

WEEK 7

HAWTHORNE VALLEY FARM

CSA Newsletter



MEET ANOTHER APPRENTICE JULY 23, 2009

I grew up in Marietta, GA, and moved to Poughkeepsie NY in the fall of 2000 to attend Vassar College. During my freshman year, I experienced my first huge snowstorm, and completely fell in love with the Hudson Valley. Soon after, I interned at the Poughkeepsie Farm Project, and that introduction to learning about organic farming, food justice, and the magic of greenhouses has greatly informed my worldview and activities in the years since.

Which must be why, nine years later, here I am apprenticing at Hawthorne Valley Farm! When I first came here, Farmer Katy told me she thought that the cows were like the heartbeat of the farm, steady and regular. I think that when the cows come in for milking, the farm inhales, and when they go out to pasture, the farm exhales. Now, this isn't a "oh no, pending doom entering the barn" sort of an inhale; the farm isn't holding it's breath. Rather, it's more like a yogic breath, calm and centered and a lovely thing to plan your day around. Of course, sometimes, even the meditative yogi of this farm organism hiccups, or a laugh wells up and bursts free.

Today is one of those days; a perfect day for it, really. Sunny, warm, and the grass is certainly greener...right over that fence. During lunch, the generally placid dairy herd discovered a hole in the fence that keeps them in their winter field, where they've been munching on silage, the fermented hay from last year's grass. Silage does the job, has plenty of nutrients and fills them up, but a choice between silage and grass is going to be, 100% of the time, hands down, no doubt about it, a rollicking good grass grazing. And let me tell you, they really did rollick. Stately matrons, elder cows who've ambled down the lane on their own time thank you very much, every day since November, kicked up their heels and moved out. Some did a little jig while crossing the line. Others skipped, hopped, and made merry. I think there was even a little party before they settled down to the serious business of grazing. Perhaps the grass wasn't quite ready for them, but they sure were ready for that grass.

It's amazing how, in such a linked and interconnected organism such as this farm, there are also some pockets where you might just miss out on such a scene as the great cow escape of April, 2009. The greenhouse is one of those places. Pigs out? Fence down? Cow's doing somersaults? Never would've known, while I was in the greenhouse. The plastic walls muffle sounds from outside, even while letting light and quite a bit of the sun's heat in. The other day, I was wishing for shorts, dreaming I was in the days of summer, transplanting bright rainbow chard seedlings into the beds.

Soon we will be transplanting seedlings outside; the last frost is generally late May in this area. We've already seeded spinach and peas outside, and have been hoeing the garlic planted last autumn. Until

then, the seedling greenhouses will be full of row after row of young broccolis, tomatoes, lettuces, eggplants...all the good stuff we'll be sending your way. And I'm pretty sure, once those shares start rolling, we'll be rollicking in the vegetable "grazing" just as happily as the cows are now in the pastures. Thank you for supporting our work, and enjoying our harvest.

-Jen
HVF Apprentice 2009



Coming Soon

Next Week's
Anticipated Harvest

Cucumbers
Zucchini
Red mini onions
Kale
Lettuce



Meet Our Apprentices

Please meet **Jen Carson**, one of our farm apprentices for 2009. She wrote this article in April 2009, back when we farmers had time to reflect about the coming busy season. So to put the summer in perspective, to connect us with the seasons even more, here is Jen's perspective on the farm, like a time capsule from April.

-Farmer Katy



A DIVERSIFIED
DEMETER-CERTIFIED
BIODYNAMIC FARM LOCATED
IN MID-UPSTATE NEW YORK.



Cucumber Salsa

- 1 small cucumber, peeled, seeded, finely diced
- 1 plum tomato, finely diced
- 1 green onion, chopped
- 1 tablespoon minced cilantro,
- 1 tablespoon sour cream
- 1 1/2 teaspoons fresh lime juice
- 1/4 teaspoon minced garlic
- 1/4 teaspoon minced jalapeno
- 1/4 teaspoon salt
- 1/8 teaspoon ground cumin
- 1/8 teaspoon white pepper

Mix all ingredients in a small bowl. Taste and adjust seasonings.

<http://www.lpl.arizona.edu/~bcohen/cucumbers/recipes/pecan.html>

Balsamic Glazed Beets

- 3 1/2 pounds beets (4 pounds with greens attached, reserving greens for another use), scrubbed and trimmed, leaving about 1-inch of stems attached
- 3 tablespoons balsamic vinegar
- 2 tablespoons pure maple syrup
- 1 tablespoon olive oil
- 1 1/2 teaspoons minced fresh thyme leaves

In a large saucepan cover beets with salted water by 1 inch. Simmer beets, covered, 35 to 45 minutes, or until tender, and drain in a colander. Cool beets until they can be handled and slip off skins and stems. Cut beets lengthwise into wedges. Beets may be prepared up to this point 2 days ahead and chilled, covered. Bring beets to room temperature before proceeding. In a large skillet stir together vinegar, syrup, and oil and add beets. Cook beet mixture with salt and pepper to taste over moderate heat, stirring, until heated through and coated well. Sprinkle about half of thyme over beets and toss gently. Serve beets sprinkled with remaining thyme.

Gourmet Magazine, November 1995

Come Visit YOUR Farm!

Recently, Stephanie, a CSA member, wrote:

"My husband and I are members of your CSA, and we were wondering if we could come by the farm sometime early next week to visit. Is there a day/time that's better for you, or can we just show up? Looking forward to seeing the farm that produces all of our wonderful veggies! Best, Stephanie"

It was great to receive and thank you Stephanie for the inspiration. So I am passing on a personal invitation to each of you. Taking a trip to the farm is a great way to spend the day, and connect with the source of your food. You can take a tour, shop at the farm store, do a little weeding in the field, meet the farmers and say hello to the cows! Not to mention there is so much to experience and enjoy in Columbia County, it would be easy to make a weekend of it! You can even tour one of the Hudson River Valley's local wineries on your way. Best to schedule a tour. Tour dates are **Monday through Thursday from 10:00am – 2:00pm**. Weekends are by special arrangement. Just give me a call at the office if you'd like to schedule a visit **518-672-7500 x105**. It would be my pleasure to give you a tour!

-Margo

What to do with those red mini-onions?

OK, so they're not big enough to use like regular onions (too much chopping work), and they're too big to slice up like scallions, so what to do with them? Well, I tried something last night that you may just LOVE!

I separated the bulbs from the tops, which I reserved. You can use them just like any scallion tops. I sliced them thinly and tossed them in with a pot of mussels I steamed for a dinner party last night.

The bulbs, I cut the root end off, cleaned, and tossed them in a small saucepot with enough white wine to cover them, and a dash of sugar, and brought to a boil. Once the onions started to boil, I reduced to a simmer and let them bubble away for about an hour, until they were very soft and most of the wine had reduced away.

I then removed the onions, and mashed them with a fork. If they don't give easily and just fall apart, then you need to cook them longer.

I served them as a side for baked fish, with pearl barley & kale.

-Chef Mark

Zucchini Pancakes

- 1 pound zucchini, trimmed coarsely grated
- 2 cups chopped green onions
- 4 eggs beaten to blend
- 1/2 cup all purpose flour
- 1/3 cup chopped fresh dill
- 1/3 cup chopped fresh parsley
- 2 Tablespoons chopped fresh tarragon or 2 teaspoons dried
- 1/2 teaspoon salt
- 1/2 teaspoon ground pepper
- 1/2 cup crumbled feta cheese
- 2/3 cup chopped walnuts
- Olive oil



Place zucchini in colander. Sprinkle with salt and let stand 30 minutes. Squeeze zucchini with hands to remove liquid, then squeeze dry in several layers of paper towels.

Combine zucchini, chopped green onions, eggs, flour, chopped dill, parsley, tarragon, salt and pepper in a medium bowl. Mix well. Fold in feta cheese. (zucchini mixture can be prepared 3 hours ahead. Cover tightly and refrigerate. Stir to blend before continuing.) Fold chopped walnuts into zucchini mixture.

Preheat oven to 300°F. Place baking sheet in oven. Cover bottom of large non-stick skillet with olive oil. Heat skillet over medium-high heat. Working in batches, drop zucchini mixture into skillet by heaping tablespoons. Fry until pancakes are golden brown and cooked through, about 3 minutes per side. Transfer each batch of pancakes to baking sheet in oven to keep warm.

<http://recipes.epicurean.com/recipe/16017/zucchini-pancakes.html>