



News From Provident Organic Farm

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Season 5, Week 2

“dedicated to a safe, just, and sustainable food system”

May 1st – 7th

Part of the mission of our CSA and CSA's in general is to reconnect people to the land that sustains them. At present, our food supply is at risk of total corporate control, a handful of corporations control a major portion of the global food supply, from seed to plate. Consider the first person that fed you and the intimacy of that relationship. Dwell on that for a moment.

Now envision yourself having a similar relationship with a corporation! Not likely.

Claudia Hemphill, a doctoral student in environmental science at the University of Idaho believes that cultural perceptions of soil are partially to blame for our poor stewardship of the soil in the past 100 years. She contends that “Americans have ingrained negative connotations about dirt, which minimize concerns about what people do to soil and how they care for it. This careless attitude leads to deterioration of soil quality, as the earth gets overworked and large amounts of toxic chemicals are used to eliminate pests and weeds.” Hemphill believes the Leonardo da Vinci statement, “We know more about the motions of the Universe than the soil beneath our feet.” Using her extensive background in anthropology and philosophy, Hemphill has studied different cultures in depth and found that soil came to be identified with things that fade and die. As society became richer and more urban, soil was identified with people who were rural and of a lower social-economic class. In the span of 100 years, the United States saw a population composed mostly of farmers become 95% urban. “Anyone who was considered socially inferior --- such as immigrants or different ethnic groups --- was called **dirty**. One of the biggest public health campaign slogans around the turn of the century was “Dirt, Disease and Death”. We have covered the dirt in our backyards with patios, concrete, gravel and mulch to “protect” ourselves from dirt.

Studies by medical researchers at the Oregon Health Sciences University and other universities have found that children are more likely to develop asthma and other allergies from cleaning chemicals than from dirt. Some research demonstrates that exposure to dirt is essential to developing a healthy immune system. As with the principle behind vaccines, the minute exposure children get to a wide range of environmental organisms through playing in the dirt triggers the development of their antibody levels.

Hemphill is also taking a hands-on approach to her philosophy. She helped found Soil Stewards, an organic farming club. Their membership includes students, faculty and community groups. The produce grown by the club is purchased by the dining services of Washington State University and the University of Idaho. In an interview with **ACRES, USA**, Hemphill said, “One of the ways that people come to change their attitudes toward other people or the environment is through education. But just learning about something doesn't make you care about what happens to it or change the way you behave. So a large part of changing people's perceptions toward soil is becoming involved with it. Civilization depends on soil, so we need to adjust our relationship with soil and learn how to keep this natural life cycle going.”

Amen to that, Claudia

For more information on this topic, contact Jodi Johnson-Maynard, UI assistant professor of soil science, e-mail jmaynard@uidaho.edu

Onward,
Jay

Come to the farm on May 13 at 1:00pm for a Steering Wheels Meeting and a Truly Effortless, Costless Fundraiser

We have an easy and painless opportunity coming up to raise up to \$1,000 for LESSON (Lower Eastern Shore Sustainable Organic Network), the non-profit arm of Provident Organic Farm. The event will take place on May 13 at 1 pm at the farm (or the Bivalve Community Center in the event of rain) and should only take 20-30 minutes of your time. We will be filling out a survey on household budgeting for a University of Maryland research project on economic development. We get 50 people there to complete the surveys, we get \$1,000. Most money for LESSON goes straight to the Medora Harvest Fund. After we're done with the survey, we'll have brief Steering Wheels meeting. All CSA members are welcome to these periodic meetings. It is at these meetings we can here from Jay in more detail about the farms' needs and issues. And we can offer him our guidance, input and feedback about the CSA. Direct any inquiries to Lori Lilly - lilly@ezy.net/410-572-2785.

In Your Share

About your parsley plant and herb garden in the making: At the winter meeting, members asked if I could grow a selection of herb plants for the shareholders this year. They gave me a list of what they would like to have. I was not able to obtain suitable stock plants for Rosemary and Lavender from which to take cuttings, but we will have Garlic Chives, Thyme, Dill, Sweet Marjoram, Greek Oregano, Sage, Cilantro and 3 kinds of Basil; Sweet Thai, Lemon and Italian Large Leaf, in addition to your parsley plant. I hope I have grown enough for each member whether you split a share or have a full share. I will also have a Sun Gold cherry tomato plant for each of you. The herb plants would like to be in full sun and good garden soil. If you are not able to do this, they will survive if potted up in at least a 6" container. The Sun Gold would prefer the same conditions, but will produce in a 5 gallon container.

Verna and Shelton Lankford came down on Monday morning and potted up 600 strawberry plants for next year's patch. In spite of their huge contribution to the effort, we are still in need of potter-uppers. If you are able to help, call or e-mail me and let me know when you will be coming so I have time to prepare and give a lesson.

Baked Leeks

Leeks
Broth (vegetable or chicken)
Cream
Tarragon (spice)

Cut off ends of the leeks (most of the green) and the roots. Cut leeks in half, length wise. Clean thoroughly. Place leeks in baking pan. Fill pan about quarter way with broth, then use cream to almost completely cover the leeks. Sprinkle with tarragon. Bake in oven (uncovered) @ 350 degrees for about 20-25 minutes. They are done when tender.

Spinach & Strawberry (or mandarin oranges) Salad

Approx 10 ounces of spinach
1 pink strawberry, sliced (*or 1 can of mandarin oranges drained & dried*)
1/2 purple onion (*optional*)
1/2 cup crumbled blue cheese
1/4 cup parmesan
1/4 cup slivered almonds, toasted (*bake at 300 degrees for 8-10 mins*)

Dressing:

1/2 cup sugar
1/4 cup olive oil
1/4 cup vinegar
1 (+) dash Worcestershire sauce
Mix dressing ingredients together. Pour over spinach.
Add rest of ingredients and toss lightly.



Comments & Contributions

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

Acoustic Folk Concert Sunday May 7th in Berlin

CSA members Karen Prengaman, Robert Fudge and Stevik Kretzman will be hosting an acoustic concert featuring Devon Sproule, a critically acclaimed singer-songwriter at Waterline Gallery, 2 South Main Street, Berlin (across from the Atlantic Hotel, on the same side of Main Street) this Sunday afternoon at 5PM. Contact Stevik for more info at 443-235-3365, stevik@yahoo.com.

