



July 10, 2008

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## FARM DIRECT CO-OP

## NEWSLETTER

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P.O. Box 1146 Marblehead, MA 01945  
1-877-FDC-FARM  
[www.farmdirectcoop.org](http://www.farmdirectcoop.org)

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### FDC News

*by Tamara Sullivan*

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This week brings us to a transition in the fruit share. Strawberries are done (in the quantities that we need anyway). We will begin cycling other berries through the depots – raspberries and blueberries – according to what we can get. This week will be a “no fruit” week for Salem and Melrose, and Marblehead will get a round of raspberries.

Beets were on then off this week. As of this printing, slicing and pickling cucumbers are in the maybe column. If not this week, then next week for sure. Though the crunchier pickling cukes are built for brining, they make a nice addition to a salad as well. Carrots are also on the horizon.

Following is an excerpt from Jenny’s letter to her CSA that we wanted to share with you.

“I often think of the growing season as pushing a boulder up and over a mountain. We gather a group of folks together to grow – and buy and eat – fields of greens. We push the boulder up slowly as we tend in the greenhouse, plow in the fields, plant and protect the young plants from frost, plant and cultivate, hand weed and hoe. Soon enough, we begin to harvest the first gifts of the field.

I think of the month of July as the time when we hover with our boulder at the peak of the mountain. It’s the mid-point of the fieldwork, which runs from March to December on this produce farm. We have the last planting rush, as well as the final great weeding push. We feel the oncoming crescendo of the harvest, as an increasing number of hours of each day are passed bringing in the food. In July, we either “got it” or we didn’t, in terms of the crops – it’s too late to re-plant, too late to “rescue weed,” and too early to make big plans for being perfect next year.

By August, the boulder is tumbling down the mountain's other side, and we spend the next few months joyfully dashing about to keep up. So, I like taking some time in July to look around and enjoy the view of both sides of the season. All in all, I say it looks pretty good. The spring challenges are already fading into the background, as boxes and plates of good food take the foreground. The hard work ahead doesn't seem so daunting when considered with the fabulous farm crew we're so lucky to have here. All in all, it's a pretty good year.

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## The Glorious Experience of NOFA

*Submitted by Rich Newburg*

Mind boggling was our first response. The summer conference for the Northeast Organic Farming Association is usually the second weekend in August and it is an experience not to be missed. My wife and I went to our first conference about fifteen years ago, after our home gardening evolved to organic. We have gone almost every year since. We stayed in a dorm in beautiful Hampshire College in Amherst, MA, and attended classes, seminars, and workshops for all three days, feeling like we were back in college. I learned things about bugs, weeds, soils and other exciting new concepts, and how to apply them beneficially to sustainable planting. That is, helping our earth while still harvesting from it.

The second exciting part of the conference was the many different healthy farm animals on display and being used in workshops, including many baby animals. They were treated kindly by knowledgeable farmers and often their families. Perhaps the most impressive aspect of the conference was the variety of people who attended and participated – farm laborers to professors. The diversity was extensive, with everyone sharing the common bond of wanting a healthy environment. Singles, couples, families with young children, teenagers, all participated (the kids have their own program). We all ate in the same dining hall, and got to talk with many interesting people.

This year the conference will be held at the campus of UMass Amherst, from August 8<sup>th</sup> -10<sup>th</sup>. You can attend one, two, or all three days. The catalogue is full of workshops and information, and about a thousand people are drawn annually. You can stay in a dorm (cheap), tent (bring your own gear), or in a nearby inn or motel. The tasty food at the dining hall is reasonably priced (you sign up for meals), usually organic, and often locally produced. You can also carpool to get there. If you have never attended the NOFA summer conference, consider this a local vacation, with entertainment throughout the day. Check it out on their website, [www.NOFA.org](http://www.NOFA.org). You can also talk to me personally about it at the Marblehead Farmers Market on July 19<sup>th</sup> at the rain barrel booth that I will be presenting.

### Vacation Swaps:

1. Josh and Stephanie Zywiec, at Salem depot, will be away July 31<sup>st</sup>. If you would like to arrange a swap, please contact [szywiec@gmail.com](mailto:szywiec@gmail.com).
2. Hannah Karpman will be away July 31<sup>st</sup>. Please contact [hkarpman@gmail.com](mailto:hkarpman@gmail.com) or [Katrina.hull@gmail.com](mailto:Katrina.hull@gmail.com) to arrange a swap.

## A Few Thoughts on Greens... *from Cheryl Wolff-Variam*

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By now you've undoubtedly noticed that the veggie shares are heavy on the greens early in the season. I remember as a new member feeling a little disappointed, and even intimidated, not knowing exactly what to do with all the leafy stuff I was bringing home each week. But I have since been converted into a huge fan of these early arrivals, and I encourage you to experiment with them a little – you will be pleasantly surprised at how delicious they are, and how easily they can be prepared. Additionally, they are packed with vitamins A, C, and B, as well as calcium, iron, and dietary fiber. And as a bonus, they are also naturally low in calories!

There are several basic ways to cook greens – they can be boiled (2-4 minutes), steamed (5-8 minutes), sautéed (for tender baby greens), or stir fried (better for larger, mature greens). The only rule – do not overcook them or they will become mushy. When their color is beautiful and bright they are usually done. Just taste a bit to be sure.

Once cooked, the greens can be eaten plain, or very simply adorned. For example, toss them with some red wine vinegar, olive oil, salt and pepper, or a lemon vinaigrette. Or you can add garlic and tomatoes to the pan and serve the mixture over pasta. You can also combine them with any type of cooked beans, for a really nutritious meal. The possibilities are truly endless! In most recipes, greens such as collards, kale, chard, spinach, beet greens, mustard greens, and arugula are interchangeable, although some, like the last two, are a bit spicier while the others are mild. If you don't feel like improvising, there is an abundance of recipes available online as well. The two below are from [www.seasonalchef.com](http://www.seasonalchef.com).

### Hot Wilted Greens

1 thick slice smoky bacon  
½ Tbsp olive oil  
1 large clove garlic, minced  
1 medium sweet red onion  
3 Tbsp chicken stock

2 Tbsp balsamic vinegar  
1 quart mixed piquant leafy greens (such as arugula, endive or mustard greens)  
¼ cup toasted pecans

- \* In a large skillet or wok over medium heat cook bacon until crispy. Remove and drain on paper towels. Crumble and reserve. Add olive oil to bacon drippings, heat and add garlic and onions.
- \* Sauté 3-4 minutes, until onions and garlic are softened. Stir in chicken stock and vinegar.
- \* Add greens and mix. Stir fry for 2-3 minutes, until leaves are coated. Cover and cook for several minutes more, until leaves are wilted and cooked tender-crisp.
- \* Top with bacon and chopped pecans. Serve hot. Serves 4.

### Pasta with Dark Greens

2 lbs broccoli raab, turnip, mustard or dandelion greens  
Kosher salt  
1 lb orechiette, penne, or other pasta  
¼ cup extra virgin olive oil

4 cloves garlic, chopped  
4 anchovy filets in oil, drained and finely chopped  
Pinch dried red pepper flakes, or to taste  
Freshly ground pepper and salt

- \* In a large pot, bring 2-3 quarts of water to a boil.
- \* While the water heats, trim the greens and wash them well. Cut the greens crosswise into 1" strips or pieces.
- \* When the water comes to a boil, add 1 Tbsp salt. Toss the greens into the boiling water, cook until they are almost tender but still bright green, 9-10 minutes. (Cooking time will vary, so test to be sure it's done.) With a slotted spoon, remove greens from the pot and toss into a large bowl of cold water.
- \* Add the pasta to the pot of water in which the greens were cooked. While the pasta cooks, squeeze the greens to remove as much water as possible. Fluff the greens to separate them, then set aside.
- \* In a large heavy skillet or wok heat olive oil over medium heat. Add garlic and cook, stirring constantly with a wooden spoon, just until the garlic begins to color. (Take care not to let it burn or the dish will be bitter.) Add the anchovies, pressing them so they "melt" into the oil. Add the pepper flakes. When the pasta is almost done, add the drained greens to the pan and cook together for 2 minutes, stirring constantly. Remove pan from the heat.
- \* Drain the pasta, leaving a bit of water clinging to it. Add the pasta to the cooked greens, toss well. Season to taste with salt and pepper. Serve immediately. Serves 4-6.

### Depot Coordinator Needed for Salem

Heather has decided that it is time to move on from her position as the Salem Depot Coordinator, and her last day will be July 31<sup>st</sup>. In order to have a smooth transition, we would like to train the right person during July. We would prefer to hire from within the organization. The best way to get a feel for the responsibilities is to come work at the depot!

The hours for the depot coordinator position include 1 to 2 hours of administration per week, plus 2 pm to 7 pm on Thursdays. The job requires strength and flexibility of both body and spirit, good organizational skills, dependability, and the ability to manage volunteers. If you think you are the right candidate, please contact Heather at [heather@farmdirectcoop.org](mailto:heather@farmdirectcoop.org).