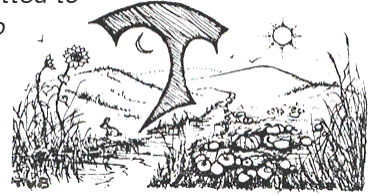


the
Canticle Farm
newsletter

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 August 17, 2009

week # 10 of 18

How's it GROWIN'?

with Mark Printz

by Ronni Gronemeier

Weather plays so many roles during a farm season. Currently the weather is playing the part of carrier of bad news.

It's hard to escape conversation about this summer's weather. And it's no different at Canticle Farm. Let's talk about what the weather has been up to. We'll single out the winds that did more than down trees in the area.

The wind literally served as a carrier of disease. With the wind came Late Blight. We've talked about it before. It's the plant plague that periodically strikes tomatoes and potatoes and was best known for causing the Irish Potato Famine.

This summer the disease is wide spread. Most Eastern states are dealing with a devastated tomato crop. The easiest way to monitor the wide-scale impact, watch tomato prices. They'll probably sky rocket.

But closer to home . . .

As of this writing, the potatoes are disease-free. But the tomatoes are not well. Late Blight, the unwelcomed visitor, has arrived at Canticle Farm.

When there's wind around Late Blight spores become travelers and journey from garden to garden like tourists racing off to their next destination. What arrived overnight, turning up on a dozen plants, by the next day had spread to colonies of tomatoes throughout the farm. Even the tomatoes in the high tunnel were hit.

Typically the first signs of Late Blight, a black oil-spot-looking thing, appear on a few plants. Within 48 to 72 hours the entire patch is reduced to black mush. That's the whole plant: fruit, stalks and leaves.

Recipe ROUNDUP

by Rhonda Berman

Howdy Partner!

This week I am sharing a recipe submitted by a shareholder, Reverend Kristen Allen.

Reverend Allen says, "I am not a big lover of beets, but I love this! You can make it with beet greens instead; just don't cook it as long. It is good hot or cold and the leftovers taste even better."

Continue to page two for her recipe.

(continued on next page)

There's only one strategy. Pick any tomato that has started to blush and hope it will ripen off the vine.

You've probably done the math by now and have figured out that there may not be any tomatoes for distribution this year.

Given that most of the tomatoes are still green, it's hard to think of an equation that would add up to 260 pounds of ripened tomatoes. That's the amount of tomato harvest needed to get 200 shareholders through one week of distribution.

The few pounds of tomatoes salvaged may appear at the Farm Stand. It seems the only fair way to ration the minuscule crop.

It's like pulling off a well-adhered band-aid. It hurts.

If there is good news, it's that the fields should be healed by next season. The winter cold should kill off the disease. Next year's tomatoes will have the chance to grow with youthful abandon, untarnished by the disease's demise of this summer's crop.

What's New?

Cutting cover crops at the farm just got easier thanks to a new piece of equipment. And when the job's done, the result will be a better quality bed for the next planting.

The flail mower, purchased with grant money from the Franciscan Sisters of Allegany, is affectionately known as Mark's new toy. But more than the fun of having this new addition trailing behind the tractor, this equipment boasts brawn and brilliance. It's the perfect piece of equipment to cut cover crops for incorporation into the soil.

A flail mower is known to be able to cut through stalks with an inch diameter. So it will make quick work of the sturdy oat stalks and viney pea plants that are part of the cover-crop mix used at the farm.

Sustainable, natural produce production relies on cover crops to help ward off weeds, pests and diseases. These preferred plants also play a role in managing soil fertility and quality.

But to be a benefit to the soil nutritionally these plants, once cut, need to stay in the bed were they can break down and act as fertilizer. And for best results they need to be distributed evenly over the entire bed.

(continued on next page)

(Recipes, continued from page 1)

Warm Beet Vinaigrette

- 2 tablespoons olive oil
- 1 onion, chopped
- 1 pound beets, peeled and sliced very thin (about three to four medium-sized beets)
- 1 clove garlic (or garlic scapes), minced
- Salt & pepper to taste
- 2 tablespoons red wine vinegar
- 1½ teaspoons Dijon mustard

Heat olive oil in a skillet over medium-low heat. Add onions and cook until golden.

Add beets, garlic, salt and pepper; stir well. Cover and cook about 25 minutes, until very tender. Remove from heat; add vinegar and mustard. Stir well and eat.

I tried this recipe and loved it. My husband, who is not a big fan of beets, also loved it.

I had beets with the greens still attached. So I used both parts in the recipe. I did not peel the beets. I just cut the crown and root off. And I added just a little orange juice in the skillet because it seemed dry.

Thanks Reverend Allen for sharing a great recipe! For more recipes please visit our Web site, www.canticlefarm.org

Until next week, eat well, live well!

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 2pm – 6:30pm.

- Canticle Farm is part of the Olean Farmers' Market located at the JCC downtown parking lot Saturdays 8am – 2pm.

“Despite the gardener’s best intentions, Nature will improvise.”

- Michael P. Garafalo

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!

- 28-quart clear, Sterilite storage containers. These are the shallow ones that would fit under a bed.
- Garden gloves.

(Mark's new toy, continued from page 1)

It's the flail mower and its unique ability to cut vegetation, which would bind and bunch in other mowers, and then evenly disperse the cuttings that makes this tool such a find.

How does it happen?

Flails are free-swinging, Y-shaped, knife-like pieces of metal that rotate around a drum at high speed. It's this action that beats and breaks plants. Because the drum extends the full length of the covered mower, these flails break off the plant and put it down close to where it was growing. In short time this layer of cuttings becomes sheet compost that's ready to be turned under.

When it comes to cutting cover crops, as well as what's left after harvest of cauliflower and lettuce plants, nothing works as well as a flail mower.

So take a moment to check out the new helper at the farm. Mark would be happy to show you his star performer.

Volunteer Opportunities This Week

Mark has an ongoing need for *Harvest Helpers* weekdays.

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

This week you could try your hand at:

- Harvest helping.

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

THANK YOU!

- Thank you, to the Franciscan Sisters of Allegany for the grant money that purchased the flail mower. Read all about the flail mower in *What's New?*

- Thank you, to shareholders Arlene and Don Frisbee for going above and beyond by volunteering many extra hours of harvesting and field work.

- Thank you, to Mike Williams who has made many contributions over the years. Whether serving on the Farm Operations Committee or coordinating St. Bonaventure Journey Project activities at the farm, Mike has left his mark. He will be missed, but we wish him all the best as he leaves the area for a position at Thiel College.

Coming Events

- **September 19 & 20:** Canticle Farm at the Cuba Garlic Festival – Block Barn, Cuba, NY.

Available Farm Shares:

Fall Shares – Large and small