

The Stanton Street Harvest

JULY 16, 2009

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE LOWER EAST SIDE'S PIONEER CSA

VOL. 4, NO. 5

TODAY'S WEATHER AT WINDFLOWER FARM



62°/82°

Some scattered thunderstorms
are likely today.

TED'S LETTER FROM THE FARM

Thanks For the Potato Blight, WalMart!

We've been on pins and needles because of the lousy weather this season, but, with one or two exceptions, most of our crops look good. I'm going to stop reading my weekly Extension Bulletins, however—they never bring good news. Last week they told me that Downy Mildew spores are probably falling on our squashes and cucumbers, and that we should be applying protective fungicides if we want to save our crops. Downy Mildew used to be a problem in just one year out of ten; now it's a problem every year.

This week they reported that farms all over Washington County where we live, and throughout the Hudson Valley, have tomatoes and potatoes with a highly contagious plant disease called Late Blight, the very same disease that caused the Irish potato famine. The disease was never totally eliminated, it just took a hiatus while it developed resistance to fungicides. The fungus that causes Late Blight, *Phytophthora infestans*, received a recent boost from the Big Box stores, and now it's here with a vengeance.

What I've been told is that WalMart and Home Depot have been contracting with large southern growers to stock their garden centers with tomato plants, and that one (or more) of them unwittingly shipped tens of thousands of diseased tomatoes to their stores throughout the Northeast. From there, the disease has

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A FEW ODDS AND ENDS AS WE START MONTH TWO

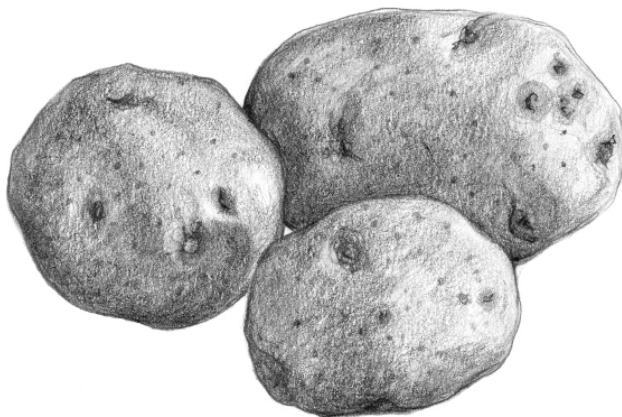
HOLY RAT BAIT! All composters, please take note: Never, never put your compostables in the community garden's big, leafy, compost pile. (We found evidence of this the last couple of weeks.) Food scraps in the compost pile will attract rodents, which is why we have to start the composting process in the big plastic tumblers located near the compost piles. Any questions? Please ask the core group.

SAVE THE DATE! The Washington County Fair—and the first of this season's overnight visit to Windflower Farm—will be August 29-30. It's fun for the whole family, as anyone who's come on past trips will attest. Lots more details will be available in the next few weeks.

FROM OUR MAILBOX. Word comes to us from shareholder Brian Voll, who says: "Last weekend I stumbled upon the LES Ecology Center. For anyone repotting their herbs and in need of good dirt, they sell composted soil for about \$1 for a small bag. They have a stand in the Green Market in Union Square, (where they also accept kitchen scraps and other composting materials for

anyone who forgets to bring theirs to the garden, like me last week). And they also host informational catch and release fishing sessions every other Friday at 10th St. and the East River, which is unrelated, but pretty neat."

We Think We're Getting Potatoes Today!



The fragile-skinned, slightly immature potatoes that have just been harvested from potato vines that still have green leaves are known as "new potatoes." They may look a little unattractive because of the unavoidable damage to their skins during harvesting. New potatoes are best in the simplest preparations, where their delicate flavor and texture can be appreciated. Boiling, steaming, and roasting suit them best.

Most potatoes, however, are harvested in a more mature state, shortly after the vines begin to bloom or start to turn color. At this stage the skins are tougher and the flesh is drier than that of new potatoes. These potatoes are then cured in a cool, dark place for a few weeks to allow any damaged areas to heal before being stored at a lower temperature.

No potatoes should be stored in the refrigerator for long, because the starch will gradually change into sugar, causing an unpleasantly sweet taste. Mature potatoes will keep best around 45°F., and need good air circulation. Don't plan on keeping any new potatoes very long. Even under refrigeration they lose moisture through their thin skins.

Community Notes. . .

NEXT WEEK'S VOLUNTEERS

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

Jul. 23 Early Shift (5:00-6:30 p.m.)

J. Small, A. Hawkins, K. Webster, D. Glass

Jul. 23 Closing Shift (6:30-8:00 p.m.)

C. Pierce, D. Kalinowski, K. Browne, C. Singiser

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BREAD TO ORDER!

You're hereby reminded about Hot Bread Kitchen's online store. Even if you don't have a bread share, you can buy HBK's delicious stuff a la carte, and they'll deliver it every other week along with the shares. Just visit: hotbreadkitchen.org/hbkcsamenu.htm. It's simple to use, and you can pay for your order with PayPal. (Order deadline is Thursday before 10 a.m.)

—*Letter from the Farm, from page 1*

spread to home gardens and now to nearby farms.

For my conventionally farming neighbors, weekly sprays using a cocktail of fungicides will keep the disease in check. For organic growers like us, the situation is not so bright. Frequent applications of elemental copper used as a protective foliar coating will slow the disease, but a severe outbreak is essentially unstoppable. During our daily farm walk, we'll monitor our tomatoes and potatoes carefully. (During a walk last week, we found that a fox and her kits were living in a shallow den in a potato hill.)

We'll only use a copper spray if it's absolutely needed. Although it's approved for use by organic growers, it's mildly toxic to plants and the people who apply it. Cool, wet weather is required for the Late Blight disease triangle to be completed. This week's sun and warmth have been a welcome change, and are probably our best hope for a safe crop. We'll keep you posted.

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.

ROASTED NEW POTATOES WITH GARLIC AND THYME

from *Chez Panisse Vegetables* by Alice Waters

Preheat the oven to 400°F. Scrub the new potatoes well in water and drain. Choose a shallow baking dish just large enough to hold the potatoes in a single layer. Toss the potatoes in the pan with olive oil; heads of garlic separated into cloves, peeled or not, as you prefer; sprigs of thyme; and a splash of water. Season with salt and pepper.

Tightly cover the baking pan with aluminum foil and put in the middle of the oven. After 40 minutes, carefully lift one corner of the foil and test for doneness. They should pierce easily with a knife. If the potatoes are not tender, replace the foil and continue to roast them until they are done. When they are, take them out of the oven and loosen the foil to allow steam to escape. They can be kept warm for a few minutes before serving.

KOHLRABI & KALE EINBRENN

from *Recipes for America's Small Farms*

2 medium kohlrabi
1 bunch of kale
1 1/2 cups stock or water
1 tablespoon vegetable oil or butter
1 tablespoon all-purpose flour
Salt and freshly ground black pepper
1/4 teaspoon ground nutmeg or
2 tablespoons chopped fresh savory
Peel the kohlrabi and cut into 1/4-inch slices. Bring the stock to a boil in a medium saucepan, add the kohlrabi pieces, and simmer, covered, for 10-15 minutes, until just tender. Remove the slices from the simmering liquid with

a slotted spoon and set aside. Add the washed kale leaves to the pot and simmer, covered, for 5-7 minutes, until tender. Drain the leaves (reserving 1 cup cooking liquid), and chop.

Heat the oil in a saucepan, then whisk in the flour and cook the mixture for a minute. Add the reserved cooking liquid, whisking to avoid lumps. Simmer, uncovered, for several minutes, until the sauce thickens slightly. Add the cooked kohlrabi slices and leaves and simmer for a minute or two. Season with salt and pepper and, if desired, nutmeg or savory.
Serves 4

RAW TUSCAN KALE SALAD WITH PECORINO

from the *New York Times* and sent to us by shareholder Christian Giordano

1 bunch lacinato (aka Tuscan) kale
1 thin slice country bread or 1/4 cup homemade bread crumbs (coarse)
1/2 garlic clove, finely chopped
1/4 cup finely grated pecorino cheese, more for garnish
3 tablespoons extra virgin olive oil, more for garnish
Freshly squeezed juice of 1 lemon
1/4 teaspoon kosher salt
1/8 teaspoon red pepper flakes
Freshly ground black pepper, to taste
Trim bottom 2 inches off kale stems and discard. Slice kale, including ribs, into 3/4-inch-wide ribbons. You should

have 4 to 5 cups. Place in a large bowl.

If using bread, toast it until golden on both sides. Tear it into small pieces and grind in a food processor until mixture forms coarse crumbs.

Using a mortar and pestle, or with the back of a knife, pound garlic into a paste. Transfer garlic to a small bowl. Add 1/4 cup cheese, 3 tablespoons oil, lemon juice, salt, pepper flakes and black pepper, and whisk to combine. Pour dressing over kale and toss very well to thoroughly combine (dressing will be thick and need lots of tossing to coat leaves).

Let salad sit for 5 minutes, then serve topped with bread crumbs, additional cheese and a drizzle of oil.
Serves 2 to 4

CUCUMBER RAITA

from *Chez Panisse Vegetables* by Alice Waters

Try this as an easy side dish or as a compliment to any spicy food.

1 cucumber
Salt
2 cups yogurt
1 pinch cayenne

Cut the cucumbers in half lengthwise, scrape out the seeds with a spoon, and cut into small dice or thin slices. Salt the cucumbers, and fold into the yogurt. Add the cayenne and more salt if needed.

Makes 3 to 4 cups