



THE RED HILL ROOT



The Seasonal Weekly Newsletter for Members of the Red Hill Farm CSA, Aston, PA

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Farm and Member News



Sister Josandra—Josandra was kind enough to send a short bio; though she didn't have a digital photo of herself, she promised she'd wear a name tag on pickup days so you can say hello! A Philadelphia native, Josandra has long belonged to the Bernardine Franciscan Order (see Mira's last report, [here](#), for more on the Order). For 18 years she worked at Sacred Heart Hospital in Chester, PA,



and has many fond memories of the area. For the last 8 years, she's been stationed in Reading, PA, ministering in the nursing home of her Order as the Sisters' Care Coordinator

[at St. Joseph's Villa on the campus of Alvernia College, a Franciscan school, rather like Neumann, offering undergrad and graduate degrees]. Josandra's developing interest in the environment and care of Mother Earth is what led her to volunteer for the next 4 months at Red Hill Farm. She's looking forward to meeting you all! Introduce yourself! (Above, *St. Joseph's Villa*, see [here](#))

Learn to Preserve Your Harvest—Sally Hammerman, of *In My Back Yard CSA at Misty Hollow*, in Westtown, PA (see [here](#)), is offering a workshop on **19th July, from 10 am to 1 pm**. Called "**Thinking Ahead—Wintering Over; Preserving Your Harvest & Flavors of Summer**," the workshop includes making berry jams, sun-drying tomatoes (see left; [photo credit](#)), drying flowers and herbs, and pickling and other preservation methods. For info, call or email Sally right away! (Red Hill folks get a discount!) 610-455-0981 or IMBYmistyhollow@mac.com.



News from the Furrow

Mira Kilpatrick's Report



"We've been pretty busy; hence not too much to report. The rain has been much needed, so we've been happy for

that. We've been weeding like crazy, and many of the fields are starting to look pretty good these days.

Some members might have been wondering what we were up to on [this past] Tuesday pick-up. We were using a backpack sprayer to spray the curcubit field, which left the plants with a bright, white powder sheen. This is a safe organic spray called **Surround**; it's a kaolin clay product that doesn't even kill the pests. The gritty powder simply sticks to insects' wings, legs, and mouth parts, and makes unwanted bugs uncomfortable enough to pick up and move somewhere else to eat or lay eggs."

[From Melinda: if you have a garden and want to try *Surround At Home Crop Protectant*, it's available on *Gardens Alive* website, [here](#). This site also hosts Mike McGrath's wonderful NPR radio show, "*You Bet Your Garden*"; see [here](#) for an archive of topics he addresses.]

Tidbits—Food News



There's a wonderful article in this week's *NYT Magazine* about the growing number of women farmers, especially here in the Northeast, where 20,000 farms are woman-run



Left: Barbara Shinn; right: Nova Kim

(including ours!). Diane St. Clair produces organic butter from grass-fed cows in Vermont; Barbara Shinn runs a vineyard; Nova Kim markets wildcrafted (ethically gathered) foods to chefs in Vermont. Other women specialize in Italian, Asian, and southern U.S. crops; and rare-heritage chickens, sheep, cattle, and pigs. And many of the women entered farming from completely unrelated fields! For the article, with bios and photos, see [here](#).



PASA's Janet Chrzan forwarded info about a great new website concerning the science of organic agriculture! While many claims are made concerning organics, not too



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much peer-reviewed scientific research exists as yet to explore the facts of organic growing. This site aims to fill that void, currently citing more than 70 peer-reviewed, scientific investigations of various dimensions of organic food and agriculture. For the website, see [here](#). (For a more political, critical take on various organic issues, see the Organic Consumers' Association, [here](#).)



The BBC ran a fascinating article on *urban farming and urban renewal in Detroit*, using land that otherwise lies waste to produce delicious food. I know the idea isn't



new, but this essay is written in the context of the world's food crises, and what role such projects might play. It's healthy socially too—many gardeners come to the farms from a local prison's rehab

program, and the sheriff's liason says *crime figures have dropped anywhere people get involved with urban farming. Take a note, Mayor Nutter!* See [here](#) for more.



Summer Squash, Pea, & Red Onion Salad w/ Feta

- ❖ 1 small red onion, thinly sliced
- ❖ 1 tbsp fresh lemon juice
- ❖ 1 lb peas in pods [or substitute a cup or a bit more of shelled fresh or frozen peas]
- ❖ 2 summer squash or zucchini, trimmed
- ❖ ¼ tsp kosher salt & fresh-ground pepper
- ❖ 3 tbsp olive oil
- ❖ 2 oz feta cheese [or chopped, spiced tofu]
- ❖ 1 tbsp chopped fresh basil

In small bowl, combine onion w/ lemon juice. Set aside. Bring small pot of water to boil, then blanch shelled peas till tender, ~2-3 min. Drain & rinse under cold water. Using sharp knife or mandoline, slice squash very thinly. Put in a bowl w/ peas. Using fork, scatter onions over all, reserving lemon juice. Whisk salt into lemon juice, then whisk both into oil. Drizzle on salad. Add feta, basil, pepper, & toss gently. 3-4 servings. (*NYT*, 9 July 2008)

Refrigerator Pickles—This is from the OSF Sisters' website; recipe is for 4 qts, but can be halved or quartered

- ❖ 4 lbs veggies (cukes, beans, broccoli, peppers)
- ❖ pickling spices (see below)
- ❖ 1 qt vinegar
- ❖ ¼ - ½ cup vinegar (white vinegar is ok)

This is for dill pickles. Veggies can be mixed from the varieties above, or experiment w/ adding other solid veggies (kohlrabi & carrots are nice, in strips or matchsticks, or sliced thin). Slice cukes; beans can be left whole. Make sure everything is washed well. Pack veggies loosely into jars. Add to each jar the pickling spices: ½ tsp mustard seed, 2 cloves peeled garlic, ½ tsp whole peppercorns, 3 bay leaves, a bunch of dill weed if you have it—or you can put in 1 tbsp pickling spice from the store in each jar. Mix ~1 qt water & 1 qt vinegar & the salt; pour over the veggies in the jars. Put on the lids & place jars on bottom shelf of fridge. Let them develop flavor for a few days, then eat! (These also could be canned in a boiling water bath, following general canning directions, then kept in a cool place.) ([source](#))

Rolled Kale w/ Feta & Olives—like stuffed grape leaves

- ❖ about 8 large kale leaves, washed
- ❖ 8 oz feta cheese [see vegan options, below]
- ❖ 2 tbsp olive oil & more for drizzling
- ❖ 2 tbsp minced garlic
- ❖ salt & fresh-ground black pepper
- ❖ ½ cup dry white wine, veggie stock, or water
- ❖ 1 cup chopped ripe tomato
- ❖ ½ cup chopped, pitted kalamata olives
- ❖ 1 small red onion, minced, for garnish

Cut each half of kale leaves off stem; reserve stems. Keep leaves intact so you have at least a dozen long, wide kale ribbons. Rough-chop stems. Cut feta into sticks 2" long & as narrow as possible w/o breaking. Put 2 tbsp oil in large skillet on medium-high. Add garlic & chopped stems & sprinkle w/ salt/pepper. Cook, stirring a bit, till kale begins to soften (~5 min). Remove from heat. Lay out a strip of kale, put a piece of cheese on the end, & roll up loosely. Put in pan atop garlic & stems. Repeat till all kale strips are used, nestling rolls next to each other in single layer. Pour wine over all & top w/ tomatoes & olives. Return pan to medium-high heat. When liquid starts to boil, cover tightly & lower heat to medium-low. Cook, undisturbed, for 10 min; check to see that kale is tender & cheese is hot. Garnish w/ onion & black pepper. To serve, scoop rolls out & top w/ bits of the veggies & juice. Pass more oil at table for drizzling. **Vegan Alternative:** Cut 1 lb tofu (baked, pressed, or prefried) into sticks & use to fill kale. Use neutral oil (grapeseed or corn). Substitute sake or mirin for wine. Use fermented black beans instead of olives. Proceed w/ recipe & garnish w/ sliced scallion, passing soy sauce & dark sesame oil to garnish. (Mark Bittman, *How to Cook Everything Vegetarian*, 2007)