



# THE RED HILL ROOT



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

Volume V, Number 4

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## Farm and Member News (Tons of It!)



### VERY IMPORTANT—PICKUP TIMES & DATES!!—

This year the *first pickups will be Tuesday 3<sup>rd</sup> June* and *Friday 6<sup>th</sup> June*. Moreover, the timing is different from last year. *All pickups will start at 1:00 pm* (rather than 12 noon, as last year) but will extend until 7:00 pm, the same as last year. Also, we ask you to be certain to come on the day you chose at the members' meeting in February. If you can't remember what day you chose, email Aby at [awright@osfphila.org](mailto:awright@osfphila.org). You're free to come to the Farm prior to 1:00 pm to sit in the Children's Garden or otherwise enjoy the view, but please don't go into the Barn or to the U-Pick areas until 1:00 pm. Also, remember not to park on the Farm road—it's against Aston fire codes and could get us in trouble!!! Thanks!



*Synchronize your watches, members, for the new 1:00 to 7:00 pickups!*

**Farm Orientation and Remaining Payments**—All new members **MUST** have a Farm orientation at their first pickup!!! And **all members who still have money due on their share(s) must pay the remainder at the first pickup**. We're set up to accept checks and cash (sorry we can't do credit or debit!) Someone will be sitting at a table in the Barn for payments, and experienced Farm members will be there to do the orientations, which should take about 30 minutes—please do allow time for this! Thanks! **Also, if you're sharing a share, all of the shareholders must have an orientation**. This is really very important, so that we're all "on the same page" information-wise. Finally, **all members (new and old) should pick up a new Red Hill Farm handbook**, which explains new policies, new contact information, and so forth. They'll be in the Barn.



on schedule! **"It takes a village"!!!**

**A Big Thanks!!**—Many thanks to all members who stepped up their hours over the past weeks to help new farmers Aby and Mira, and seasonal employees Marcy and Emily, to stay

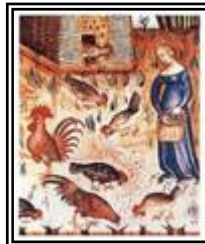
**Crops to Anticipate**—Aby, Mira, and "the gang" are hoping to offer us the following spring veggies at first pickup: **arugula, broccoli raab, chard, pea shoots, radishes, and turnips!** Plus, some of the U-pick perennial herbs are ready (but please don't pick those without a label—they're too young yet). Wow, all that nutrition—and fabulous taste! Now you can start planning some meals! Also see *Root*, below, for sample recipes. (**Note from Melinda: I'd love it if anyone wants to send me their favorite recipes for various crops, for publication in the Root—email me at [m.boydp@gmail.com](mailto:m.boydp@gmail.com)**)



Pea Shoots, the choice leaves & tendrils of pea plants

**Preparations**—The high tunnels are covered with plastic and filled with the **tomatoes, cucumbers, basil, and scallions** that will comprise our later harvests. Yum! However, germination on spring crops has been slow because of the weeks of drought earlier in the spring; although, with the recent rains, we're now coming along nicely! (Remember, like all farms, Red Hill is at the mercy of the weather and the critters.)

**Off-Farm Products**—Here are the start dates for the various off-farm products. **Chicken & eggs** will come every two weeks on Tuesdays, beginning 10<sup>th</sup> June. If you're a Friday person, both the chicken & eggs will keep fresh in our refrigerator until you pick them up on Friday of the same week. **Cheese** shares are once a month, June thru October on Thursdays, beginning 12<sup>th</sup> June. **Milk** is delivered every two weeks, June thru October, also starting 12<sup>th</sup> June. **Corn** will begin mid-July; as soon as we hear from the grower, we'll post a notice on the bulletin board in the Barn. And, as a special treat (you did not have to preorder this), we'll have **fresh asparagus** for sale in the Barn, at \$2.20 lb, for the first three weeks (weeks of 3<sup>rd</sup>, 10<sup>th</sup>, 17<sup>th</sup>).



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**Critter Alert!!!**—Yes, the deer fence is up and working, but so are the GROUNDHOGS! Those lumbering critters are chewing through the bottom of the deer fencing and getting in to munch on our crops, especially things in the cabbage family. We’ve managed to catch two in humane traps, but we really need more traps. If any of you have



humane traps—say, the size of a raccoon trap or larger—we sure would love to borrow them! Or, should you have any other great ideas for catching or repelling groundhogs, please email Aby at [awright@osfphila.org](mailto:awright@osfphila.org). (photo credit)

**Red Hill Root Delivery**—We apologize that some of you have not been getting the 2008 *Roots* as you should. Aby and I (“I” am Melinda, *Root* editor) are working to update and correct the member email lists. Meanwhile, if you think there’s a problem, or if you’ve changed your email address since you signed up, please email Aby at [awright@osfphila.org](mailto:awright@osfphila.org), asap. If you missed the Feb, Mar, & Apr *Roots*, you can view them on the Sisters’ site [www.osfphila.org/red/newsletters\\_2008](http://www.osfphila.org/red/newsletters_2008). (Many thanks to Marie Mayer, as always, for her timely posting of the *Roots* and her eagle eye for typos, etc.!)

**“Mercy Buckets”!!!**—We are in need of 5-gallon, food-grade, plastic buckets that we can use for harvesting. They’re the kinds of bucket that pickles, coffee, etc. come in. If you have any, or if you know of a source for them, could you email Aby at [awright@osfphila.org](mailto:awright@osfphila.org)? Thanks!!!

## So Who Are the New Farmers?

We’ve already featured bios of *Abygail Wright*, the head farmer, and *Marcy Magness*, one of our seasonal workers, in the April *Root* (click [here](#) and see pages 1-2).



(Left, Aby; above, Marcy with her grandsons Julian [the baby] and Josiah; photos courtesy of Aby and Marcy)

Our new assistant farmer is *Mira Kilpatrick*, while our second seasonal worker is *Emily Fero*. They’re all fascinating, multifaceted individuals! Mira and Emily both sent along short bios, which I’ll quote: “*Mira had her first taste of farming in 2001, while studying at Smith College. She and Aby worked at Brookfield CSA Farm in Western Mass for a summer. That fall, she studied in Costa Rica, in a Resource Management and Sustainable Development program. Much of the study involved global/local food economies, ranging from huge banana plantations to small organic family farms. Back at Smith, her studies focused on plant sciences, organic farming and community food systems. She spent another summer at a community farm in Albuquerque, NM. After graduating, she moved back to the area and spent the next few years at a small intensive farm in Philadelphia, doing a CSA, farmers’ markets and some restaurant sales. She*



*has been looking for properties to buy to start her own farming enterprise but has realized how difficult that can be for a young farmer. She was married last fall, in Ridley Creek State Park, and she*

*and her husband, Gerard, have decided to put the property search on hold. They recently moved to this area and are looking forward to exploring Delaware County. This past winter, she’s been...at graduate school, focusing on acupuncture, as well as Buddhist and meditation studies. Learning more about alternative health/energetic work has compelled her to take a community herbalist training course, and she is excited to incorporate that into her farming and cooking interests. She looks forward to getting to know the farm and its members, and becoming part of the... community here at Red Hill.” (photo of Mira & Gerard, courtesy of Mira)*



*Emily Fero* is our part-time seasonal worker, and she has this to say about herself. “*I live in Kennett Square and attend Villanova University. I’m studying math and will be a junior next year....I’ve enjoyed my time on the Farm so far. I’ve repotted tomatoes, which I can’t wait to see*

grow and fruit [neither can we, Emily!], and I've dug some holes, and I've looked for groundhogs." And, we just got this update from Emily: "We actually did get a groundhog on Thursday... yay!! We set out three traps with watermelon as bait, and it worked. But we also got a raccoon and an opossum, which we set free." (photo of Emily Fero, courtesy of Emily) By the way, Aby says that *as of right now, several more groundhogs have been caught*, so more cages definitely would be helpful. *If any of you have (or can get) cages, please do let us know.*

## The Peace Pole Dedication

As we noted in the last few *Roots*, our dedication of a Peace Pole in memory of **Bill Nelling**, our friend and



member who died 5<sup>th</sup> May 2007, was held Saturday, 10<sup>th</sup> May 2008. The Peace Pole is now in the Children's Garden, which Bill played such a large part in planning and building, and it has messages of peace inscribed on it in languages of the countries to which Bill traveled, as well as in paw prints symbolizing Bill's love of animals. It's a beautiful thing, fitting well into its environment. (In the photo at left, the animal prints are on the lower half of the pole; photo M. Parsons.)



Bill's fiancée, **Lori Imbesi**, describes the ceremony in



words more meaningful than anything I could write. "We had a *small, lovely gathering of family and friends. Memories and poems were shared as were moments of silence. Tears were shed too. As part of the Peace Pole ceremony, some items, relevant to Bill's life,*

*were buried at the base of the pole—a rock, a feather, a photo, a small gold disc, a bandana, some chocolate.*

*Some of Bill's ashes were added too. Everyone had a hand in replacing the soil around the pole. The ceremony ended with lots of hands planting annuals and perennials in the arbor boxes and around the sand box of the children's garden. It was a wonderful way to honor Bill."* Thank you so much, Lori, for sharing.



(photos by M. Parsons)



## "Do I Hear \$850.....?"

Thanks to **Mimi Hall, Nancy Bernhardt, Eric Lienhard, Mia Painter, Amy & Chris**, & others on our Auction and Square Dance committee, we had a very successful Auction, and fun was had by all at the dance, with music by the **Bowrockers** and calling by **Pete Laberge**. Nancy organized a bag auction (see April *Root*, [here](#), for what that is), while Mimi & others worked on the live auction, with our multitalented Eric Lienhard as auctioneer.



Eric performing his auction magic (photo M. Parsons)



(photo M. Parsons)

As well, Rich Hoffmann created a filmic tribute to Amy and Chris's years at the Farm, celebrating their "birthing" and nurturing of everything we've become at Red Hill.



The "real" Chris and Amy, with their backs to us, right, watch Virtual Amy in Rich's tribute film projected on the wall! (photo M. Parsons)

## Notes from the Furrow—A Morning in the Life of a Work-Share Member

By Jeanne Wordley



Peter Henry Emerson, *A Stiff Pull, East Anglia*, albumen print, 1886 (Archive of the George Eastman House, Rochester, [here](#)). Emerson was among the first photographers to capture clouds and earth simultaneously in his prints (in this case using sandwiched negatives).

"Please excuse the romantic title which, to me, conjures up images of Suffolk Punch horses pulling plows through the heavy clay soil of East Anglia, or perhaps a team of Belgian mules working Pennsylvania fields. Yesterday, some of the work share folks continued the tasks of preparing for more planting. Our job was to remove the black plastic sheet mulch and drip tubes from the next section of field to be plowed. The rains of the previous day had softened the soil, making it easier to pull up the long sheets. However in some places the sheet edges were so overgrown and buried that we had to lift up chunks of soil by fork and hand, creating our own furrows.



"The thermometer remained at 50 degrees all morning. Bright green new leaves in the woods edged the gray sky, and neat rows of tiny plants combed the newly turned fields. The wind played dressing games, cajoling us to second guess, shedding layers as our muscles warmed. Fresh air, moisture, and work joined to put a glow on our faces. As the purple martins twittered overhead a female cowbird surprised us by walking within one foot of us, gobbling grubs that we had exposed. Did we look like cows to her, or were the tasty treats too good to resist? The cowbird gets its name from following cows, eating insects disturbed by their grazing. Later on I saw the female with her handsome mate with bronze head and black body. I wondered if they were plotting whose nests would receive their clandestine eggs, leaving another pair of birds to raise their young.



"As the Convent clock chimed the hours, I was first amazed at the amount of work I had accomplished then saddened that there was still more to do. My body was tired but my spirit was refreshed. As I pulled up last year's pepper plants, seeing their membranous remains on the ground, memories of last year's harvest and warm summer days came to mind. I recalled the joy of finding huge healthy peppers among the knee high plants, even though the deer had come through and nipped a few. Flavors of zesty chili...with Red Hill peppers came to mind, and I [anticipate]...harvest again." ***Thanks Jeanne!***

## Yet More Farm Fun!!!!

**Mia Painter** sends a short account of Saturday (17<sup>th</sup> May) Work Day at the Farm, when a number of members gathered to weed and otherwise have a good time (and it wasn't raining for once!). Among the participants were **Karen Feeley**, **Brian Brophy**, **Suzanne Fazik**, and a new member, **Caroline**, whose last name we need! (Step forward and be counted, Caroline!) Karen (at left) worked on the raspberries and herb garden, then joined everyone else in the flower beds, weeding and preparing to plant! Also, as Mia says, "Thanks to Aparna Hasling who



Left: Karen in the herbs; right: Karen, Suzanne, and Caroline (photos by Mia)

stopped out to see what the farm was all about and weeded and chatted for a while. And of course the kids, who enjoyed themselves tremendously.”



Ben Chandler, and Leyla & Maya Fazik (photo Mia Painter)

## Farming is One of Humanity’s Highest Callings...

...says Lisa Kerschner, a farmer who wrote “*A Farmer’s Labor of Love*,” published in *Newsweek* (see [here](#)). *Aby* sent this article along for us, as it succinctly describes both the problems and the joys of farming, things we all care about. Kerschner speaks first of problems—scorching heat, no vacations, unpredictable weather, ravenous insects, little income, and farming’s lack of social caché in some circles (“*You’re a.... farmer?!?*”). But when asked why she continues to farm, she says “*We love growing food for people. It is often said that the three most basic needs are shelter, water, and food. Growing food, then, may be one of man’s highest callings.*”

Another article of interest (also sent by *Aby*—*thanks Aby!*) concerns eating, the other end of the farming/food cycle. In “*Change We Can Stomach*,” in the *NY Times* (see [here](#)), chef Dan Barber suggests that in the face of worldwide food shortages, chefs and discerning eaters may be able to move US farming away from harmful agro-industry to small-scale, organic, local production: “*Around the world, from Cairo to Port-au-Prince, increases in food prices have governments facing riots born of shortages and hunger. It’s enough to make you want to toss in the toque. But here’s the good news: if you’re a chef, or an eater who cares about where your food comes from (and there are a lot of you out there), we can have a hand in making food for the future downright delicious.*” Barber cites statistics to support this, noting that the a 4-acre farm in the US nets \$1400 per acre average, while a 1364-acre property nets only \$39 per acre (making up the difference in quantity). He suggests strategies to promote small farms and their flavorful, nutritious food, most of which make considerable sense, especially if they can reach the poor. Worth reading!

Barber touches on rising food prices *in the US* and their links to petroleum costs. But an article in *Newsweek*, “*Now It’s the \$6 Loaf of Bread*,” (see [here](#)) also moves beyond our shores to global tragedies and the economic complexities of today’s food crisis. “*In January, the bull run of agricultural commodities was an afterthought at the World Economic Forum in Davos, where the subprime crisis, sovereign-wealth funds, and...inexorable rise of petroleum dominated....*” (Indeed, one economist cited on NPR opined that in the not-too-distant future, oil will reach \$200 a barrel!!!) But now, food rivals or surpasses



oil as a danger to what we know as “civilization.” There are many reasons for this, discussed in the essay, but among the tragic outcomes are, for instance, the dirt pies (made of mud,

oil, and bits of vegetable) now eaten in the poorest parts of Port-au-Prince. As the article notes, many folks can get through a day without gas, but without food you can’t get through many days at all. (*Eating dirt in Haiti*, [photo credit](#)) While there is a folk tradition of mud pies in Haiti, to be forced to eat *only* those is indeed a tragedy.

Finally, one of the Sisters sent *Aby* an interesting essay on *raw milk, both its pros and its cons*. If you have a raw-milk share at Red Hill, you might want to take a look at “*Raw Milk Straight from the Cow*,” [here](#).



## Recipes for Spring Crops



### To Stir Fry Pea Shoots

- ❖ 1 lb pea shoots, rinsed & drained
- ❖ 2 tbsp oil
- ❖ 3 garlic cloves, crushed w/ flat of knife
- ❖ ¼ tsp dried red-pepper flakes (or to taste)

Heat oil in a wok or large heavy skillet over high heat until surface of oil ripples. Add smashed garlic and red pepper flakes, then stir-fry until garlic is pale golden. Toss in shoots and stir-fry until wilted and tender, 4 to 5 minutes. (*Gourmet Magazine*, May 2001; [photo credit](#)—this is a very informative website!)



## Pea Shoot, Radish, and Edamame Salad w/ Asian Vinaigrette—serves 4

- ❖ 2/3 cup edamame (soy) beans, fresh or frozen
- ❖ 1 large celery stalk, peeled of strings [or not!]
- ❖ 2 radishes, trimmed
- ❖ 4-6 cups pea shoots, any tough stems removed
- ❖ 1 tbsp rice vinegar
- ❖ 2 tbsp fresh lemon or lime juice
- ❖ 1 tsp finely minced fresh ginger
- ❖ 1 tbsp honey
- ❖ 1 tbsp soy sauce
- ❖ 3 tbsp canola or grapeseed oil
- ❖ 2 tsp dark sesame oil

Bring small saucepan of salted water to boil. Add the edamame beans & cook, uncovered, on medium-high, till tender (~3-4 min). Drain edamame in colander & run under cold water till cool. Slice celery stalk in half lengthwise, then, holding knife on diagonal, slice it crosswise into very thin slices. Cut radishes into thin slices, then cut the slices into matchstick-size pieces. Mix edamame, radishes, & celery & set aside. Mix all liquid ingredients together & shake well. Just before serving, place pea shoots in serving bowl. Dress shoots w/ dressing; then add some dressing to edamame & toss well. Place edamame mix atop pea shoots and serve immediately. ([source](#))

## Broccoli Raab, Vegetable of Many Names—Also called



rapa, rapini, rappi, rapponi, turnip broccoli (it's related to turnips, not broccoli!), taitcat, Italian/Chinese broccoli, etc. You can eat the nutritious stems, leaves, florets, & even yellow blossoms! Here's the basic cooking technique: wash & trim bottom 1/4" (or more) of stems if

tough. Cut stalks crosswise into 2" pieces & drop into boiling water (salted if desired). Cook ~1-2 min & remove w/ slotted spoon. Sauté this blanched raab/rapini in olive oil & crushed garlic to taste till tender. (Optional to add dried red-pepper flakes.) Yum! ([source](#); [photo credit](#))

## Arugula (Eruca Sativa), aka Rocket, Roquette, Rugola

Considered an aphrodisiac by ancient Romans, Arugula is a nutrition-packed member of the brassica family. It has a lovely, full-bodied, peppery taste, though the young leaves

aren't as strong in flavor and can be used raw in salads (we love it!). In Italy, it's found on pizzas, and it makes a fabulous addition to basil-based pesto sauces (they become very hearty-tasting) or even as a pesto on its own. ([photo credit](#)) Here's a recipe:



## Arugula and Olive Pesto—enough for 1 lb of pasta

- ❖ 3 cups arugula
- ❖ 1/2 cup olive oil
- ❖ 1 garlic clove, peeled (or more to taste)
- ❖ 1/4 cup pine nuts (or almonds or cashews)
- ❖ 1/4 cup pitted kalamata olives
- ❖ 1/4 tsp salt (or to taste) & fresh-ground pepper
- ❖ 1/4 cup grated Pecorino Romano or Parmesan

Place all ingredients except cheese in food processor. Process till smooth, scraping down bowl as necessary. Transfer to small bowl & stir in cheese. Taste & add salt & pepper as desired. ([source](#)—this site has more recipes)

## Linguine w/ Arugula, Pine Nuts, and Parmesan

- ❖ 1 lb linguine
- ❖ 1/2 cup olive oil
- ❖ 4 oz arugula, trimmed of tough ends
- ❖ 1 cup fresh-grated Parmesan cheese (vegans can substitute Parma)
- ❖ 1/2 cup pine nuts (or slivered almonds)
- ❖ additional cheese

Cook linguine in large pot of boiling salted water till just tender but still firm to the bite, stirring occasionally. Meanwhile, heat oil in heavy skillet over medium heat; add arugula & stir till just wilted, ~30 seconds. Remove from heat. Drain pasta & return to pot. Add arugula & stir well. Add 1 cup Parmesan & salt/pepper to taste. Toss well. Transfer to bowl, sprinkle w/ pine nuts, & serve immediately, adding cheese if desired. ([source](#))

## Arugula & Red Pepper Pesto

- ❖ 1/2 lb arugula
- ❖ 1 1/2 tbsp salt (that's a lot; I'd start w/ much less!)
- ❖ 1 tbsp brown sugar or honey
- ❖ 1 tbsp red wine vinegar
- ❖ 4 roasted red peppers
- ❖ 1 cup toasted pine nuts (or almonds) & 1 cup toasted pumpkin seeds
- ❖ 1 cup olive oil

Blend everything in food processor. Add garlic if desired. Use on pizza, pasta, or in sour cream dip. ([source](#))