

# The Stanton Street Harvest

OCTOBER 8, 2009

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE LOWER EAST SIDE'S PIONEER CSA

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TODAY'S WEATHER  
AT WINDFLOWER FARM



60°/48°

Partly cloudy.  
A crisp autumn day up there.

## TED'S LETTER FROM THE FARM

### Preparing for the Cold Is All About Timing

The changing seasons dictate our activities on the farm, of course, and this season we are keeping very busy. The arrival of fall means that we have just a few weeks left to bring in the last of our potatoes and root crops. And because our first frost is expected any day, it is time again to pull out our hoops and row covers. Tender lettuces and other salad crops will need their protection. Fall is when we plant the following summer's garlic. The ground is ready now, but if we plant too early, the cloves will produce shoots that will push through the surface before winter, zapping the cloves of their energy reserves. If we plant too late, the cloves won't send out roots before the cold sets in, losing their early start.

It is also time to take care of our soils. We need to lime a couple of our fields. A newly rented parcel produced some mediocre crops in this first year that we've used it, and part of that may have been due to acidic soils. A lime application now should remedy the problem by spring. We also have just a few weeks to establish a good rye cover crop. We use it mostly to keep our bare soils from eroding.

The coming of winter keeps us hustling. We have a greenhouse to finish. It's a big one, measuring 30 feet wide by 150 feet long, and we'll use it to enhance our winter greens growing capacity and

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## THE LAST WORD (WE HOPE) ABOUT "TOMATO BLIGHT"

*Tomato season is over, to be sure. But this article from the Baltimore Sun helped us put the whole tomato blight experience into perspective.*

Organic growers on the East Coast who were hit so hard by the early appearance of late blight are already wondering what next tomato season will bring. Is there something that can be done this fall to ensure that the blight, which usually appears late in the season after all the fruit has been harvested, doesn't short-circuit next summer's tomato season, too?

The jurors—in this case, the plant pathologists—are still out, but it looks like the strain of blight that damaged plants before they had a chance to bear fruit is not a type that will hide in the soil to attack again next summer.

Jean Beagle Ristaino of North Carolina State University is one of the plant pathologists who has been examining samples from tomato—and potato—fields. She says this year's early outbreak of a disease (*Phytophthora infestans*) that usually only strikes plants in the very late stages of the season does not appear to be a new or resistant strain. Instead, she describes this season as a "perfect storm" of climate conditions that allowed the blight to flourish and spread.

She explained that two different strains of blight must appear in a field and then mate to produce the kind of spores that can survive the winter without living plant tissue. That, she said cautiously, does not appear to have happened. "From the samples I've seen, there is only one mating type in the field," she said. "We don't have multiple mating types in the same fields. [So the blight] is not going to survive."

William Fry, a professor of plant pathol-

ogy at Cornell University, is seeing much the same thing in tissue samples from New York state. "Because in New York, we appear to have only one mating type . . . this pathogen will most likely not overwinter on its own," he said in an e-mail.

The early appearance of late blight devastated tomato and some potato crops throughout the region. The tomato plants yellowed and turned brown, as did any fruit, before the season even got under way. Commercial farms, which generally treat plants with fungicides, were able to step up the spraying when news of the blight first arrived. Organic farmers were faced with a Solomon's choice of whether to spray or not.

There is evidence that infected seedlings from the Carolinas were delivered to big-box stores and sold to home gardeners in Maryland, New York, New Jersey and elsewhere. But even so, the summer weather—in the 60s and 70s, cool and rainy—would have been ideal for the blight to flourish.

Gardeners and farmers have been told to remove infected plants, bag and dispose of them in landfills, but Ristaino disagrees. "The plants could get uncovered in a landfill," she said, and the spores could be distributed on the wind. Better, she said, to bury the plant material in the ground. "Don't leave it in the field, but bury it," she said. "The spores don't move into the soil."

Home gardeners should be careful to purchase locally grown seedlings next spring, not those that were brought in from other states or regions. Better yet, grow your own. And watch your plants carefully next summer for any of the tell-tale gray or brown spots. Remove infected plant tissue and spray healthy tissue with organic fungicides.

## Community Notes...

### NEXT WEEK'S VOLUNTEERS

Remember, we need *four* volunteers for each shift, and *two* shifts per season from each member.

#### Oct. 15 Early Shift (5:00-6:30 p.m.)

Christian Giordano, Alli Haapasalo, Annie Cheney, Ben Bailes

#### Oct. 15 Closing Shift (6:30-8:00 p.m.)

Angie Cho, Jeremiah Cymeman, David Crane, Yecnar Yuen

### BREAD SHARES END NEXT WEEK!

It's sad but true: Next week will be bread delivery No. 10—aka the end of the season. So maybe you'll want to stock up on some of your favorites? Everyone—bread shareholder or not—is welcome, nay, encouraged to order your fill at [hotbreadkitchen.org/hbkcsamenu.htm](http://hotbreadkitchen.org/hbkcsamenu.htm). The on-line store is simple to use, and you can pay for your order with PayPal. (You can place orders right up until the deadline of next Thursday at 10 a.m.)

### COME LEND A HAND!

Hey folks, here's your latest reminder about the annual It's My Park Day in our lovely community garden. Mark your calendars for Saturday, October 24, from noon to 4 p.m., and come lend a hand with some with seasonal service projects. You'll be more than adequately compensated with food, drink, and fellowship. If you're grateful that your CSA operates in this beautiful garden, this is a great way to express it!

—Letter from the Farm, from page 1

our summer tomato output. We hope to be able to cover it in two weeks, which is our deadline for planting the kales, lettuces, chards, tatsoi, and spinach that will fill our winter shares. If we wait any longer, the cold temperatures and limited light won't allow the leafy vegetables to put on enough biomass. If we plant too early, the plants will grow rank, creating too humid a canopy, and they won't keep through the winter. Hiliberto and Daren have been working on the construction for several weeks now, and it is almost finished.

We've also been trying to finish siding our barn and packing shed and adding heat to the space. We wash your veg-

### SUCCOTASH FRITTATA

from our very own Farmer Ted

1/4 pound green beans, stemmed and cut on an angle into 1-inch pieces  
4 tablespoons butter (2 tablespoons chopped into small pieces)  
3 ears corn, kernels cut off  
1 small red pepper, seeded and chopped  
1 small onion, chopped  
1 clove garlic, chopped  
3 sprigs tarragon, chopped  
12 large eggs  
A few dashes of hot pepper sauce  
Salt and pepper

Preheat the oven to 400°F. In a small saucepan, add enough water to reach a depth of 2 inches and bring to a boil.

Salt the water, add the green beans, simmer for 3 minutes, and drain.

In a large ovenproof, non-stick skillet, melt the un-chopped butter over medium-high heat. Add the corn, bell pepper, onion and garlic, and cook, stirring until softened, about seven minutes. Season with salt and pepper, and stir in the green beans and tarragon.

In a bowl, beat the eggs with the hot sauce, and season with salt and pepper. Add the chopped butter and pour over the succotash. Cook until set. Transfer the skillet into the oven and cook until firm, about 8 minutes. Let cool. To serve, cut into wedges.

Serves 4 to 6

### MARINATED GREENS

from *The Art of Simple Food* by Alice Waters

Fall greens are here in abundance, and this simple approach to cooking them never goes out of style. You can prepare any greens this way—mustard greens, beet tops, kale, spinach—but cook them separately because they all have different cooking times.

1 bunch greens  
2 tablespoons olive oil  
1 garlic clove chopped fine  
Lemon juice, dried chile flakes, salt

Wash the greens thoroughly. One at a time, grasp the stems in one hand and strip the leaves off with the other. Chop the stems, and cut the leaves into

2-inch pieces. Heat a heavy sauté pan or skillet over a medium-high heat. Pour in 1 tablespoon of olive oil. Add the chard stems and sprinkle with salt. Cook, stirring often, for 3 to 5 minutes. Add the greens and cook for about 5 minutes more, until the greens are tender. The residual water clinging to the leaves from washing is usually enough to keep them moist; if not, add a splash of water during the cooking.

Remove the greens from the pan and cool. Squeeze out moisture and transfer to a bowl. Dress with the remaining oil, garlic, a squeeze of lemon and a pinch of dried chile. Serve warm or cold.  
Serves 3 to 4

### KALE AND POTATO SOUP

from *Chez Panisse Vegetables* by Alice Waters

1 bunch kale  
2 pounds boiling potatoes  
2 quarts water  
1 teaspoon salt  
Extra-virgin olive oil

Remove the stems from the kale, wash the leaves, and cut them into a

chiffonade. You should have about 6 to 8 cups. Peel the potatoes and chop them very fine. Bring the water to a boil with the salt. Add the potatoes, return to a boil, and cook for 2 minutes, covered. Add the kale and cook 2 minutes more. Taste for seasoning. Serve with a splash of the oil.  
Serves 4

etables in very cold water, which is quite nice in the summer, but unpleasant in late fall. The farm crew has lobbied for a heated packing shed for a couple of years. I've put it off until now by relocating fall vegetable processing to a heated greenhouse. Jacob, a finish carpenter who has been working with us, has taken on this project. Now we have a coffee maker, a microwave, a refrigerator and heat—and we're feeling downright pampered.

This week we are sending the last of

our beans and the last of our peppers. We'll round it out with broccoli, more carrots, potatoes, onions, eggplants, lettuces, kale, an herb, and spinach.

*The Stanton Street Harvest* is published weekly by and for members of the Stanton Street CSA (P.O. Box 971, NYC 10002; <http://stantonstreetcsa.wordpress.com>). Thanks to core groupers Lucinda Sears (for her lovely illustrations) and Laura Schalchli (for her editorial wrangling). Most of the recipes and food info from cookbooks by Alice Waters, Deborah Madison, Farmer John Peterson, and other food geniuses. Please send questions, recipes, letters to the editor or other contributions to [stantonstreetcsa@gmail.com](mailto:stantonstreetcsa@gmail.com).