Irish Potato Famine in the 1840s. If it shows up at Canticle Farm it stands to kill off this year's potato and tomato crop, taking with it next year's potato seed stock.

Recipe ROUNDUP

by Rhonda Berman

Howdy Partner!

Have you noticed that I like to talk about Canticle Farm produce?

Part of my job is to answer questions about the vegetables during distribution hours. Did you know that scallions or onions can be chopped and frozen for later use? No other processing is required. And did you know that radishes with blue cheese is a great combination? Both of these tips were given to me by other shareholders.

I have learned many tips and tricks from other shareholders and customers over the years. I love to compare notes and hints and have exchanged many recipes.

I encourage you to ask me any questions that you may have and share with me your experiences

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This disease hits the northeast from time to time. But this year its reach is extended, helped by the unknowing distribution through sales of sick plants at large retail chain stores in many states.

So far, there have been sightings in Albany, the Hudson Valley and Rochester. But an expert from Cornell Cooperative Extension recently took a walk through the Canticle Farm fields and found no sign of the disease.

Should Canticle get a case of Late Blight there is a cure, but the cost of such an attempt to save the crops would have to be considered. A copper spray, typically used in organic grape production, has proved effective against Late Blight and this spray is in keeping with natural farming practices.

But in the meantime, the swath of land on the far side of the farm, in front of the reflection area has been abloom with plentiful purple and white flowers that boast big beautiful potato plants.

And the Farm's older tractor with hilling disk in tow has done its part to give the vegetables an edge. This equipment has pushed piles of dirt up onto the lower part of the potato plants. This mounding of soil gives the tubers more room to grow and is a natural way to increase the crop yield.

Walk or drive over to the other side of the Farm and see the potato patch. Current signs say we should see a feast of potatoes; but we'll have to wait to see.

Farming Naturally - Better for the Earth!

by Sheryl Anderson

This is the third installment in a series.

Monocrop farm production produces unnaturally high quantities of crops. This practice holds down the cost of the crop, but the environment pays a hefty price.

Industrial farming lacks a healthy balance. What's more, this unhealthy cycle seems to feed on itself.

In the drive to produce more grain, land is used continuously. Crops are not rotated in a way that replenishes the soil. Excessive plowing contributes to erosion. And domestic cropland loses seven tons of precious topsoil per acre each year. This is a serious problem because eroded soil contains 3 times more nutrients and 2-5 times more organic matter than what's left behind.

(continued on next page)

(Recipes, continued from page 1)

with our beautiful, delicious produce. Please pass along any of your favorite recipes. I love to try out different ways of using our veggies.

Initially, the only things I did with cabbage was to make traditional coleslaw or stuffed cabbage leaves. In 2005, a shareholder submitted this Hot Pot Cabbage recipe to the newsletter. I am reprinting this recipe in hopes that it will expand your repertoire of cabbage uses.

At the time, this was a different recipe for me and I welcomed the variety. I have made this recipe many times over the years. I think you will enjoy this Canticle Farm classic recipe as much as I do!

Hot Pot Cabbage

Submitted by shareholder Joan Haynes

- 1 lb cabbage (about 4 cups chopped)
- 2 cloves garlic
- 1 medium sized onion (about 1/2 cup chopped)
- 2 tsp vegetable oil
- 1/2 cup water
- 1/2 cup vinegar
- 1/2 cup sugar
- 1 3/4 cups diced tomatoes
- 1 tsp mustard
- 1/2 tsp salt
- 1/2 tsp pepper
- 1/4 tsp hot sauce

Wash and chop cabbage. Mince garlic. Chop onion.

Heat oil in large pot on medium heat. Add garlic and onion. Saute 3 to 5 minutes. Add remaining ingredients, except cabbage.

Increase heat and bring mixture to a boil. Stir in cabbage and cook 5 to 10 minutes.

Variations: Cooked meatballs or Italian sausage can be added before serving.

For more recipes visit www.canticlefarm.org.
Until next week, eat well, live well!

Ice Cream Social and Workshop

An ice cream social starts the activities at Canticle Farm on Monday, July 27 at 6:30.

Sundaes are \$3 and for children age 10 and under \$2.

Then at 6:45 it's Nature Printing presented by local artist and educator Joan Pingitore. Spaces are limited so call the Canticle Farm Office (373-0200) today to register. Workshop fee is \$3 per person.

THANK YOU!

- Thank you, to Sister Anne who is back. Best place to catch up with her is at the Farm Stand where she'll be tending the store.
- Thank you, to Molly Wagner who's finishing up her second season with us. She has been a big help this season.
- Thank you, to the St. Bonaventure University HEOP (Higher Education Opportunity Program) group who took time to weed onions.

(Farming Naturally, continued from page 1)

Monocropping tripled US farm production since 1950. However, its lack of natural diversity results in the depletion of minerals and nutrients from the soil. Such a system uses ever-increasing amounts of chemical fertilizers to replace nutrients. These are primarily nitrogen, phosphorus, and potassium which lack the effectiveness of natural fertility sources.

In 2005, 22 million tons of these fertilizers were applied to conventional US farms alone. In the short run they provide just a shot in the arm, supplying only what's necessary for one year's crop. Over the long term, their use depletes the soil rendering it infertile and it's then abandoned.

Did you know that more energy is now used to make synthetic fertilizers than to till, cultivate, and harvest all of our crops?

But it's not just human consumption that pushes American cropland to produce extraordinary amounts. 66% of grain is grown for livestock feed. Factory farms consume massive quantities of feed crops.

Consider: the beef industry raises more than 30 million cows in feedlots each year, and each cow eats roughly 30 pounds of food each day ... that's a lot of corn! Moreover, a corn diet is unnatural for grass-eating ruminant cows.

To the contrary, the biodiversity of small-scale farms represents the exact opposite of hundred-thousands of acres of monocultured commodity crops such as corn and soybeans, which are intensively farmed by industrial agribusiness.

In a healthy farm system, agriculture works in harmony with the natural environment. Cows are allowed to engage in natural behavior to graze the land, then replenish the soil. As farmers take from the land, they make sure to give back.

What makes up about 70% of the Earth's surface? What makes up about 70% of the human body? In our country, conventional agriculture is responsible for about 70% of the pollution associated with it. Find out what it is in the next installment.

Wish List

If you have any or 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!

- Totes for storage and distribution.
- Heavy-duty garden scissors for trimming in the wash station.
- Pens for the sign-in sheet table.

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.