



local food for everyone

Spring 2009

NEWSLETTER

Spring makes its own statement, so loud and clear that the gardener seems to be only one of the instruments, not the composer. Geoffrey B. Charlesworth

240 Beaver Street • Waltham, MA 02452 • 781-899-2403 • www.communityfarms.org

OFF-SEASON WITH FARMER ANDY

Whenever I talk to non farmers and they find out what I do for a living, inevitably they ask, "What do you do during the winter?" Well, there's actually a fair amount of farm work that needs to be done during the off season. Winter share distributions and putting the farm to bed last well into December. January and February are spent planning for the upcoming season – tweaking our crop plans, ordering seeds and supplies, fixing equipment. And then in March, the greenhouse starts up and the growing begins. But there is one more thing that vegetable farmers do in



Andy Scherer,
Assistant Farm Manager

and have been doing it off and on ever since. I apprenticed with a master potter after college in northern Wisconsin and have worked in a handful of studios all over the greater Boston area. As much as I enjoy making pottery, I only do it in the winter. I love making pottery but can only do it in the winter. Come spring, I'm drawn back outside and into the fields. So in short, what do I do in the winter? I try and keep my hands dirty, with clay.

their off season... rejuvenate. For some it's reading or watching movies, for others it's spending lots of time with friends and family. I do my fair share of all of these, but I also try to make it into the pottery studio as much as I can. This is a chance to slow down and be creative and expressive; it's an opportunity to stay present and focus only on the task at hand, quite different than a typical day in the fields when I'm rushing around the farm doing one thing and thinking about the 10 other things that need to be done as well. I started throwing pots in college

EDUCATION AND OUTREACH COORDINATOR ON THE HORIZON

In keeping with the goals and objectives of our current Strategic Plan (07-09), we are thrilled to announce the creation of a new education and outreach position at the farm, and are looking forward to having someone in place by early April. The Education & Outreach Coordinator (EOC) will be responsible for coordination and leadership of volunteer groups and on-farm educational programs, including Children's Learning Garden programs, special farm events for targeted groups, and events in promotion of farm-to-school connections and community-building. The EOC will also have a role in helping with public education related to food access programs (like our Martha Creedon Outreach Market), participation in community events, and promotion of sustainability initiatives (composting, healthy eating, etc.)

SPROUT 2009 TO BE HELD IN AMERICA'S FIRST FACTORY

Join us on the scenic banks of the Charles River for SPROUT, our annual fundraiser and evening of celebration, featuring a silent auction, live music, and delicious food. Last year, we raised over \$32,500 for hunger relief and education initiatives, and we are setting our sights even higher this year in response to rising demand for food assistance and farm



A Farmer Andy off-season creation is just one of the many incredible auction items up for bid at SPROUT this year.

programming. The silent auction is shaping up to be as good as ever with many of last year's donors renewing their support and a great committee of folks leading the helm, including co-coordinators Kate O'Connell and Marla Rhodes. . New to SPROUT this year, we've created the "WFCF Preservation Raffle". In addition to the regular silent auction format, guests will be able to purchase low-cost tickets and place them in canning jars in front of gifts they want to win. Before the night is over, we'll draw one winner from each jar.

We are super excited about holding this year's event at the Charles River Museum of Industry in the 1814 Boston Manufacturing Company textile mill that is on the National Register of Historic Places as America's first factory. This new location will allow us to accommodate even more guests than before, and people will have the added benefit of viewing the Museum's displays, including the national touring show which runs through the end of May, called "The Bicycle Takes Off." This special exhibit chronicles the history of the bicycle, focusing on several examples of early bicycles, advertisements, photographs and other ephemera associated with what some have called the most efficient machine ever made.

Save The Date for SPROUT 2009:

Saturday, May 16th 6-9pm • Charles River Museum of Industry

Ticket invitations will be sent out soon!

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THANKS TO OUR 2008 DONORS

The work that we do at Waltham Fields Community Farm is made possible through both financial and in-kind donations from hundreds of individuals, local businesses and community organizations, and foundations. We are very grateful to everyone who contributed to our work in 2008!



Local Business Heroes*

Commonwealth Financial Network • Earth Footwear • Energy Credit Union •
First Parish Church of Waltham • Gravestar, Inc. • Stanton Insurance Agency

**These businesses are the founders of our new Local Business Hero program, an initiative to form long term partnerships with businesses and community organizations who have a shared vision for sustaining local agriculture, expanding access to fresh vegetables for people of all income levels, and providing environmental education. To learn more about our program partners, follow the links provided on our website: www.communityfarms.org/index.php/supporters/local-business-heroes*

Additional Business and Community Support

R. L. Allison • Alphagraphics • American Repertory Theatre • Antonia's Restaurant • Arlington Children's Theater • Arlington Reiki Associates • Arron Sturgeon Graphic Design • Autumn Hills Orchard • Beadventurous Jewelry • Belmont Car Wash & Detail Center • Belmont Frame And Art • Big Fresh • Biogen Idec Blues Band • Bodywise Therapeutic Massage • Boston Sports Club • Brine's Sporting Goods • Cabot Cheese • Cantata Singers • Chapel Hill Chauncey Hall • Charles River Chiropractic • Chef Around Town Personal Chef Service • Chestnut Farms • Chez Henri • Christopher's Restaurant • Citrio Catering & Provisions Co. • Cityside Subaru • Cook's Illustrated • Cooper Muscular Therapy • Doubletree Guest Suites • East Coast Grill & Raw Bar • Eat More Kale.com • Fedco Seeds • FEI Theaters • Flora • Focus First, LLC • Fresh Pond Capital • Gardener's Supply/Dutch Gardens • Gargoyles on the Square • Geoff and Drews • Gordon's Fine Wine and Liquors • Hamersley's Bistro • Harpoon Brewery • Harvard Book Store • Harvest Co-op Market • Healing Arts of Belmont • Hitachi Data Systems • Iggy's Bread of the World • Il Capriccio • Inman Oasis • Kerry Hawkins Graphic Design • KinderExpress • Knead Massage Therapy • Landmark Theatre • Larz Anderson Auto Museum • Les Zygomates Wine Bar & Bistro • Marcou Jewelers in Waltham • Margarita's • Masao's Kitchen • McCormick and Schmick's Seafood Restaurant • MetroRock Climbing Gym • Museum of Science • New England Rain Barrel Company • New England Wild Flower Society • New Repertory Theatre • Notchland Inn • O'Connell & Rudolph • Pioneer Investments • Raffi's Limousine Service • Random Acts of Jewelry • Reagle Players • Real Pickles • Redbones • Reynders McVeigh Capital Management • Russo's • Sara Jamison Esthetics • Seeds of Solidarity • Shady Hill School • Shaws – Belmont • Solea • Spark Craft Studios • Spectrum Singers • Staples Copy and Print Center • Susan Liao Massage Therapy • Taza Chocolate • Temple Beth David • Temple Beth Elohim • Tennessee's BBQ • The Chapel • The Charles Hotel • The Elephant Walk Restaurant Group, Inc. • The Magnolia Wine Company • The Red Lion Inn • Tom Lyons Tire & Auto Center • Trekroller • Trillium Asset Management • Tuscan Grill • Upstairs on the Square • Valora Charters • Vanguarden CSA • Wainwright Bank & Trust Company • Waldorf School • Watch City Brewery Company • Watertown Savings Bank • West Side Lounge • Westport Rivers Vineyard & Winery • Whole Foods • Zip Car • Zocalo Cocina Mexicana

Foundations

Barron Family Fund • Cricket Foundation • Crossroads Community Foundation • Green Leaf Foundation • Draper Laboratories' Corporate Foundation • The Frederick E. Weber Charities Corporation • Harpley Foundation • Hope Foundation Foundation M • IBM community service grant (in recognition of the volunteer service of IBM employee Marian Friedman) • Orville W. Forte Charitable Foundation • Project Bread • Ramsey McCluskey Family Foundation • The Fullen-Smith Foundation • The Jersey Foundation • The Morton and Dinah Danseyar Family Foundation • Waltham Community Foundation • Shaw's Corporate Giving • Vervane Foundation • and four Anonymous donations, two of which were made through the Boston Foundation

Individuals

Thomas Akin and Lisa Hasting • Rachel Alabiso • Edith Allen • Paul and Paula Aloisio • Sara Anderson • Gretta Anderson and Paul Bay • Josh and Courtney Apgar • Lisa Arrowood and Philip O'Neill • Lynda Banzi-Sponholtz and Todd Sponholtz • Robin Barber • Brad Barber • Karen Barone • Tracy Barron • Mary-Frances Barry • Marina Bartley • Molly and Peter Baskette • Steven Beardsley • Judith and Matthew Beecher • Judy Bennett • Brenda Berasi • Hillary Berbeco • Cindy Bethard • Laura Bethard and Jack Greene • Frank Bingham • Judy and Jerry Blaine • Nora Bloch and Skuk Jones • Rick Blumsack • Pat Bonnet • Ann Bonsett and Peter Muisse • Amy Braddock • Lucinda Brandt • Kristin Bray • Pete Brenton • Jessica Brooks and Russell Neufeld • Susan Brown • Jessica Ellen Brown and Bree Carlson • Robin Buell • Janet Bunbury • Eliza Burden • Kimberly and Matthew Burnett • Greg Burns • Wendy Cadge and Deborah Elliott • Amy and Kris Camp • Amy Candell • Elisabeth Carter • Amanda Cather and Mark Walter • Don and Mary Cather • Joseph Chabot • Marvin and Mary Chaney • Jane Anna Chapman and John Buchheit • Julie Chamberlin • Jan Childs • Michael Cicone • Jeffrey Clements • Laurie Cleveland • Russ Cohen and Ellen Vliet Cohen • Martha Cohen and Marc Wolman • Ann and Aaron Cohen • Sophia Cohen • Daphne Collins and Norm Richardson • Meg Coward • Ellie and Walter Creedon • Stephen and Maura Crowley • James Dailey • Anndy Dannenberg and Glenn Rosen • Irene Deane • Hank and Emily DeGroat • Tim Delaney • Cindy Delpapa and Margaret Kearns • Kathy and Richard Diamond • Cynthia Dill and Heather Glista • Grace Dingee • Richard Dinjian • Jane Dobisz • Reva Dolobowsky and Jeff Howe • Jean Duprelien • Marcia Dworkind and Charles Merzbacher • Carroll Eastman and David Dorfman • Amy Eastwood • Ellen Epstein and Ian Brownell • John Eskew and Rita Vaidya • Eleanor Fabris • Judith Fallows and Adrian Gropper • Kate Farb-Johnson • Amanda Ferguson-Cradler • Louise Forrest and Leslie Horst • Bobbi Fox and Daniel Dern • Reena Freedman and Dan Riles • Marian Friedman • Tim and Kate Fukawa-Connolly • Jocelyn Gardner • Lien and Doug Gauthier • John Gawoski • Katherine and Ted Gekas • Sabine Gerbatsch • Bill Gerber • Bill Gerke and Jessica Korecki • Lauren Gill and Paul Smith • Fumiko Gold • Carol Goranson and Novem Ayeung • Jeff and Sheryl Grace • Lydia Gregoret • Kris Gregson and Oz Barron • Allison Gross • Amanda Gutowski • Deb Guttormsen • Ruth Haas • Robert Hagopian • Melissa and Frank Hanenberger • Rachel Happel • Lydia and Rob Harris • Chris Harris • Sarah Hartman and Benjamin Newman • Ezra and Allison Hausman • Eileen R. Heisman • Sue Hickey • Elise Hoblitzelle • Laurie Hoffmann •

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Individuals *continued from previous page*

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THANK YOU

SPOTLIGHT ON PRESERVE'S ZERO WASTE INITIATIVE

Today, Waltham is a hub for the Eco-Revolution, just as it was one of the early hubs of the American Industrial Revolution two hundred years ago. One of the companies leading the way is Preserve, a company that creates stylish performance-driven products like the Preserve toothbrush, razor, tableware, mixing bowls, cutting boards, and colanders – all of which are all made from 100% recycled #5 plastics. In an effort to become a zero waste workplace, Preserve team members recently launched Project Zero, which includes a partnership with Waltham Fields Community Farm to compost the company's food waste at our farm. Preserve is committed to community building and environmental sustainability; all manufacturing is done in the USA and all Preserve products are BPA (bisphenol A) free. The company is powered by the recycling efforts of individuals and companies via its Preserve Gimme 5 program, which accepts #5 plastics, a type of plastic that many municipalities do not currently recycle – such as yogurt cups and other common household containers. Learn how to turn your used #5 plastics into new Preserve products at www.preserveproducts.com/gimme5.



Preserve employee Jon Doyle rides his bike to work every day and makes regular compost drops at the farm in support of Preserve's Project Zero



ANNUAL MEETING FOCUSES ON DUNG BEETLES, CLIMATE CHANGE & YOU

Waltham Fields Community Farm was proud to host guests Jim Laurie and Marla Rhodes from the Somerville Climate Action Committee to speak at our Annual Meeting on January 13th at the Waltham Public Library. Their provocative presentation started out by explaining the basic scientific facts that have led scientists all over the world to agree that climate change is one of the most pressing problems of our time. They then moved into the latest developments in slowing/reversing this problem, going beyond the idea of reducing our carbon footprint to strategies to restore damaged ecosystems and sequester atmospheric carbon.

Jim Laurie used the Texas ranching industry as his main case study. Most of the ranchers in the area are dragging the land to take away brush. They then burn the brush piles to create bare ground, add seed and get quick grass growth for grazing, often with irrigation. All this is putting carbon into the air by using fire and continually exposing the soil. They are also using pesticides to try to control unwanted weed species. In contrast, the Maddox Ranch, a leader in rotational grazing, has devised a system that doesn't burn brush, add seed or use chemicals. Their grazing land is divided into 25 tracts. Animals stay in one tract for about a week and then don't return to the same tract for 6 months. Their system of rotational grazing in concentrated areas has nurtured an exploding dung beetle population which finds the animal dung and carts it down beneath the surface for feeding and breeding. Once populations are built up, virtually no dung escapes burial within 24 hours, allowing the carbon to be stored in the soil, instead of sitting on top of the soil where it breeds flies and gets washed into waterways, leading to pollution problems.

In this system the hoofs of the ruminants also play an important role by helping to breakup the hardpack in an area, allowing water penetration and germination of native seeds stored in the soil as the area is allowed to recover when it is out of rotation. Joe Maddox says the recovery has been slow, but each year they see more grass. Some years they get more rainfall and it is sinking into the land more and more. When the Maddox family started their operation in 2002, the ranch had not seen animal impact for 15 years (except for some deer activity). There was 68% bare ground and 50% of the land had a crust or hard pack that couldn't absorb water. Most of the grass plants were dead or dying. By 2007, the Maddox Ranch had changed the landscape to 35% bare ground and only 25% hardpack. The health and diversity of the perennial grasses was greatly improved. Their costs are much less and they are running more animals at 250% of the recommended rate. They are investing in their land, paying their bills and making a living, and sequestering tons of carbon for the health of the planet!



FARM POLICY SWEETENS THE POT FOR HIGH FRUCTOSE CORN SYRUP

While the Waltham Fields Community Farm staff is hard at work trying to make a contribution to reversing the obesity epidemic by promoting fresh vegetable consumption, our new board member, Alicia Harvie, is hard at work exposing misguided U.S. farm policy as a contributor to this crisis. Alicia, a student in the Agriculture, Food and Environment masters degree program at Tufts University, recently teamed up with Timothy A. Wise from the Global Development and Environment Institute at Tufts to investigate the extent to which the production of high fructose corn syrup (HFCS) was boosted by farm policy that effectively lowered corn prices below corn's cost of production from 1997–2005. Over this 9-year period, HFCS producers received an implicit subsidy of \$243 million a year – a total savings of \$2.2 billion. For soda bottlers, the main consumers of HFCS and among those most heavily implicated in public health concerns, the savings amounted to nearly \$100 million per year; \$873 million over the nine-year period, and nearly \$1.7 billion since the wholesale adoption of HFCS by the soda industry in the mid-eighties. While this may not have reduced soda prices to an extent that would account for rising consumption, there's little doubt U.S. agricultural policies indirectly subsidized a sector that may be contributing to health problems in the United States.

To read Alicia and Timothy's full report, go to: <http://www.ase.tufts.edu/gdae/Pubs/rp/PB09-01SweeteningPotFeb09.pdf>.

CHERRY BOMB TRAP CROPPING ON THE FARM

As we gear up for the 2009 growing season, we are looking forward to testing out an emerging practice for control of certain pest species, called Perimeter Trap Cropping. The practice is based on exploiting an insect's natural preference for some varieties of a crop type over others. At our farm, we will be trying this out for control of the Pepper Maggot, which has a preference for flattened or rounded types of peppers such as the Cherry Bomb variety.

The Pepper Maggot has been known to affect up to 90% of unprotected crops, and has been a significant pest at Waltham Fields Community Farm, where we don't spray our crops with chemical pesticides and have nearby tree borders for the pepper maggot fly to take refuge in. The damage from this fly manifests itself as small holes in the skin of the pepper fruit and the development of maggots as the life cycle progresses, making it especially hard for us to ripen our green peppers into untarnished red ones. By surrounding our sweet pepper crop with a perimeter of cherry bombs and covering our main crop of peppers with floating row cover during the few weeks when the maggot fly breeds and lays eggs, we hope to concentrate the pepper maggot among the variety it prefers, and achieve higher quality production of our sweet pepper crop. A study published in Horticultural Entomology in 2003, called *Managing the Pepper Maggot (Diptera: Tephritidae) Using Perimeter Trap Cropping*, reported that "maggots infested only 1.7% of the main crop fruit when protected by a sprayed or unsprayed trap crop barrier; compared with 15.4% in control plots." The study goes on to conclude that, "use of the perimeter trap crop technique as part of an IPM or organic program can help improve crop quality and overall farm production."

Jim, Marla and Claire strategize how to get Redbones to serve range-fed ribs after their presentation.




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WAYS TO GET INVOLVED

Volunteer Drop-In Hours Begin Tuesday, March 3rd:
Help our farmers get the season off to a great start!

- March Hours: Tues–Fri, 9:00 a.m.
- April–Oct: Tues–Sat, 9:00a.m.

Stay for an hour or all the way up to 12pm, but please show up at 9am so anyone present that day can get started as a team. Folks of all ages are welcome!

Food Access/Hunger Relief

Want to help out with our hunger relief efforts? We're looking for volunteers to help deliver produce to food access partners and to help out with our Martha Creedon Outreach Market. To get involved, contact Andy at andy@communityfarms.org

SPROUT Volunteers and Auction Donations Needed

There are many opportunities to help out with our annual spring fundraiser, SPROUT. Join our organizing committee or simply volunteer to help out on the day of the event. We're also eager to receive underwriting donations and donations of auction gift items, such as gift certificates, handmade crafts, lessons for building skills, and weekend getaways.

Children's Learning Garden Intern Wanted

We're looking for an enthusiastic person to assist our Children's Learning Garden Teacher for spring, summer and fall programming. The Intern will help plan and implement garden and food-based activities for kids ages 6–11, as well as help with general garden maintenance. The time commitment is one afternoon a week in the spring and fall, and 15–20 hours per week for 6 weeks in the summer. A \$1000 stipend is offered. To express interest, contact Claire at claire@communityfarms.org



Future Assistant Grower Isaiah Irwin Evans puts in quality tractor time during the Chestnut Farms January meat CSA pickup at Waltham Fields.

MARK YOUR CALENDARS!

Farm Activity and Story Hour Programs at the Public Library, March 24th & 31st

Join Paula Jordan, a past CLG Assistant and current volunteer farm educator, for a free activity and story hour series at the Waltham Public Library on two Tuesdays in March, from 3:30–4:30.
 Tuesday, March 24th – The Risky Life of a Seed, and
 Tuesday, March 31st – Critters that Call the Farm their Home.
 Programs are intended for kids ages 6–11 and their caregivers. Open to all.

SPROUT, Saturday, May 16th

Waltham Fields Community Farms' annual spring fundraiser at the Charles River Museum of Industry. Tickets go on sale at the beginning of April – buy yours early, as we anticipate another sold out event this year!

WISH LIST *Donation values are tax-deductible.*

- More land to farm
- 55 gallon barrels with lids for our greenhouse heat sink project
- Picnic tables
- Laptop computer and small form desktops capable of running Vista & Office 2007
- LCD monitors in good condition, 17"