



BLOOMING GLEN FARM

June 18, 2007

Newsletter

Issue #14

BloomingNow!

Features Fresh from the Farm

Community

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Agriculture

From the field...

What a crazy week of weather, unpredictable as always. We had a handful of thunderstorms roll through last week- not too much rain all told, but lots of lights and rumbles. The gigantic old oak tree in the back corner did take a lightning strike- the noise made us all jump. We didn't even realize the tree had been hit until the next day- it looks fine, except the turf all around the base is torn up where the current must have exited the tree. Our friend "Plant Talk Jim" of Plant Health Alternatives (<http://www.planthealthalternatives.com/>) will be coming soon to check it out for us. He uses ancient wisdom and leading science to tap into trees and other plants in a way similar to alternative health

care for people. Very interesting stuff. Last year he had remarkable success with our stressed out onion seedlings. Hopefully he will give a good prognosis for the tree. I've been reading a fantastic book lately- and wish that you all could read it and be as inspired by it as I am. It's by one of my favorite authors, Barbara Kingsolver, and it's called "Animal Vegetable, Miracle: A Year of Food Life." For me, it's not a lot of new information- people like Michael Pollen and Vandana Shiva have already presented much of it before. However, her style is very reader friendly and engaging- no matter how tired I am at night, I find myself picking it up for a few minutes. As her website describes, "Kingsolver

makes a passionate case for putting the kitchen back at the center of family life and diversified farms at the center of the American diet." If you find yourself looking to delve deeper into what the whole local food scene is about- check this book out, please. Out in the fields we are in the midst of trying to keep everything weeded, as the heat and the rain got everything jumping, including those weeds. As always lots of hoeing and cultivating ahead of us. Our first potluck of the season was a success- lots of yummy dishes to try. Mark your calendars for Second Saturday's of the month and join us this summer for a farm fresh potluck meal. Take care- Tricia

News and Notes:

- ♦ **Coming up in the share:** garlic scapes, beets, sugar snap peas, cilantro
- ♦ *Blooming Glen Farm is one of seven featured gardens on the Perkasio Garden Club's 2007 Garden Tour, Sunday June 24 from 12-4pm. Come out for a work day Sat. morning (8:30-12:30am) June 23 and help us spruce the place up!*
- ♦ **Local Food Source update:** **Green Haven Farm** pastured poultry and eggs will be delivered every other week. **Hendricks Farms and Dairy** will deliver cheese and bacon weekly. **Tussock Sedge Beef** griller packs are available weekly; larger sizes can be pre-ordered for delivery any time. Check out the counter in the distribution center for more information and to place orders.
- ♦ **Please remember to check off your name** when you pick up your share. This is very important. We look at the list late in the day to see if for any reason we are running low on certain crops, and may harvest more if we think there are still people who haven't picked up. You can also help us out by weighing out your veggies as accurately as possible. For things that are calculated in weight, we harvest for how many people are picking up, with some leeway. If we run out early, it means people are weighing heavy. Our system of distribution works on the honor system, and saves us from the extra labor costs of having to box up everyone's share each week. Thanks for your understanding!

Dr. Brian's Corner: The Colors of your Diet

Q: I've been hearing a lot lately about something called "phytonutrients" in foods. What are these, and are they important?

A: The word "phytonutrient" is simply an invented term meaning a substance that comes from a plant ("phyto-") that provides nourishment ("-nutrient"). You see, the experts are no longer just talking about vitamins and minerals, or about carbohydrates, protein, and fat. What's really exciting about this is that scientists are finding that vegetables and fruits contain thousands- yes, *thousands*, of chemicals that are bioactive. "Bioactive" means that these molecules don't just pass through your mouth, into your stomach, and then even-

tually leave, but, rather, that they actively participate in the myriad of cell processes taking place in your body. Some of these nutrients act as hormones, some regulate immune functions (keeping out or destroying the bad guys), some prevent the aging processes in cells, and some can even stop cancer cells in their tracks.

Q: How do I know if I'm getting enough phytonutrients?

A: That's actually a loaded question, since some nutrition experts would say that you don't "need" any of these at all. Of course, this line of thinking is the same one that has produced the nation (ours) that is the most obese and chronic disease-ridden that the world

has ever seen. Assuming for a moment that you are perhaps interested in the healthiest, most active life you can possibly have, then it becomes very important to get as many phytonutrients into your body as possible. How much is enough is, at this time, impossible to know for sure, and depends upon such things as your present physical condition, the physical and environmental stresses you are experiencing (including air and water pollution, free radical exposure, toxic load through processed foods and household or industrial chemicals, and emotional stress), your age, your genetic predisposition, and the condition of your digestive tract.

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Simple Braised Greens with Garlic

1-2 tablespoons olive oil
 2 bunches fresh summer greens, about 8 cups, washed and coarsely chopped. (This could include a mixture of Asian greens, or mustard, collards, turnip greens, beet greens, kale)
 1-2 cloves garlic, chopped (or diced garlic scapes to taste)
 1/8 cup water or vegetable broth
 Salt to taste
 Optional flavorings: Sesame oil, umami plum vinegar, tamari
 Optional toppings: sesame seeds, chopped almonds or walnuts, toasted pumpkin seeds

1. Heat oil in a large skillet over medium-high heat and add greens and garlic, stirring to coat with oil. Stir occasionally until greens are barely wilted, just a few minutes.

2. Add vegetable broth or water and stir, allowing greens to steam until barely tender. Salt to taste.

3. Add flavorings and toppings as desired and serve.

Submitted by farm member Christy Venters

What's a garlic scape?!

Also called a garlic whistle, scapes are the flower stalks that grow on all members of the allium family (onions, leeks, chives and garlic). Commercial garlic growers from warmer climates (for example Gilroy, California) use "softneck" garlic varieties that are machine harvestable and do not produce scapes. This is the kind of garlic you are most likely to find in the grocery store— they are great for long term storage. The "hardneck" garlic varieties we grow have larger cloves, peel easier, and produce scapes. The scapes appear in mid June, and curl as they grow, like a pig's tail, or whistle, ultimately straightening up and ending with seed like bulb. We snap the curl off in order to promote large underground bulb growth. This is also when the scapes are tender and delicious, with a subtle garlic flavor. Dice and use like you would a scallion, they cook well in stir fries or can be made into a green "pesto" sauce.

Garlic Scape Pesto

1 C grated parmesan cheese
 3 T fresh lime or lemon juice
 1/4 lb. scapes
 1/2 C olive oil
 Salt to taste

Puree scapes and olive oil in food processor until smooth. Stir in parmesan and lime or lemon juice and season to taste. Serve on bread, crackers or pasta.

Garlic Scape Frittata

1/4 C hot water
 4 large eggs
 1/2 C chopped scallions
 1-1/2 C chopped garlic scapes
 Salt and pepper
 2 T olive oil

Place garlic and scallions in a 10" skillet with 1 tsp. oil, water, and pinch of salt. Cook covered over med. Heat until tender, about 5 min. Drain well. Beat eggs with salt and pepper. Add remaining oil to skillet. When oil is hot, shake skillet to spread greens evenly, add eggs. Cover and cook over med. Low heat until top is set (2-3 min.). Serve hot or warm, cut into wedges.

Swiss Chard and Dill Pilaf

Just google swiss chard and you'll be amazed at the number of health studies done on this vitamin and mineral dense leafy green. It is absolutely packed with health promoting nutrients. It would definitely be in my top five, if stranded-on-a-desert-island, vegetable choices. Another plus— it's the one green that stands up to our hot, humid summers, and keeps on performing. With a taste similar to spinach, and a much longer growing season, it's definitely one to learn to cook with. Both the leaves and the stalks are edible (just dice and cook the stalks first until almost tender, then add the greens last). Aristotle even wrote about chard in the fourth century B.C. This is not surprising given the fact that the ancient Greeks, and later the Romans, honored chard for its medicinal properties.

3 Tablespoons olive oil
 1 1/2 cup chpd onion or spring onions
 3 cloves garlic, minced, or diced garlic scapes
 1 cup long grain white rice
 1/4 teaspoon ground nutmeg
 3/4 teaspoon sea salt
 fresh ground pepper to taste
 1 lb. Swiss chard, stemmed and washed, and finely chpd
 2 1/2 cups water or stock
 2 Tablespoons lemon juice
 1/2 cup fresh dill

Heat oil in a 4-quart heavy pot. Add onions and garlic and cook until soft, about 6 minutes.

Stir in rice, nutmeg, salt and pepper. Stir in chard and water or stock. Bring to a boil and lower heat.

Cover and simmer 15-20 minutes, until rice is tender. Remove from heat and stir in lemon juice and dill. Mix well.

From the Rose Valley Farm FoodBook

Dr. Brian's Corner, continued

Q: I just want a quick and simple way to get the most phytonutrients I can. How do I do that?

A: Here's the simplest way: Pay Attention to the Colors of Your Diet!

Q: How can eating a colorful diet possibly work?

A: The various groups of these chemicals are characterized by their colors. A good example is the carotenoids— as you can imagine this relates to carrots— a group of orange and orange-yellow compounds found not only in carrots, but in practically all orange-colored vegetables and fruits. Ancient Sanskrit writings advised eating "the seven colors of the rainbow" at each meal. As it turns out, that advice is spot on, and you should do your best to

include the colors red, yellow, orange, green, blue, indigo, and violet in your daily diet.

This, of course, means eating a largely plant-based diet, since this is where most of the colors in our foods come from. The further you get from the common American diet (which is mostly white in color), the healthier your diet will likely be. So, like your Mom said, "eat your fruits and vegetables!"

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