

Cobble Hill CSA

community supported agriculture 

Newsletter

www.cobblehillcsa.org

July 17, 2007

The 2007 season marks the 4th year that I've been a member of the Cobble Hill CSA, as well as several personal firsts: my first attempt to tackle a season without the aid of a share partner and my first year as CSA newsletter editor. Both challenges are fun and works in progress. I'm learning as I go along, and looking for ways to improve in each endeavor along the way.

Experimentation will be the watchword on both fronts. While you might not benefit from my kitchen efforts (although I'll likely share particularly successful discoveries or spectacularly entertaining failures), my goal is to develop this newsletter into a tool that will connect members with useful information as well as a sense of connection with our farmers and the broader CSA community.

Feel free to contact me with questions or suggestions (any InDesign tutors out there?!) at ablankstein@verizon.net, I'd love to hear from you.

Thanks!

Amy Blankstein

Notes From Green Thumb Farm

July is upon us and its amazing what some rain and warm weather can do. Crops seem to be coming in, in abundance. Summer squash has started, beans of all types, carrots, scallions, and cucumbers are all starting. After the birds ate our first planting of peas they seem to have left the other two plantings alone, so we should have peas in another couple of weeks. We also have broccoli and cabbages for a short time.

We're still picking our lettuces, beets and swiss chard, and a few herbs as well. Basil is happening also. So the next few weeks will be filled with the summer's bounty!

Tomatoes and eggplant should be ready by the end of the month. The plants look very good. Just takes a little longer to produce their fruits.

Organically yours,
Farmer Bill



Supporting The Family Farm

Another first for me this season was finally taking advantage of the opportunity to visit Green Thumb Farm for their annual strawberry picking event in June. Aside from the obvious fun of foraging for strawberries on a gorgeous early summer day, it was a great opportunity to meet Farmer Bill and get a greater understanding of how Green Thumb Farm works.

Visiting the farm finally drove home the point of how important Community Supported Agriculture is in sustaining the viability of small family farms, particularly in the New York metropolitan area. The Halsey's family farm is located in Water Mill, New York, sandwiched in between Southampton and Bridgehampton on the South Fork of Long Island, home of some extremely expensive real estate.

In addition to being a CSA member, here are other ways to support local family farms:

Agriculture Committee Debates Farm Bill

This week, the House Agriculture Committee is debating the farm bill, an omnibus legislation considered once ever 5 to 7 years which impacts everything from the future of family farms, public health and nutrition, and the environment. For more information on how to encourage a sane farm bill, check out www.farmland.org/programs/campaign/what.asp

USDA Reopens Comment Period for Proposed Mandatory Country of Origin Labeling (COOL)

The USDA's Agricultural Marketing Service has reopened the comment period for mandatory COOL for pork, beef, lamb, fish, shellfish and other perishable agricultural commodities until August 20, 2007. Comments can be submitted online at www.regulations.gov or by e-mail at cool@usda.gov.

Farm Aid: A Home Grown Festival

Buy your tickets today for this year's Farm Aid concert! The concert will take place September 9, 2007 on Randall's Island, NY. Farm Aid is a non-profit organization working to keep family farmers on their land, producing fresh, high-quality, healthful food for all of us. Proceeds from the concert will help Farm Aid provide grants to local, national and regional organizations working to promote fair farm policies and family farms. For concert information visit www.farmaid.org.

Carrots!

There's nothing sweeter than the taste of just-picked organic carrots. I typically inhale them within a day or two after pick up—it must be all those great beta-carotenes. If you've got more self-discipline when it comes to this orange root, you can make them last up to three weeks. Remove the lovely greens before storing them, unwashed, in a perforated plastic bag in the refrigerator.

And for those of you who can keep your hands off them long enough to actually make a dish—here are a few tasty carrot recipes:

Roasted Carrots

12 carrots
2 tablespoons good olive oil
1 1/4 teaspoon kosher salt
1/2 teaspoon freshly ground pepper
2 tablespoons minced fresh dill or flat-leaf parsley

Preheat the oven to 400 degrees.

If the carrots are thick, cut them in half lengthwise; if not, leave them whole. Slice the carrots diagonally into 1 1/2-inch-thick slices. (The carrots will get smaller while cooking, so make the slices big.) Toss them in a bowl with the olive oil, salt, and pepper. Place on a baking sheet in one layer and roast in the oven for 20 minutes.

Toss the carrots with the minced dill or parsley, season to taste, and serve.

From *The Barefoot Contessa Cookbook*, by Ina Garten, whose specialty food store of the same name is located in East Hampton, not far from Green Thumb Farm. In the cookbook, Garten advises her readers that the sweeter the carrots, the better the dish will taste, and advocates buying the carrots directly from a farm for the best results.

Cobble Hill CSA

Got questions, concerns, or comments? Check out our Web site, www.cobblehillcsa.org, post to the Cobble Hill CSA members' group, or feel free to contact members of the core group directly:

General Coordinator
Chris Caveglia
cjcaveglia@yahoo.com

Treasurer & Membership Coordinator
Jeffrey Axelrod
jeffrey_axelrod@yahoo.com

Volunteer Coordinator
Carey Johnson
carey@donatoart.com

Publicity Coordinator
Angela Long
Along09@yahoo.com

Website Administrator
Martha Rowen
Mr29@nyu.edu

Newsletter Editor
Amy Blankstein
ablankstein@verizon.net

Tarragon Carrots

4 cups small peeled carrots or large carrots cut into 3-inch pieces.
1/4 cup tarragon vinegar*
2 tablespoons sugar
2 tablespoons chopped fresh parsley
2 tablespoons chopped green onion
1 teaspoon chopped fresh tarragon
1/2 teaspoon salt
Freshly milled black pepper

Cook the carrots in salted boiling water to cover in a medium saucepan until they are just tender, about 8 minutes, then drain. Combine the vinegar, sugar, parsley, green onion, tarragon, 1/2 teaspoon salt, and pepper to taste and pour it over the drained, cooked carrots while they are still warm.

Cover the mixture and refrigerate it overnight. Drain the carrots well and pack them in a container with a tight-fitting lid.

Tarragon Vinegar

Don't happen to have tarragon vinegar sitting in your cupboard? Make your own! You can create a flavored vinegar with any herb—if kept under the right conditions, it will be potent for about a year.

Use any clear vinegar (balsamic doesn't work well, but wine vinegars and fruit vinegars are great). Choose a jar with a tight cover or cork and place the herbs—about three to four large sprigs for each cup of vinegar—in it. Cloves of garlic or small chile peppers add taste and ornament.

Heat the vinegar to just below boiling, then pour it into the jar. Cover or cork tightly, let cool, and store in a dark, cool place.

The recipes for *Tarragon Carrots* and *Tarragon Vinegar* are adapted from *Recipes from America's Small Farms: Fresh Ideas for the Season's Bounty*, by Joanne Lamb Hayes and Lori Stein, with Maura Webber. In addition to great recipes from CSA farmers and Chef's Collaborative members, the book features tips on buying and storing produce, profiles of CSA farmers, and resources for more information on the CSA movement and sustainable agriculture.

Site Coordinator: 6/5-7/7
Jackie Glasthal
queeline@aol.com

Site Coordinator: 7/24-9/4
Simone Mogul

Site Coordinator: 7/11-10/23
Sabra Gandhi

Site Coordinator: 10/30-12/11
Tom Kingsley