



Where The Land, Food, and People Come Together!

PO Box 122 Elsah, IL 62028 22867 Chautauqua Rd. Elsah, IL 62028

www.threeriverscommunityfarm.com (618)374-9470

info@threeriverscommunityfarm.com

**October/November 2011**

## Field Walk....

So after much anticipation our exciting news about the future of the farm is....no, we are not having another baby (as many of you thought). That would impact our future exponentially, which is why we are holding off another year or two. The big news is that Principia College has approved a long-term lease with the farm for our original 12 acres and even better, starting in 2014 we will be leasing the additional 35 acres right across from the parking area (pond included). First, we are excited that Principia envisions our farm on this land on a long-term basis, which gives us much needed security to continue with soil improvement and infrastructure purchases; also the addition of a pond will help in very dry years like the last two. However, we are most excited to move into the new property and build a beautiful, post-and-beam-style barn right off the main road with close parking, electricity, plumbing, a toilet, a good washing station, two coolers minus the noisy generator, an aesthetically pleasing and functional pick-up area, tool and maintenance shed, ample storage area, office and maybe even a root cellar? We would like to model our barn after Brookfield Farm's barn (the farm that I apprenticed at in 2001 and 2006 in Massachusetts--if you would like to see pictures go to [www.brookfieldfarm.org](http://www.brookfieldfarm.org)). We have big dreams, we realize for this new space, and will be working very dilligently in the next two years to make it a feasible goal financially. We are always open to the expertise and counsel of anyone in the area of financing or alternative financing and/or recommendations for good contractors/builders. Please contact us at any time if you would like to be more involved in the process.

While much of our time is spent daydreaming about the next phase of our farm, we are still very much living in the moment of October 2011 and thinking about improvements for next season. We are going to be keeping a close eye on the ongoing drought in Texas, for we feel that if it doesn't break, we are in store for another hot, dry summer. This will impact whether we decide to add more CSA members next year, what crops we can realistically grow in July and August, and how we can be better prepared for produce gaps in September. We have been very pleased with what we have offered this last month, but we also realize that they are not the vegetables that most people desire. So, we are going to be focusing on varieties of green beans and lettuce that withstand the heat better and growing more green beans in the spring and fall to make up for any summer gap; growing a sald mix for spring and fall that is milder tasting (and instead offering arugula as a separate green for those who want it); monitoring the peppers much more closely to make sure we keep disease at bay; doubling our production of onions; and figuring out how we can have a continuous bumper crop of cherry tomatoes through October (they held up much better in the heat and drought than the regular tomatoes did). Extreme years such as the last two hone our farming skills. They help us focus on the details which after doing this for five years is kind of where we are at: we've got the basics down, now we are just fine-tuning; trying to make each week's share as appealing as possible for our diversity of farm members, delicious, nutritious, and bounteous. We have come along way since our first year and I get giddy just thinking about what our farm, fields, and CSA shares are going to look like ten years from now after even more experience. Of course, we feel at ease to do all this futuristic thinking, because this year, more than any other, we have felt incredible support and encouragment from our CSA members. Every season, we are getting closer to finding our 200 families who really connect with and love the farm (even with all its annoying quirks like the noisy generator), who understand the risk and rewards of joining a CSA, who enjoy cooking and love eating vegetables! As we say every season, we wouldn't be here without you, so the many thanks received over the course of this season are sent right back at ya!!

*Enjoy the harvest, Amy, Segue, Diego, and Helen*

## Important Dates

**\* Last CSA Pick up is Tuesday, November 8th (2-5 PM) and Saturday, November 12th (9 AM-Noon) for on-farm members. Tower Grove members, your last pick up is Saturday, November 5th and for our Wednesday St. Louis members, your last pick up is on November 9th!**

**\* Daylight Savings Time Ends** November 7th. For the last week of CSA pick up, the time changes to Tuesday from 2-5 PM, **no Friday pick up, and Saturday morning from 9AM-Noon.**

**\*Live Springs Farm will be at the farm for one last sale on Friday, October 28th from 2-6PM. Please visit their website to see their offerings:[www.livespringsfarm.com](http://www.livespringsfarm.com).**



Helen leaves us at the end of the month. Thanks for all your hard work and all the laughs!

## Time to Renew Your Share!

Please send us your renewal forms along with deposit by November 1st. **Our new mailing address is Three Rivers Community Farm, PO Box 122 Elsah, IL 62028.** Or you can drop it off at the barn on Tuesdays or Fridays or the Wednesday and Saturday farmer's markets. You can also renew online at [www.threeriverscommunityfarm.com](http://www.threeriverscommunityfarm.com).

### **Roasted Sweet Potato Salad:** from Mark Bittman.com

- 4 large sweet potatoes
- 1/2 cup olive oil
- 1/4 cup red wine vinegar or sherry vinegar
- 1 bell pepper, cored, seeded, and quartered
- 2 tsp ground cumin
- 1 T grated orange zest (optional)
- 1/2 cup sliced scallions
- 1/2 cup minced parsley or mint
- 1/4 cup raisins (optional)

Preheat the oven to 400. Peel and cut sweet potatoes into bite-size pieces. Put them on a baking sheet and drizzle with olive oil, and toss to coat. Season with salt and pepper and roast, turning occasionally, until crisp and brown outside and just tender inside, about 30 minutes. Remove and keep on pan until ready to dress. For the dressing: put 6 T oil in blender, along with vinegar, bell pepper, cumin and zest. Sprinkle with salt and pepper. Puree until smooth. Toss the warm potatoes with the scallions, herbs, and raisins. Add 1/2 cup of dressing and toss to coat, adding more if necessary. Taste and adjust seasoning. Serve immediately or at room temperature.

### **Sweet Potato Pie**

a recipe from Brookfield Farm, in Amherst MA

- 1/2 lb or 2 cups cooked, mashed sweet potato
- 3 T melted butter
- 1/4 cup maple syrup or 1/2 cup sugar
- 3/4 tsp cinnamon
- 1/4 tsp cloves
- 1/2 tsp nutmeg (or less)
- 3 eggs
- 3/4-1 cup milk

#### **Crust**

- for 1 9" pie shell
- 1 1/2 cups flour
- 1/4 tsp salt
- 1/2 cup butter
- 3-4 T cold water

Pour sweet potato mixture into pie shell and bake at 350 degrees for 1 hour or until set. Serve with real whip cream or ice cream!

### **Easy Pasta Topper: from Amy's own kitchen**

This vegetable saute is easy to whip up in about twenty minutes and is delicious over whole wheat penne pasta!!

- 2 small eggplant, chopped into small pieces
- 2 peppers, sliced into thin strips
- 1 jar of diced tomatoes (16 oz) or 4 fresh tomatoes
- 2 cloves of garlic
- 1 small onion
- 1/4 cup pesto (more or less depending on your taste)
- salt, pepper, and oregano to taste

Saute onions and garlic in olive oil until soft. Add eggplant and peppers and cook until tender. Add tomatoes and heat through. Season with herbs and cook for a few more minutes until seasoned well. Add pesto at the end and pour over penne pasta for a quick supper!!

### **Sausage, Kale and White Bean Soup:** from allrecipes.com

- 1 cup dry navy or cannellini beans soaked and cooked (or can use canned)
- 1 bunch of kale, rinsed and chopped
- 1 T olive oil
- 1 pound sausage (your choice of variety--Italian, spicy, chorizo)
- 1 cup onions, chopped
- 4 cups chicken broth
- salt and pepper to taste

Heat olive oil over medium heat in the soup pot. Add sausage and onions and brown. Then add your beans, chicken broth, salt and pepper to taste. Cook for 15 minutes or until the sausage is fully cooked. For the last 15 minutes add your kale to the soup and simmer until kale is tender, but not mushy. Season again with salt and pepper if needed. Serve alongside a nice salad and some crusty, artisan bread!

### **Sweet Potato Enchiladas** from [Real Dirt on Vegetables](#)

- 1 pound sweet potatoes
- 3 T butter
- 2 medium onions, diced
- 3 cloves garlic, minced
- 2 tsp ground cumin
- 1 tsp oregano
- 1 tsp coriander
- 1 tsp salt
- 12 corn tortillas
- 1 recipe Enchilada sauce **or**
- 4 cups prepared enchilada sauce
- 1 cup grated cheddar cheese

#### **For Enchilada Sauce:**

- 1 T vegetable oil
  - 1 medium onion, minced
  - 1 T chili powder
  - 2 tsp ground cumin
  - 1 tsp oregano
  - 8 cloves garlic, minced
  - 4 cups pureed tomatoes
- Heat oil in skillet and saute onions, garlic, and herbs, 2-3 minutes. Add tomatoes and pinch of salt. Simmer 30-45 minutes.

Preheat the oven to 350 degrees. Lightly grease a 9 x 13 baking dish. Bake the sweet potatoes on a baking sheet until soft, 40-50 minutes. Let cool, then peel and mash. Melt the butter in a medium skillet over medium-high heat. Add the onions and garlic and saute until translucent. Stir in the cumin, oregano, coriander, and salt; cook, stirring constantly for 2 minutes. Add the mashed sweet potatoes and cook for 2 minutes longer. Remove from heat. Soften tortillas either in microwave, in the oven, or on the stove top. Then, fill each tortilla with about 1/3 cup of the sweet potato filling and roll up. Place the filled tortillas in the prepared baking dish. Pour the sauce over top and sprinkle with cheese. Bake until cheese is melted, 20-25 minutes.

### **Herb Roasted Vegetables** from [Farm Fresh Recipes](#)

- 3 medium sweet potatoes (about 2 pounds), chopped
- 1 onion, peeled and chopped
- 1 pound carrots, chopped
- 1 pound beets, chopped
- 1 pound potatoes, chopped
- 8 cloves garlic, chopped
- 3 Tbs. rosemary
- 2 Tbs. thyme
- olive oil, salt, and pepper

Preheat the oven to 375 degrees. Put all chopped vegetables in a large bowl. Drizzle olive oil, enough to lightly coat and season with salt, pepper, rosemary, and thyme. Toss to coat. Spread mixture into a baking dish. Bake until vegetables are soft, 45 minutes-1 hour.