



News from Provident Organic Farm



www.providentfarm.org

Season 5, Week 19

“dedicated to a safe, just, and sustainable food system” September 4th-10th, 2006

Notes from the Field, vol. 5, # 19

Please forgive me for this diversion, but my heart must speak.

I dedicate this newsletter to the memory of H. William Overholt, 6/9/19-8/29/06, my friend, my teacher and one of the finest people I have ever known. Kathy and I will be attending his funeral Sunday afternoon. He was known as Tomato Willie in Somerset County because he and his family grew, without a doubt, the finest tomatoes on the Eastern Shore. The Overholt “pack” was sought after by fruit stands throughout the area.

I met Mr. Overholt in 1987, two years after Kathy and I started Silver Seed Greenhouses. He was searching for an alternative to the tomato plants shipped from Georgia and Florida that frequently were infected with fungal diseases that reduced yield and affected the quality of tomatoes grown on the Eastern Shore. He believed locally grown plants would not have these problems. He put his trust in us and helped us grow our little backyard business into a viable enterprise. I owe, in large part, my success in the greenhouse business to Mr. Overholt for his faith in us.

We were in the process of transitioning our greenhouse operation to organic practices when we first grew tomato plants for Willie. I knew we had to be quiet about this conversion with our conventional customers so as not to scare them away. Mind you, fear is a tremendous factor in conventional growing and “organic” meant “no protection” to those uninformed. Willie knew something was different about my plants and I wanted to share what I was trying to do with him. He and his wife Pearl (so aptly named) would often come here on Sunday afternoons and visit the plants, giving me helpful instruction. I tried to convince Willie that a plant grown with compost and natural fertilizers would be healthy and able to resist the diseases that attacked plants grown with a chemical dependency. I think he finally believed me after 10 years.

One day when I had delivered plants to his farm we took a ride to look at other farms in the area. He showed me a field of tomatoes that had been sprayed with an herbicide. This practice facilitated pulling up the stakes and getting the plastic mulch out of the field. I asked him “How does anyone expect to elicit life from a piece of ground after doing **that** to it.” His answer, “The old-timers would turn over in their graves if they saw what we are doing now”. It was then that I realized Willie believed in what I was doing, but also knew he was trapped in a system of agriculture with a bleak future. I believe that was why he supported me through my learning process, while I tried to figure out how to grow strong, healthy plants organically. We both prospered from our friendship.

When Willie retired, his sons took over the farm but gave up the tomato business and turned to grain and chickens, mostly because the labor to tend 30 acres of tomatoes was increasingly difficult to find. I know this hurt Willie, but he knew they had to do what they thought best for them. Since then I visited Willie whenever I was in the area and had the time to spare. Our family has shared Thanksgiving Dinners with the Overholt family, a feast fit for a king to say the least. Picture no less than 50 family members and friends sitting down to a meal lovingly prepared under the direction of a Pearl of a woman. This is a memory that will live in my heart forever. I treasure my friendship with the Overholt family.

Onward,

Jay

In your share

**Sweet Potatoes
Selection of Winter Squash
Peppers
Beets?**

Curried Squash

1	squash peeled, cut into chunks
2 tbsp	shallots or onions
1 tbsp	garlic
1 tsp	ginger
2	hot peppers
3 tbsp	water
1/2 cup	water
3/4 cup	cilantro
1 can	coconut milk
1 tsp	sugar
1 tsp	salt
1/4 cup	basil leaves

1. Food process: shallots, garlic, ginger, peppers, 3 tablespoons water, basil, & cilantro until it's a paste consistency.

2. Heat 1/2 cup coconut milk in a saucepan & gently boil. Cook a few minutes until thickened.

3. Add curry paste until dissolved in coconut milk. Add remaining coconut milk, 1/2 cup water, sugar, salt, & squash. Raise heat & bring to a rolling boil. Reduce heat & cook until squash is tender.

Cooks Note: My mother-in-law makes this dish when she visits us. It smells and tastes fabulous.

CCAN Director Mike Tidwell Discusses How Climate Change Will Affect You & What You Can Do About It

After Katrina: Disaster and the Politics of Climate Change

Wednesday, September 6, 7:00 - 9:00 PM

The Town Creek Foundation in Easton, Md. will host a lecture by Mike Tidwell, author of *The Ravaging Tide: Strange Weather, Future Katrinas and the Coming Death of America's Coastal Cities* and Executive Director of the Chesapeake Climate Action Network on Wednesday, September 6 as part of its 2006 Edmund A. Stanley Jr. Lecture Series.

Author and filmmaker Mike Tidwell predicted in vivid detail the Katrina hurricane disaster in his 2003 book *Bayou Farewell: The Rich Life and Tragic Death of Louisiana's Cajun Coast*. He just released his follow-up book titled *The Ravaging Tide: Strange Weather, Future Katrinas, and the Coming Death of America's Coastal Cities*. Tidwell's most recent documentary film - "We Are All Smith Islanders" - details the dangers and solutions associated with global warming in Maryland, Virginia and D.C.

WHAT: A global warming lecture by CCAN Director Mike Tidwell

After Katrina: Disaster and the Politics of Climate Change

WHEN: September 6, 7:00 - 9:00 PM

WHERE: Town Creek Foundation, 121 N. West Street, Easton, Maryland 21601


MORE INFORMATION: for more information, visit Town Creek's website at www.towncreekfdn.org

More recipes from the first four years of Provident Organic Farm CSA may be found on our website:

www.providentfarm.org

Recipes are indexed by individual vegetable.

Please email your recipes to Theresa Connelly (MightyTeaOne@cs.com).



THE LEADER IN ORGANIC-BASED LAWN CARE

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Comments & Contributions

We welcome your comments and contributions, including recipes! Please send to ubuubok@comcast.net or Provident Organic Farm CSA, PO Box 62, Bivalve, MD 21814.