



THE RED HILL ROOT



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

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Around the Farm...



Farm Orientation and Remaining Payments—This is repeated information, as some members did not attend the first pickup, and we have some new shareholders as well. All new members need a Farm orientation at their first pickup!!! And all those, new or old, who still have payments due need to take care of that by the second pickup (checks or cash). Someone will be in the Barn for payments, and experienced Farm members will do the orientations, which take about 30 minutes—*please allow extra time for orientation if you're a new member!* Thanks! Also, if you share a share, all shareholders must have an orientation. Finally, *all members (new and old) please pick up a new Red Hill Farm Handbook* for further reference (it has contact info, policies about weeks you're out of town, methods of keeping produce fresh, etc.).



Humane Traps—We still can use some, should you have access to any. You can drop them off at the Farm any time the gate's open—be sure to put your name on them, so we can return them properly. Thanks!



Buckets—We still need more 5-gallon buckets w/ handles for harvesting! If you have any, or wouldn't mind asking your favorite restaurant or food shop to donate some to the Farm, it would be great! Thanks so much!



Change in Off-Farm Products Pickup Policy!!—If you



preordered *chicken or eggs*, they start arriving this week, on Tuesday, 10th June. *In a change from last year, Friday pickup people can come get their chickens/eggs on Tuesday, should they wish,*

but they must wait to do their produce pickup on Fridays! On the other hand, they can wait till Friday to get them (they keep well in our Farm fridge for those few days). *Cheese and raw milk shares also start this week, on Thursday, 12th June. Anyone ordering cheese or milk (whether a Tuesday or Friday person), may come to pick*

them up on Thursday or Friday, but ditto regarding picking up your produce share on your designated day. Aby says to *be sure to communicate with family members if one of you comes to pick up off-Farm stuff, and then another family member comes on a different day to get the share.* (If there are too many problems, we'll have to go back to the previous policy, i.e., picking up all your things, on- or off-Farm, on the same day.) Also, when you pick up off-Farm products, please sign for the food on the sign-out sheet. Thanks! By the way, we still have *asparagus* for sale in the Barn, \$3.00 a bunch, the weeks of the 10th and 17th, but quantities are limited. ([photo source](#))

Any Tuesday Folks Willing to Switch to Friday?—Many thanks to those who have switched to Friday already! If anyone else thinks of switching to Friday, could you please email Aby at awright@osfphila.org? Thanks!

We Still Have Some Farm Shares Available—If you know anyone who'd like to join Red Hill Farm, we have about 10-15 shares available. Just have them email Aby at awright@osfphila.org, and she'll send them forms.

Sheets and T-Shirts—If you have any old sheets, we could use some to shade the wash station. We also need old t-shirts to wet and keep the veggies cool in their lugs.

News from the Furrow



(I liked Jeanne's article, "Notes from the Furrow," so much that I'm rephrasing her title for our news from the farmers!) Here's a report from *Mira Kilpatrick*, assistant farmer. The first pickup day was terrific, with lots of varied, nutritious spring produce (and very bounteous!). Many thanks to Chris

McNichol for finishing up the deer fence before he left—it's been a huge help! We've caught 5 groundhogs so far, as well as two foxes, who were let go. The groundhog damage seems somewhat reduced (knock on wood!). Work began on taking up the old strawberry fabric, and there was lots of long-overdue mowing done on the left-hand side of the field, so the Farm gang is feeling good



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about that! And, as Mira says, “*Last but not least, we planted a flowering Japanese cherry tree in front of the*



Barn, in honor of Aby’s future father-in-law, who recently passed away. We hope that it will add additional blooms to the Farm in the spring, and some shade on summer scorchers.”

I’m sure we’ll have some of

those soon! Finally, *crops that the Farm team hopes to offer you* over the next few weeks include Asian greens, pea shoots, and possibly scallions. **Thanks, Mira!** ([photo](#))

8th-9th June Holidays

The 8th of June hosts some agriculture-related holidays.



It’s France’s *Feast day of St. Medard*, a 6th-century saint who once, legendarily, took refuge in a storm under an eagle’s wings (see left; [source](#)). Hence his day was used for prognostication, depending on whether it rained or not. According to tradition, “*If on the eight of June it rain, that foretells a wet harvest men sayen.*”

(Today is sunny in the high 90s, so I think we’ll avoid a wet harvest!) In China, 8th June is *Chinese Dragon Boat festival*, believed to encourage sky dragons to fight and hence bring rain to help crops. In that vein, 7th June was *Independence Dragon Boat Regatta* on Philly’s Schuylkill!!! ([photo](#) at right) 9th June is the *Feast Day of St.*



Columba, among the most beloved of Irish saints (also 6th century), a missionary saint who founded the monastery at Iona and inspired a host of followers—the *peregrini*—to sail, where the spirit would take them, in small coracles. Thursdays are linked with Columba, agriculture, & life: “*Thursday of Columba benign, day to send sheep on prosperity, day to send cow on calf, day to put the web in the warp. Day to put coracle on the brine....*” (from *Carmina Gadelica*, cited in Esther de Waal, *Celtic Vision*). For Columba, see [here](#) and [here](#). 9th June is also *Shavu’ot, Jewish Festival of Harvest* On this day the Jews were given the *Torah* on Mt. Sinai. (See [here](#) and [here](#).) (*Columba*: [picture credit](#))

Popoloe—According to *Sean Crane*, who sent this recipe, “*popolo in Italian means ‘people’ or ‘common.’ Bietole ... is ‘chard.’ I suspect my [Abruzzi] grandmother’s name for this dish comes from a melding of these two words.... The recipe... is what I have come to make after watching Mima at work. I cook mine in a presto 606 pressure cooker..., but any 6-quart pot will do.*”

- ❖ 3 tbsp olive oil plus 1 tbsp olive oil
- ❖ 6 cloves garlic, pressed [or to taste]
- ❖ ½ tsp salt and ½ tsp ground black pepper
- ❖ ½ onion, sliced in ¼" rings
- ❖ 2 doz. large chard leaves, sliced across the stems every 2 inches
- ❖ 2 medium-large white potatoes cut in ½-¾" cubes
- ❖ equivalent of ½ can cooked beans (red, black, etc)
- ❖ 10 large black olives, diced or sliced in rings

Put potatoes in 4-qt pot w/ 2 qts water; bring to boil for 3 min, or microwave in water 6 min. Drain; set aside 1 cup cooking water. Put 6-qt pot on medium heat, adding 3 tbsp oil. Add garlic, onion, salt/pepper. Put chard in pot to wilt; stir w/ wooden spoon 3-4 min. Add potatoes & another tbsp oil, stirring to coat potatoes. Add ½ cup cooking water. It will sizzle & steam; reduce to medium-low. Put lid on pot & cook 6 min (or 4 min in pressure cooker). Remove lid, add remaining ½ cup water & beans. Stir w/ wooden spoon, replace lid on pot & cook another 6 min (or 4 in pressure cooker). Remove from heat. **Thanks Sean!!! Sounds great!**



Cream of Asparagus Soup—Another goodie sent to us by Christine Baer; recipe from Rosso & Lukins, *The Silver Palate Cookbook*, 1982. **Thanks Christine!** [I’ve added vegan substitutions in brackets.]

- ❖ 2 cups chopped onions
- ❖ ¼ cup butter [olive oil]
- ❖ 4 cups chicken broth [veggie or garlic broth]
- ❖ 1 lb asparagus
- ❖ ¼ cup heavy cream [soy creamer or homemade cashew cream—see [this Root](#), pg 5, for recipe]
- ❖ salt/pepper to taste

Melt butter in 3-qt saucepan. Add onions; cook on low till onions are soft but not browned. Add stock & bring to boil. Trim woody ends from asparagus & chop stalks & tips in 1" pieces. Add to stock, cover pot, turn heat down to simmer, & continue cooking soup ~30-35 min, until asparagus is very soft. Purée soup in either a blender (preferred) or food processor. Return to pot, add cream & salt/pepper to taste & heat through. Christine has served

this with cooked shrimp or chicken. She also says “*It freezes very well (always nice to have a taste of spring in the dead of winter!)*.”



(photo source; for more asparagus recipes & storage tips, see [here](#))

Christine’s Balsamic Vinaigrette for Greens or Grilled Veggies—very easy & good. *Thanks so much, Christine!*

- ❖ 3 tsp balsamic vinegar
- ❖ 1 tsp Dijon mustard [or more or less, to taste]
- ❖ ½ cup plus 1 tbsp olive oil

Whisk together the vinegar and mustard. Continue whisking & slowly dribble the olive oil into the vinegar & mustard mixture. The dressing should be thick. It will keep at least a week in the fridge.

Penne con Le Bietole (Penne w/ Swiss Chard)

- ❖ 6 qts water & 2 tsp salt
- ❖ 1 slice dry Italian bread, 2" thick, quartered
- ❖ 2 large garlic cloves, peeled (~1/3 oz total)
- ❖ 5 flat anchovies, rinsed & patted dry [vegans substitute ~1oz smashed, pitted Kalamata olives or capers]
- ❖ ¼ tsp dry hot red pepper flakes
- ❖ ½ cup olive oil
- ❖ 8 oz penne pasta
- ❖ 1 lb Swiss chard leaves, including stems, sliced horizontally ⅛" to ¼" thick
- ❖ fresh ground black pepper
- ❖ 1 tbsp olive oil

Bring the water & salt to boil. Meanwhile process the bread w/ metal blade of food processor till finely chopped. Reserve. With motor running, drop garlic thru feed tube & process till finely chopped (~5 sec). Add anchovies [or substitutes] & pepper flakes & pulse 5 times to chop. Heat ¼ cup oil in small skillet on medium-high. Add bread crumbs & cook, stirring, till golden brown (~1 min). Remove to paper towels to drain. Wipe skillet w/ paper towel. Heat remaining oil, add garlic mix, & cook on low, stirring, till garlic is soft but not brown, ~3 min. Set aside. Add penne to boiling water & cook ~8 min. Stir in chard & cook till pasta & chard are tender, ~3 min more. Drain

well & transfer to serving bowl. Toss w/ garlic mix & season w/ salt/pepper. Serve sprinkled w/ crumbs. ([source](#))

Insalata di radicchio e rughetta (Radicchio & Arugula Salad)—If you can’t find radicchio (Italian chicory—see [here](#)), you can substitute other bitter greens like Belgian endive, curly endive, dandelions, etc). This recipe is from Jamie Oliver, *Jamie’s Italy*, 2006, and it’s just written out:



Left: radicchio ([source](#)); right: arugula ([source](#))

“*Get yourself a large bowl and, for each person, toss together a handful of arugula with a small handful of grated Parmesan cheese and a quarter of a radicchio, finely sliced. Dress this with a glug of balsamic vinegar, three times as much extra virgin olive oil, and a little salt and freshly ground black pepper. Mix carefully, grate over a little extra Parmesan, and eat straight away. You can vary it by adding things like toasted pine nuts, roasted red onions, or crispy bacon.” That’s some simple, good eats.*

Eat-Your-Greens Pesto—This is my way of using up the greens the two of us get before they go bad—and it’s SO good for you! It’s a very *laissez-faire* & forgiving recipe.

- ❖ as much basil as you like or can get
- ❖ handfuls of arugula, endive, radish greens, etc.
- ❖ oriental greens, broccoli raab greens & flowers
- ❖ parsley
- ❖ leftover lettuces
- ❖ Pecorino-Romano cheese, grated, to taste [vegans use *Parma* or another cheese substitute]
- ❖ nuts—these could be almonds, walnuts, cashews, almost anything you like
- ❖ garlic—as much or as little as you like—you also can add garlic scapes if you can get them!
- ❖ salt & pepper to taste

Put various greens into the food processor. Add oil—¼ to ½ cup—and process until smooth. Add more greens if you want. If you like your pesto very basily, and you haven’t got enough fresh basil, add some organic dried basil. Add garlic, nuts, cheese, process again, then taste to adjust ingredients. Add salt & pepper. Freezes well too!

“In June as many as a dozen species may burst their buds on a single day. No man can heed all of these anniversaries; no man can ignore all of them.”

Aldo Leopold