

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 September 28, 2009

week # 16 of 18

How's it **GROWIN'?**

with Mark Printz

by **Ronni Gronemeier**

Broccoli is back.

Heads of broccoli, technically the flower of the plant, have looked beautiful on the distribution table. But these eye-catching bouquets come with a special story this year.

When 90 percent of last year's broccoli was lost because of the insect invasion of the Swede Midge, it was apparent that something needed to be done.

The prescription to get rid of this bug recommends that a farm stop raising broccoli for two years. Time is the cure because this persistent pest has four to five overlapping life cycles a season. Moreover, it winters over waiting to start up again in early spring.

Mark didn't want to settle for two seasons without broccoli so he decided to try tactics aimed at breaking down the foundation of the Swede Midge's plan of procreation.

How does it reproduce? The eggs are laid on the broccoli flower. Hatching produces larvae that eat and grow until it's time to drop to the ground. Then they burrow just below the surface, usually no more than a centimeter, where they make a cocoon. In short order the emerging adult flies from the ground, finds the broccoli plant and a mate, and the cycle starts again.

With generations turning over every two to three weeks it's virtually impossible to stop the Swede Midge once it starts in the spring. If the cycle could be stopped it was going to have to involve disrupting the fly's plan to winter over.

Somehow, the season's last generation of Swede Midge seems to know winter is coming and literally, cocoons for the winter.

Recipe **ROUNDUP**

by **Rhonda Berman**

Howdy Partner!

The other week I brought home my share and thought to myself, "What can I make this week with all these vegetables?" With a flash of inspiration I combined a few of my Canticle Farm veggies with some items out of my pantry and refrigerator. The recipe that follows is what was produced.

I hope you enjoy this recipe as much as I did.

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The plan? Do everything possible to disturb the habitat.

Since the larvae drop to the ground by the plant, the farm sent in the first responders. It was the farm equipment that was initially called to action last fall in the Swede Midge-infested broccoli fields. The broccoli plants were chopped up in their place, then the beds were mowed and finally the ground was subject to a deep heavy-duty tilling.

Next up, a move for the fields themselves. Since these flyers aren't very good at flying, they can't travel much distance. The further away the broccoli could be from last year's patch the better. You may recall finding broccoli in the far front corner last year. This year it's up on the back hill.

With only 10 acres it's hard to get away from something. But between the move and the soil-shifting of last year's beds, there has been success. 80 to 90 percent of the broccoli has survived and thrived.

There have been sightings of the Swede Midge at the farm this season. But it's been isolated and seen mostly in the Brussels sprouts. This bug that likes anything from the Brassicaceae family is being watched closely.

In the mean time, hike up the hill to find the broccoli.

What Would Stella Do?

Stella plays a big part at the farm. Stella's a nickname for Stella Natura, biodynamic planting that centers on moon phases.

Science accepts that the moon affects tides, but did you know there seems to be evidence that the moon affects plant growth too. Proof is mounting with every passing season at Canticle Farm.

It all started when Mark tried to disprove something he'd stumbled across.

Found. A calendar that guided planting by listening to what the moon says. Enter skepticism. How can the moon make a difference?

What began as a lark, surprisingly seemed to work, time after time.

For the last four or five years Mark has planned for the seed or seedling to hit the soil after consulting this calendar of information. He still doesn't know how it works, but is comfort-

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(Recipes, continued from page 1)

Italian Mixed Vegetable Pasta Salad

- ½ package whole-wheat pasta shells
- 1 medium sized head of broccoli, chopped (stalks and florets)
- 4 carrots, chopped
- 1 sweet pepper, chopped
- 1 15.5 ounce can chic peas, drained and rinsed
- ¼ cup chopped black olives
- 3 tablespoons sliced banana pepper rings
- ½ cup chopped provolone cheese
- 1 tablespoon crushed dried oregano
- 1 cup Italian dressing (your favorite store brand or homemade)

Cook pasta according to package directions. During the last three minutes of cooking time, add chopped broccoli and carrots to pot. Drain and let cool.

Meanwhile in a large bowl, mix together the sweet pepper, chic peas, black olives, banana pepper rings and cheese. Then fold in pasta, broccoli and carrots. And sprinkle with oregano.

Pour Italian dressing over salad ingredients and mix well. Chill completely, then serve.

Variation: If desired, add some chopped deli ham and salami.

For other recipes, including Broccoli and Red Pepper Salad, Carrot-Potato Salad, and German Potato Salad, visit www.canticlefarm.org.

Until next week, eat well, live well!

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:

- Bean picking. Beans are labor-intensive crops and will be picked until the first frost. There are currently more beans than hands available to harvest them.
- Popping garlic.
- Planting garlic.

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 everyone who helped with bean picking. You make a big difference on distribution day!

For the Heavenly Harvest:

- Thank you, to all of the volunteers who gave of their time in many ways.
- Thank you, to all who donated mugs, pop ups and auction items.
- Thank you, to The ReHAbilitation Center for providing parking and restrooms.

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able settling for not knowing. If seeing is believing, then it's hard to argue the point of disregarding lunar information.

It's an out-of-this-world idea that's really down to Earth. It seems that the moon signals an optimal time for seeding, depending on what you're interested in harvesting. It simply starts with determining if you are trying to produce a leaf, root, fruit or flower. A carrot is a root and would be planted when it's a root-seeding period. Cauliflower is a flower whose seeds would go in the ground during the flower-seeding stage. There are also dead times when you don't want to plant. There's a time to transplant too.

The period of days for a leaf and root, aren't necessarily equal and their planting cycles don't have the same duration either. One window of opportunity to plant may be two to three days and another may be two to three hours in a given day.

It looks like hodge-podge on a calendar. But because the farm harvests all four categories there's an ebb and flow when a farmer works this way throughout the fields. Some kind of rhythm emerges. Maybe it's like the notes played by two different instruments in the same song. The plantings of different crops seem to work together over time and space to create a harmony that a farmer is able to keep stride with.

Of course a farmer has to consider more than the moon. Weather is another major factor that has a say on when it's possible to plant. Sometimes a crop has to go in when it has to go in, no matter what Stella says. It's notable that typically the vegetables that go in the ground without Stella's OK, just don't do as well.

This year 80 to 90 percent of the crops were planted according to Stella's advice. These crop yields consistently out perform others, which adds a whole new meaning to the term harvest moon.

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!

- Storage totes.
- Well-functioning portable, electric heaters to take the edge off the colder temperatures in the storage-crop areas.

"One of the most delightful things about a garden is the anticipation it provides."

- W.E. Johns

Coming Events

- **Tuesday, October 20** - fall share distribution begins at Canticle Farm.