



local food for everyone

# NEWSLETTER

*Those of us who are gardeners do not need to train ourselves to be aware of the seasons, intuitively or any other way, for the seasons have us by the throat*

Germaine Greer

240 Beaver Street • Waltham, MA 02452 • 781-899-2403 • [www.communityfarms.org](http://www.communityfarms.org)

## WALTHAM FARM DAY CELEBRATES MA HARVEST FOR STUDENTS WEEK AND COMMUNITY FARMING



Chef Leslie Glynn, Waltham Public Schools parent and cooking teacher, shows folks how to cook with garden greens.

On Saturday, September 26th we opened our fields for a free public event and over 200 attendees came to engage in apple cider pressing, compost exploration, farm tasks, a community art project and more. Healthy Waltham lined up two healthy cooking demonstrations in conjunction with the Waltham Public Schools Food Services, and Herbalist Iris Weaver taught folks about using fresh herbs. The event drew a variety of participants ranging from our current members, program partners, urban dwellers, and Waltham residents. We were excited to see so

many students and their families at the Farm, and hope the event helps reinforce the benefits of farm to school programming. This year, we are supplying the school lunch program with harvests of summer squash in September, sweet potatoes in October and carrots in November. Many thanks to our event supporters and especially to Mayor Jeannette McCarthy for use of the Waltham trolley to shuttle guests between the farm and the town common and for attending the event.

## ASSISTANT GROWER DAN ROBERTS LENDS HIS MUSICAL TALENT

**Save The Date** • Tues, Dec 1 • Johnny D's in Somerville • 8-10:30pm  
A Benefit Concert to Support Food Access & Education Programs at WFCF

*Dan Roberts will step down from the tractor and join Kris Delmhorst, Tim Gearan, Barry Rothman and Sean Staples on stage! Gail Erdos, WFCF member, volunteer and music aficionado, recently interviewed Dan about his love of tubers and tunes...*

*Gail:* Dan, tell me a bit about your musical life:

*Dan:* When I was fifteen I was in a hardcore band from New Jersey called iconoclast. We made some records and had a lot of fun. In the later 90's and early 2000's, I was in a roots rock band in Philadelphia called the Boxcars. For now I'm a solo songwriter. Being on stage definitely fills a niche in my life that nothing else has.

*Gail:* I am a huge fan of the Boxcars cd and was thrilled when you disclosed your life as musician as we harvested one day. How does music enter into your daily world on the farm?

*Dan:* Music plays several varied roles on the farm, most often surfacing as a sing-along to a favorite "Europe" song or Andy mercilessly trying

to get Billy Joel stuck in our heads. I have enjoyed many serious conversations with Amanda Cather (a fine guitar player and singer herself) about what makes for great songs and what makes people compelling performers. I count those as very rich times.

*Gail:* This is your second year working for WFCF. How has your experience been so far and what has been your inspiration for pursuing farming?

*Dan:* I rode my wife's coattails (Erin Roberts, Assistant Grower) onto this farm, as I did into agriculture in general. I was unsure at the time whether a life in agriculture was for me at all and over the last two seasons my experience here, working with and learning from this incredible staff, has shown me the place that farming holds firmly in my heart and has given shape and substance to our dreams of a long term future in farming.

*Gail:* Are there similarities between being a farmer and a musician?

*Dan:* These are pretty different disciplines, though like all crafts they require a ton of work and time to progress in them. I'm definitely trying and struggling with finding time and energy for both in my life, though a quiet winter season seems to be on the horizon, offering me hope for my songwriting again.

*Gail:* Who are some of your favorite musicians?

*Dan:* Some of my favorite musicians include, but are not limited to Tom Petty, Gillian Welch, Sam Cooke, Elvis Costello, Otis Redding, The Isley Brothers, Bruce Springsteen, Blackstar, Lucinda Williams and on and on...

*Gail:* Thanks so much, Dan. See you in the fields and on the stage!

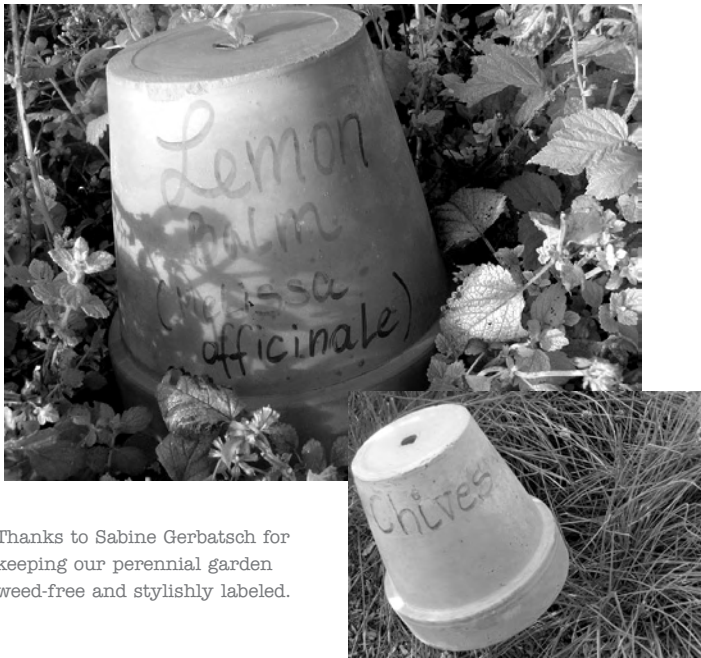
*Go to Dan's myspace page to hear some of his fine songwriting: [www.myspace.com/danrobertsband](http://www.myspace.com/danrobertsband).*



2009 Assistant Growers Dan & Erinn Roberts and Jonathan Martinez

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Thanks to Sabine Gerbatsch for keeping our perennial garden weed-free and stylishly labeled.

## WALTHAM FIELDS COMMUNITY FARM

### 2009 Board of Directors

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Jericho Bicknell, Education & Outreach Coordinator

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Dan Roberts, Assistant Grower

Erinn Roberts, Assistant Grower

Nina Rogowsky, Learning Garden Teacher

Paula Jordan, Learning Garden Teacher

Lina Yamashita, Learning Garden Assistant

Blake Robers, Outreach Market Intern

We promote local agriculture through growing and distribution practices that are socially, ecologically, and economically sustainable.

We forge relationships between people, their food supply, and the land from which it grows.

Waltham Fields Community Farm is the business name of Community Farms Outreach, a 501(c)(3) nonprofit charitable organization.

### Contact Us

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## FROM THE BOARD

This past weekend we had our first Waltham Farm Day. What a glorious day and glorious event. Healthy Waltham got flyers into the backpacks of all the elementary students in Waltham, and many folks came out with their kids and families to enjoy the day. The trolley that Mayor Jeannette McCarthy kindly sponsored had riders every time it went back and forth, and almost half of our board members came out to volunteer and enjoy the event as well. It was an all-around wonderful community building, community farm celebration that brought many people to the farm for the first time!

But our community building efforts this year have been much broader than just one event. This year, we've able to hire our first Education and Outreach Coordinator, Jericho Bicknell. Although we were only able to budget for a part-time, seasonal position this year, Jericho has already provided an important presence on the farm, interfacing with volunteer groups and school groups, and continuing to build a variety of educational opportunities on the farm, culminating in September 26th's fantastic Waltham Farm Day. As you can see from Jericho's article on page 3, our Learning Garden and educational programming have taken a huge leap forward this year, growing in both size and scope, adding yet another facet to our terrific farm and staff, and truly enabling us to better "forge relationships between people, their food supply, and the land from which it grows."

Enjoy the harvest! And best wishes for a peaceful winter.

Judy Fallows, Board President

## FROM THE FARM OFFICE

The first frost has dusted the fields and shifted us into the comforting foods of fall – root vegetables, winter squashes, and a variety of cabbage- and onion-family plants. My recipe cravings center on hearty soups, sautéed greens, and roasted anything, and I almost always find my mood a reflective one this time of year. The early-onset and region-wide spread of Late Blight, and the subsequent loss of our tomato crop certainly stands out, but it is by far overpowered by an optimism about the growth of and support for diversified farms committed to sustainable agricultural practices.

While the disease that swept through the Northeast this year is the same as the one that caused the Irish Potato Famine in the 1840s, the consequences are very different when you still have dozens of other types of vegetables to rely on and recipients that have invested in the farm's harvest up front, sharing the risk as well as the bounty. While the loss of our tomato crop meant that our food assistance partners missed out on our tomatoes as much as our CSA shareholders did, strong yields of these other vegetables have pulled us through with no loss of nourishment, and right on target to meet our goal of distributing \$40,000 worth of produce through food access programs this season!

There is so much to be thankful for – our fields and farmers have provided sustenance for hundreds of people from all income levels and backgrounds; we have engaged hundreds more in learning about organic food production, connecting with the land, and helping with organizational development; and we have a committed staff and board focused on fulfilling our mission. I'm hoping we can still meet our budget goals as well this year, despite today's tough economy. See our calendar of events on the back page for a few exciting fundraisers coming up, and hope to see you in costume at our Harvest Potluck on Halloween!

Sincerely,

Claire Kozower, Executive Director

## A SUCCESSFUL SEASON OF EDUCATION PROGRAMS

By Jericho Bicknell, Education and Outreach Coordinator

As cooler weather, orange leaves, and the switch from summer squash to cabbages signify the coming of fall, we reflect with excitement on the happenings in our Learning Garden this season. We were thrilled to offer spring and fall after school programs again, expanded options for our summer camps, and a brand new Family Program series for children ages 0-4 and their caregivers. This has been an ambitious year of growth for our programs as well as for the physical site of our Learning Garden. The construction of an outdoor shelter with a tool shed, sink, and counter space was an invaluable addition to our educational programming. On very rainy or very hot days (both of which we had many of this summer) our program instructors and participants could take cover under the shelter and explore the worm bin, make a craft, work on their journals, or prepare a fresh snack in comfort. In addition to being able to purchase



Despite the blight, the kids in the Learning Garden were able to enjoy a few homegrown tomatoes this year. Cassia Hawke took full advantage of the harvest!

more of our own supplies for hands-on food activities, we were also fortunate to be able to use Healthy Waltham's "Traveling Kitchen" for recipe preparation. Apple cider vinegar, olive oil, yogurt, milk, soup stock, salt and other spices were just some of the groceries donated by Whole Foods, which we then combined with just-picked produce from the farm to solidify the farm-to-table connection that is a big part

of what we would like kids to take away from our programs. Learning Garden teacher Nina Rogowsky commented that "The children loved preparing their own food. When they made their own salsa, the resulting concoction bore little resemblance to the commercial variety, but each child, proud of his or her efforts in producing it, tasted it. When the parents came to pick the kids up, many made comments such as, 'If I tried to serve them something like this at home, they would never eat it!'"

Elliot Trilling's mother Sarah wrote us in July to say, "Elliot is so very much enjoying Farm Camp, it's absolutely his favorite part of summer. I'm so glad that my children get to truly see where food comes from!" and Oliver Saffery's mother JJ wrote, "Oliver spent some really productive time at the farm, digging and learning, with Cambridge Adventure Day Camp. He loved it there. Toward the end of the summer he came home with seeds in a pot. He nursed and tended them and they are 3 beautiful big seedlings now."

Thanks to Nina Rogowsky, Paula Jordan, and Lina Yamashita, this year's fabulous Learning Garden educators; Mark Walter and all the volunteers who helped build out our new Learning Garden space, as well as those who worked to try and keep some control of the weeds; Natasha Hawke for keeping her chickens, ducks and bees at the farm and engaging our young farmers in caring for them; Whole Foods Newtonville and Fresh Pond for the summer and fall grocery supplies and Healthy Waltham for use of the travelling kitchen; and to the following foundations and corporate funders for essential education program support: Agnes M. Lindsay Trust, Cambridge Community Foundation, Draper Laboratory, Green Leaf Foundation, Harpley Foundation, Orville W. Forté Charitable Foundation, and The Ramsey McCluskey Family Foundation.

## THE LEARNING GARDEN HAS GONE SOLAR!

It's been a season-long project, starting with early winter conversations between our staff and volunteer biologist James Crall, proceeding with purchasing and then having to return some faulty equipment, and then finally pulling in Roger Lee, CEO and Founder of Sunshine Advantage, LLC to help us complete our plans to set up a solar system so education program participants can turn harvested produce into luscious smoothies, blended dips and heated recipes using the power of the sun! Just a few weeks ago, Sunshine Advantage was pleased to install two Mitsubishi 125w solar panels on the roof of our outdoor classroom. With this new system in place, we will be able to power small appliances for their use during educational programs and workshops. The photovoltaic (solar) system is not only a viable solution for the farm to generate clean

energy, but it is also a great way to introduce renewable energy to young children. One of Sunshine Advantage's core values is to help educate and establish energy security for local communities through solar systems, so we were thrilled to partner with the company on this project. Located in Needham, Sunshine Advantage, LLC provides photovoltaic system design, building and integration services for commercial and residential properties. For more information, please visit [www.sunshineadvantage.com](http://www.sunshineadvantage.com).



Thanks to the Sunshine Advantage team for designing and installing our new solar system!



Nina, Lina and Jericho gratefully receive groceries from Terri Petrunyak from Whole Foods Newtonville and Lynay Smith from Whole Foods Fresh Pond for farm to table programming.

## THANK YOU

### TO OUR 2009 LOCAL BUSINESS HEROES

AlphaGraphics, Waltham	The MathWorks, Inc.
CitySide Subaru	O'Connell & Rudolph, LLC
Commonwealth Financial Network	Pioneer Investments
Earth Footwear	Stanton Insurance Agency
Energy Credit Union	Staples, Waltham
First Parish Church in Waltham	Wainwright Bank & Trust Co., Watertown Square
Fresh Pond Capital	Watertown Savings Bank
Gordon's Fine Wines and Liquors	Whole Foods Market, Fresh Pond & Newtonville
Gravestar, Inc. (Waltham Plaza, LLC)	
Hitachi Data Systems	

**Please contact us to find out how you can become a Local Business Hero too!**



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## WAYS TO GET INVOLVED

### Harvest Potluck Volunteers

We're looking for 10–15 volunteers to help with our Harvest Potluck on Saturday, October 31st. We need people on the day of the event as well as ahead of time. If interested, please contact Jericho at [jericho@communityfarms.org](mailto:jericho@communityfarms.org).

### Fall Field Volunteering

There are still a few weeks left to volunteer with fieldwork. Now through Friday, October 30th, you can drop-in to volunteer Tuesday through Saturday. Stay for an hour or up until noon, but please show up at 9am so everyone can get started as a team.

### Winter Share Harvest and Distribution Help

We are looking for a few key volunteers to help us on the day of and during the week leading up to our November winter share distribution. If you have weekday availability in mid-November and/or can help us on Saturday, November 14th, please contact Amanda at [farmmanager@communityfarms.org](mailto:farmmanager@communityfarms.org).

### Special Project Opportunities

Want to help complete our self-guided tour of the farm, help sell merchandise at CSA distributions and events, and/or stuff envelopes for upcoming mailings? We're also open to helping you pursue an idea of your own that relates to our mission. Contact Claire at [claire@communityfarms.org](mailto:claire@communityfarms.org) to express your interest.



## MARK YOUR CALENDARS!

### Harvest Potluck on Halloween This Year. Come in Costume! Saturday, Oct. 31, 11am–1pm:

Our annual Harvest Potluck for members, supporters and friends of the farm will feature live music, children's activities, prizes for best costumes and a raffle! Potluck Suggestions (organized by first letter of last name) – A–G: drinks or dessert; H–N: a salad of some sort; O–R: an appetizer or side dish; S–Z: a main course.

### REAP Benefit Dinner at Prose Restaurant, Sunday, Nov. 15, 5:30pm:

Please join us for the first meal in our new REAP Dinner Series (Raising Funds for Education and Food Access Programs). Enjoy one of Chef Debbie Shore's leisurely-paced dinners at her cozy restaurant on Mass Ave. in Arlington (Debbie made the delicious food for SPROUT this year). Seating is limited to 25 people; cost is \$45 per person plus tax and gratuity. Homemade ginger limeade is included with the meal; beer, wine and other beverages are available for purchase. To reserve your seats, call Debbie at Prose: 781-648-2800.

### Benefit Concert at Johnny D's with Kris Delmhorst, Tim Gearan, Barry Rothman, Sean Staples, and our very own farmer, Dan Roberts, Tuesday, Dec. 1, 8–10:30pm:

Come on out for a night of terrific music by some of the best singer-songwriters around. Tickets are \$15/person (ages 21+) and can be purchased in advance through our website ([www.communityfarms.org](http://www.communityfarms.org)). Johnny D's is in Davis Sq., Somerville.

### WFCF Annual Meeting, Tuesday, Jan. 12:

To be held in the evening at the Waltham Public Library. Event program details coming soon...