

CSA Newsletter

WALTHAM FIELDS COMMUNITY FARM

a project of Community Farms Outreach

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AROUND THE FARM

by John Mitchell, Farm Manager

This is the time of the season on farms around Massachusetts when students who have been working in agriculture start to leave and return to school. Soon, some familiar faces around the farm will be moving on, and I want to express my gratitude to those people for a job well done. Andrew "Coop" Cooper, our agricultural intern this season will work his last day for us on Thursday, August 21st. Coop has done an admirable job this season, bringing Waltham Fields the benefit of his previous seasons of farming at both this farm and The Food Project, while developing his skills, knowledge and ability further during his internship here this season. Coop has worked many more hours than was required under his internship agreement, and has shown great spirit and motivation in all his work. He will be attending college in Unity, Maine. We thank him for his work here, wish him the best in his efforts at Unity, and welcome any future interest he may have in this farm organization.

Izzy Maxwell, our Thursday CSA distribution coordinator, will also be leaving us soon to go to school in pursuit of his goal to become a music producer. Izzy has been very helpful and enjoyable to work with, and will be missed. Thank you Izzy. Fortunately, we have Izzy's mother, Ellen Epstein, to take over on Thursday nights until the end of the season. Please take a moment to say goodbye to these people who have been reliable and have become our friends.

Distribution shelter update

The distribution shelter project remains on hold until the University of Massachusetts develops a plan for the future of our farmsite on which we are tenants, the former agricultural research station in Waltham. Umass budget cuts have severely affected all aspects of the university and its programs. The future use of this site remains a big question mark.

The site is operated under the extension department of the university. The extension's only program here was 4-H. Unfortunately, both of the full-time 4-H workers were laid-off, leaving only a part-time employee who works as the scheduler of activities here. Without a program, the extension truly becomes an absentee landlord.

DISTRIBUTION WEEK: 10

August 10-14, 2003

Apple shares will start soon

The final deadline for apple share signup is Monday, August 18. Autumn Hills Orchard has not yet determined whether the first distribution will be on Thursday, August 21, or the following Thursday. The weather this year has slowed the ripening of the crop of peaches, which will mostly comprise the first share. The fruit and apples will be delivered to the farm once a week on Thursdays. The 1/2 peck bags will be distributed at the Thursday and Sunday CSA pickups. Check in with the distribution coordinators to receive your share. The last apple delivery will coincide with the last CSA pickup, Thursday, October 30. The last Sunday vegetable distribution this season will be October 26, but people who pick up their apples on Sunday will still be able to collect their final delivery at the farm Sunday, November 2. Due to the fact that it will be dark during most of the usual pickup time, the final Sunday apple share distribution will be from the farm office located in the main red brick building. -*John Mitchell*



The university considered closing the former research station once previously in 1999, but the tenants met with the university under the auspices of the Friends of Cornelia Warren Farm, and asked that their rents be raised to reduce the university's costs. The university agreed, and the station remained open.

There are many rumors and much speculation about the fate of this site, ranging from total closure to a continuation of the status quo with only an increase in rent. This time, the Friends of Cornelia Warren Farm is a committee of Community Farms Outreach Inc., and is eager to work as a partner with the university on solutions to keep the site open for all the tenants.

The distribution shelter project will be given the OK to continue when we hear if our farm will be continuing on this land, but not if we will need to relocate to new land for next season. Either way, we have been given reassurance that the farm will be allowed to continue through the end of this season, so you can expect no disruptions.

E-MAIL US!

Farm Manager: John.Mitchell@communityfarms.org
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Board of Directors: Board@communityfarms.org
e-mail list: CFO-WFCF-Chat-subscribe@topica.com

OUR FARM: COMMUNITY SUPPORTED AGRICULTURE

We work in the fields because it is fun, the kids and I learn about farming, and the kids make connections about how the food they eat gets produced. It has been an extraordinarily enjoyable experience. John has been extremely patient and accommodating, taking the kids on tours of various parts of the farm and explaining what to do and why, often with interesting background information.

Allen Feinstein, CSA shareholder, who worked 6 hours last month with sons Henry, 6, and Daniel, 2

I like to work in the fields because I enjoy being outdoors and I especially enjoy learning about the life-cycles of the produce. Doing the farm-work is a great hands-on way to see how vegetables grow and how they're harvested. Finally, there's a lot of informal education that goes on between volunteers working in the field, and with John and the other farm folk who really know what they're doing. That social element is a lot of fun.

Rachael Rosner, CSA shareholder

As for why I work in the fields and what the experience is like for me, well, I come to the farm for lots of reasons. I really enjoy learning about farming techniques and learning about the types of vegetables grown and how. I've been exposed to so many things I've never really been aware of or thought about, including expanding my culinary options and techniques ;) I also really enjoy working with my hands and being outdoors, something my day job doesn't even come close to providing. And lastly but certainly not least, I get a chance to work with some really great people. The people at the farm, both the full time people and the volunteers, are terrific. Everyone is so friendly and helpful and I get a chance to meet people of all different backgrounds. I feel very fortunate that the farm is what it is and fosters such a community spirit - and that I can be a part of it.

Brad Wasson, worksharer

"PURS-A-LANE" REFLECTIONS *from CSA shareholder Colleen Fogarty*

Purslane? What is that? We used to get Lamb's Quarters (another weed) from our old CSA in Rochester, NY. I'm not quite sure what to do with purslane, but not being one to waste good food, I'm in the process of figuring it out.

I have tried a few ideas, shared below:

*Sprinkled atop a salad, it's quite good. My 2 1/2 year old loves purslane (he calls it 'purs-a-lane') and grabs it off the counter on the day we bring our share home.

*I've recently started putting it inside breakfast omelettes for him, which he adores.

*I've also put it, along with grated cheddar, between two tortillas, and pan-heated for a nice quesadilla. *Last night I made an eggplant-squash tomato sauce and threw in the purslane and basil. Taste test on this one is pending.

Other ideas I plan to try:

*Chop with herbs and put into fritatta or quiche.

*Put in soup (any kind!) though I'm particularly interested in trying it in a light miso broth with tofu and scallions.

*Chop and put in pasta salad with other assorted vegetables.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Bicycles and helmets still needed for Americorps volunteers

Thanks go out to the several CSA members who have lent bikes for the

AmeriCorps volunteers to use. Bikes and helmets are still needed. Bicycles should be in good operating condition.

Please contact the farm, or bring the equipment by when you pick up your share.

Thank you.

CSA Cookbooks on Sale for \$20

We have received copies of "From Asparagus to Zucchini", second edition. The book will be on sale at all CSA pickups and 3rd Sunday Gatherings. If you haven't checked it out, give it a look. "From A to Z" provides many ways to use your farm fresh veggies; also gives tips on storage and cooking methods.



August 17 -- 3rd Sunday gathering!

Join fellow shareholders and friends for a monthly gathering at the farm - byo picnic and beverage, 12:30-1:30; we'll provide dessert!

Also August 17 -- Study circle informational meeting

Discussion Groups Forming. WFCF CSA shareholder Beth Tener and her dad John will lead an information meeting about the Northwest Earth Institute study circles on Sunday, August 17, 1:30 at the farm. These peer-led discussion groups explore living sustainably, deep ecology, living in place, and the practice of simplicity Dates, times and locations for the groups will be determined during the informational meeting. For more information see www.nwei.org, contact John Tener, (617) 227-8835.