

September 28, 2006



*Supplying healthful produce and  
supporting local farmers for 13 years*

## FARM DIRECT CO-OP

P.O. Box 1146 Marblehead, MA 01945  
1-877-FDC-FARM  
www.farmdirectcoop.org

# NEWSLETTER

### FDC News

*by Julie Pottier-Brown*

Happy Autumn! Subscription to the Extended Season is officially closed – thank you to all who are participating. The pick-up dates will be November 2<sup>nd</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup>. The depot hours will be shorter because of the shorter days. Starting time will be the same, closing time will be 5pm in Salem and Marblehead, and 5pm or 5:30pm in Melrose (we need to check on the light situation).

Here's the news from the farm this week. Our cheese comes to us from Maplebrook Farm in Putney, Vermont. When I found this cheese in a local market last year, I called the farm for our cheese share. At the time they were bringing their milk in from Wisconsin, but had high hopes of becoming local by this year. And they were successful – this fresh mozzarella is indeed made from local Vermont milk. The second cheese this week is a blue from Great Hill Dairy in Marion, MA. Great Hill used to have their own herd, but now they purchase their milk from several of their neighbors to make their delicious cheese.

A small portion of the produce this week, including the kohlrabi, is from Spencerbrook Farm in Concord. Concord is also where the certified organic raspberries and the certified raspberry vinegar is from. Tom Johnson of Silverleaf Farm grows only raspberries, and does a great job with them. The Bartlett pears are from Cold Springs Orchard in Belchertown, MA. This orchard is a part of the University of Massachusetts, and is a working farm as well as a research facility. Joe, the farm manager, talked about raising his two children on the farm and being very conscious of pesticide use, of how willing he is to do more work to keep poison levels low in his “backyard,” and about staying connected with his neighbors and educating them on coexisting with a farm. Aaron, our truck driver, suggested that we call them, as they are very conscientious growers. This is from their website – “On December 28, 1961, the Massachusetts Fruit Growers' Association, Inc. completed the purchase of the Hanifin Farm. In June of 1962, the farm was donated to the University free and clear. Since that time, much research has been conducted, many students have learned fruit-growing practices, and many commercial orchardists have observed and adopted state-of-the-art management systems. The focus of the research from the beginning to the present, has been to find better ways to grow fruit in Massachusetts, including the testing of new varieties, the evaluation of more efficient horticultural techniques, and the development of more environmentally friendly management approaches.”

DeWitt Thompson of Full Bloom Farm is still offering a short list of basics and hopes to have carrots and beets back for next week. The tomatoes are most likely the last of the season. They are picked between “ripe” and “having a star of red at the stem.” The latter ones *will* ripen, but *please* be patient and give them time.

For the remainder of the season you can expect the vegetable shares to be a little smaller, and the fruit shares to be very generous. This is due to a simple matter of economics. At this point in the season I usually turn to the bank statement and see what we have left to spend. First let me tell you that we didn't raise our prices this year because we knew that our main farmers were going to keep their prices the same. In June DeWitt asked for a small raise in price for his greens, from \$1.35/ea to \$1.50/ea. Very reasonable, considering he hadn't raised his prices in four years! While that doesn't seem like much, think about how much lettuce, greens, basil and arugula we have gotten over the last few months. This is why our veggie shares may look pretty light for the last two weeks. Fruit on the other hand, will be pretty flush. We increased our prices to be able to bring fruit share members more berries throughout the season. We have been able to do that, though it is a challenge to find enough raspberries at once! The cantaloupe crop failed, there was only one week of watermelons, there are no grapes available, and it was a bad plum year. I was able to get a lot of the fruit for a *better* price than last year. All this means we have plenty to spend, and only a few weeks to do it. Cider will come again on Oct. 12 from Cider Hill, hopefully a peach jam, and of course more tree fruit. If you are left with questions, please don't hesitate to email or call me, at 1-877-332-3276 or Julie@farmdirectcoop.org.

**“The Challenge of Childhood Diabetes: Family Strategies for Raising a Healthy Child”****Written by Laura Plunkett with Linda Weltner, iUniverse, Inc.**

In July 13<sup>th</sup>'s newsletter, Marblehead Depot member Laura Plunkett wrote about her family's road to healthier eating, initiated 5 years ago when her then 7 year old son, Danny, was diagnosed with juvenile diabetes. ([www.farmdirectcoop.org/newsletter](http://www.farmdirectcoop.org/newsletter)) Her article caught my attention. Even though I know very few people with diabetes, I was interested in how she managed to change her family's diet, steering them away from white flour and sugar and towards sprouted grain bread and red leaf lettuce. After reviewing her website, [www.challengeofdiabetes.com](http://www.challengeofdiabetes.com), I wanted to learn more, so I picked up a copy of her new book “The Challenge of Childhood Diabetes: Family Strategies for Raising a Healthy Child”, co-written with her mother, popular columnist Linda Weltner.

Laura's book is extremely moving, and once I started it, I had trouble putting it down. It is so much more than a story of a young boy with diabetes; it's a story of a multigenerational family's reaction and response to this diagnosis. The first two parts of the book read like a personal journal, which is how this book came to be. In the early days of her son's diagnosis, she began sitting down with her mother, discussing the day to day struggles, how they were coping with them, and what they had learned. As she talked her mother wrote. When they ended up with 250 pages, they decided to turn it into this invaluable guide to share their wisdom with other families living through the same diagnosis. The last part of the book is a “Survival Guide for Parents.” It includes sample medical sheets and food logs, tips on nutrition and family strategies, and numerous other resources and suggestions. I found the food logs fascinating, particularly how Danny's diet changed over the three years.

From this book, I obtained ideas for packing healthier lunches and snacks for my son's lunchbox, and a strategy for getting him to now eat Ezekiel bread - we're still working on red leaf lettuce! The book also advocates a more active lifestyle, explaining the effect exercise has on blood sugar. We have incorporated her suggestion of exercising after school (or work, in my case) and I know I feel better for it. I also learned a great deal about diabetes, for instance:

- Diabetes is a chronic, debilitating disease affecting every organ.
- In the last two decades, the number of people around the world suffering from diabetes has skyrocketed from 30 million to 230 million. (International Diabetes Federation)
- In the U.S. approximately 176,500 people aged 20 years or younger have diabetes.
- **13,000 children** will be diagnosed with Type 1 diabetes in the U.S. in 2007! (Juvenile Diabetes Research Foundation)
- Type 2 Diabetes affects 21 million Americans and its prevalence is increasing at the rate of 8% per year.

Through Laura's research and common sense, her family arrived at a diet and exercise plan that is helping to control Danny's blood-sugar levels. This control is crucial in preventing or delaying the many complications of diabetes. What she also discovered: not only has their whole-food diet kept Danny's diabetes under control; it has also improved her entire family's energy levels, health, weight, and sense of well being.

“The Challenge of Childhood Diabetes: Family Strategies for Raising a Healthy Child” was written for parents and caregivers of children with Type 1 and Type 2 Diabetes, but it is also a book for any parent who wants to raise healthy children. It is a reminder to us all that what we eat has an effect on our health, and it gives us another reason to stock our refrigerators with fresh fruits and vegetables. The book is available from her website, Barnes and Noble, Amazon, and at the Sprit of '76 Bookstore in Marblehead.

## HAPPENINGS....

On Wed. Oct. 4<sup>th</sup> at 7:30pm the Melrose Unitarian Universalist Church (70 W. Emerson St., across from library) will show “Thirst,” a 60-minute documentary on the global movement to stop water privatization, focusing on the conflict between public and private ownership, and the claim that water is not merely a commodity, but a human right. Following the screening there will be a talk with Jonathan Leavitt of Massachusetts Global Action. Free & open to public.

***ATTENTION MELROSE MEMBERS: OUR LOCAL FOOD PANTRY IS CURRENTLY IN GREAT NEED OF DONATIONS, SO WE ARE TAKING UP A COLLECTION FOR THEIR BENEFIT. FOR THE REMAINDER OF THE CO-OP SEASON, PLEASE BRING YOUR DONATIONS OF NON-PERISHABLE FOOD ITEMS TO THE DEPOT, AND WE WILL TRANSPORT THEM TO THE FOOD PANTRY. THANKS!!***