

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 24, 2009

week # 11 of 18

## How's it **GROWIN'?**

with Mark Printz

by **Ronni Gronemeier**

The onions pulled off a comeback. When it was all over they had doubled the anticipated score against their worthy opponent, Downey Mildew.

Recap. The most promising onion crop in Canticle Farm history met an adversary that threatened to wipe out this root crop.

But the onions held on. When the clock ran out, it was time to harvest. Onion pulling revealed roots that had sized up better than believed and the amount of market-ready produce was double the expectation.

So the onions rallied. The next test will be how they'll stand up to storage.

Storage doesn't involve an outside opponent, but rather depends on the strength of the onion itself to ward off decomposition.

Time will tell. Meanwhile the onions are drying.

To remove the diseased plant-part, the top leaves have been cut back to more of a stub. Usually the whole onion stays intact during the curing process, but the hope is that over the next several weeks they will still dry out well. Successful drying produces a good seal that forms at the crown end of the onion. This is important to good storability.

While the onions dry you've got a couple of weeks to take a look. A quick walk through the greenhouse gives you a chance to see this season's onions.

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## Recipe ROUNDUP

by **Rhonda Berman**

Howdy Partner!

Do you ever wonder what to do with those "oddball" produce items? For a new take on an old tradition, this week we turn to a guest columnist.

Here is a suggestion from Kris Later. Kris is a longtime Canticle Farm shareholder and is currently serving as Chair of the Board of Directors.

*Following is an article and recipe from Kris Later.*

Do you ever look at something in your Canticle Farm bag and wonder, "What am I going to make from this that everyone will enjoy?" Here's a recipe idea, Mashed Potatoes with Mix-ins.

It's traditional mashed potatoes with the bonus of added flavor and nutrition from added ingredients.

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## Farm Talk: What's a CSA and what's a PYO?

Come to the CSA and PYO. Looks like a coded phrase kids might text message. But CSA and PYO are short for a couple of key things at the Canticle Farm.

CSA stands for community supported agriculture.

Beginning as a grass-roots idea, the concept has mushroomed. It started simple. It started a revolution.

The founders of the movement aren't names you'd know. They were just regular people, a group of women, who started thinking about what they saw happening in their ordinary lives.

It was Japan in the 60s, but it could have been anywhere. Because the questions they had about their community could have been asked in a city in Europe or America.

They were thinking about food. Chewing on ideas regarding increased pesticide use, over-processed food, the long distances their food traveled and the decreasing number of rural farms.

They came up with a plan. It became the blueprint for a practice that would catch on worldwide. Their idea? To pre-pay a farmer for a season's produce yield.

By combining their buying power they found a local farmer willing to grow and supply produce for several families. The farmer knew up front that he would receive a fair price for his yield and the families knew their farmer and his farming practices.

The idea spread to the United States. In 1986 the first CSA opened in Massachusetts.

A CSA took root on 10.5 acres on the South Nine Mile Road in Allegany. In 2001 Canticle Farm, a CSA, was founded by the Franciscan Sisters of Allegany.

Next acronym.

PYO means pick your own, but it also means more bang for your buck at Canticle Farm.

You can add an additional thirty- to forty-dollar value to your share over the course of the season if you take advantage of PYO. It's an opportunity to pick additional vegetables.

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(Recipes, continued from page 1)

I have tried all of the below in different combinations, but feel free to experiment to your taste.

If anyone at your dinner table is turned off by colors that the mix-ins impart, for example a pink or green color to typically light-colored potatoes, then avoid the brightly-colored mix-ins. Dark, leafy greens in particular give off a lot of color, but they also add nutrition.

### Mashed Potatoes with Mix-ins

Use any combination of items from the following categories:

- Potatoes: white, red, yellow, sweet.
- Mix-ins: green cabbage, Swiss chard stems, celery root/celeriac, garlic cloves, garlic scapes, carrots, any leafy greens, broccoli (stems and florets), cauliflower (stems and florets), leeks (white and light green parts), turnips, rutabagas, scallions, shallots.
- Flavorings: herbs, spices, salt, pepper.
- Crowd-pleasers: grated cheese, sour cream, butter, cooked and crumbled bacon

Directions:

Cut the potatoes in one-inch pieces and boil in a large pot until tender, about 15-20 minutes. For better nutrition and a huge time saver, leave the peels on.

Cut up mix-ins. Boil separately until tender. For extra flavor, use broth instead of water for boiling.

Drain the potatoes and mix-ins. If desired, save the boiled water for your next batch of soup.

Combine the potatoes and mix-ins in the pot used to boil the potatoes. Mash well, adding milk if needed to achieve the right consistency.

Add the flavorings and crowd-pleasers.

Heat on medium-low, stirring until heated through. Serve immediately.

Alternatively, spoon into a buttered casserole dish, top with a mixture of melted butter and breadcrumbs. Bake at 400 degrees until the topping is golden brown, approximately 20 minutes. Serve hot.

Kris, thanks for sharing this recipe with us. For more recipes visit [www.canticlefarm.org](http://www.canticlefarm.org)  
Until next week, eat well, live well!

## 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!

- Rain jackets and/or pants.
- Kneeling pads.
- Towels (anything from kitchen towels to bath towels).

## Coming Events

- **September 19 & 20:** Canticle Farm at the Cuba Garlic Festival – Block Barn, Cuba, NY.
- **September 27:** Heavenly Harvest Celebration Day – Canticle Farm.

(Farm Talk, continued from page 1)

Because, there's a limit to how much time farm hands can devote to harvesting a given crop, the labor-intensive ones open up an opportunity. An example? Beans.

Bean picking takes much more time than harvesting heads of lettuce. So when beans are plenty they're sure to show up as a PYO item on a distribution-day, bulletin board in the barn. Here's where you come in. Head towards the fields in the front and follow the PYO signs to the self-pick areas.

If it's not convenient to pick on distribution day you can pick any time that week through Sunday. To ensure enough for all please pick only up to the maximum amount listed on the PYO board.

Enjoy PYO at your CSA!

## 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.
- Bean picking. This is a late-morning, early-afternoon activity because it needs to be dry.

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

**"No occupation is so delightful to me as the culture of the earth, and no culture comparable to that of the garden."**

- Thomas Jefferson

## THANK YOU!

- Thank you, to Molly Wagner and Joanna Abraham for their help and dedication this season. We wish you well as you wrap up your time with us and head off to college.

## It's Heavenly Harvest Celebration Day

**Sunday, September 27, 2009**

**from 1 to 4 p.m.**

Join us at Canticle Farm for our major fundraiser for the year. This event is open to the public. Pre-sale tickets will be available at the farm in coming weeks.

Activities will include: luncheon, raffle, auction, entertainment for all ages, labyrinth walk, and a zucchini/summer squash casserole contest. More details to come.