



Newsletter, June 28- July 1, 2011

Volume 8, Issue 4

Farm News

Last week we started to harvest enough summer squash to give out. One of the earliest squash harvests we can think of, in a growing season that is, to say the least, quite challenging. No late frosts this year, but rather a seemingly ongoing pattern of a couple of days "dry enough to irrigate"

followed by yet another series of rain storms. And not just a little shower – inches at a time. It makes for interesting and very long planting days (when it's dry enough to go in the fields with equipment), catching up with plantings that should have gone in over the time of a week, and setting up irrigation by the light of the fireflies – just before the rains come in again. See the pattern? No cakewalk farming this year, but it's for sure still the most rewarding work we can think of. We hope you're enjoying the harvests so far!

By now you probably have noticed that we have embarked on a pastured poultry project, a new development for the farm. We're raising the chickens for many purposes. One of them might be quite obvious: to increase the economic viability of the farm by selling the broilers (and later: eggs). But there are many other ways the chickens contribute to the processes going on at the farm. We manage them to graze the cover crops – increasing the cover crop health, and fertilizing the soils at the same time. We believe that by rotating the chickens to fresh ground every day, they are replacing the aged and composted manures we used to truck in. Manures that come with a "wild card" of weed seeds, creating very labor intensive weeding challenges in the field. In short, by integrating animals in the farming process as an addition to our cover crop program, we're getting closer to our ideal of a closed system – where we can maintain or improve on the soil fertility we need to grow those great vegetables right on the farm.

That being said, we are still taking poultry orders for July 2. The order form is part of this newsletter, and if you send us the form, we will confirm with you availability before you come up to the farm to pick them up. It's a good time to come out: the U-pick herbs and flowers are coming in and are yours to harvest. Or make it to a well-spent day in Schoharie County: bring a cooler for your chicken and take an easy hike up Vroman's Nose (about 20 minutes west of the farm off Rt. 30, just out of the village of Middleburgh – the trailhead is at the parking off Mill Valley Road. For more directions, Google "Vroman's Nose Loop Trail"). Enjoy the spectacular sights over the Schoharie Valley, and stop at Bohringers fruit farm (on the foot of Vroman's Nose) to pick your own berries (check for availability at 518-827-5783) before heading back to the farm.

About this week's share: In this week's share you'll find mesclun, lettuce, summer squash and garlic scapes. We are rotating spinach, Easter Egg radish, parsley and edible podded snap peas. Garlic scapes are the tender flower of the garlic plant, cut off to encourage the plant to put energy into the bulb. Cut off and discard the bud and any yellowing stem (it should snap like asparagus where it's edible). Then you can enjoy scapes either minced or mashed raw as seasoning, or cooked in large or small pieces (the taste mellows considerably).

U-Pick: The U-Pick garden is *free with your CSA membership*. This week cilantro, sage, parsley, scallions, leaf fennel, marjoram, summer savory, oregano and thyme are ready, as well as a few flowers. Please help yourself to the box of supplies. All we ask is that you consider regrowth and cut a branch, not the whole plant (i.e. - cut to come again). The U-Pick garden has a sign and is located north of the road as you drive up to the barn.

Expected harvest: Beets with tops, lettuce or mesclun and summer squash, and a rotation of snap peas and parsley.

Your farmers,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Raymond Et Sara".



Top: harvesting garlic scapes. Fox Creek Farm's secret to early summer squash in the middle (hightunnels!). Bottom: brassica's (cabbage, broccoli, cauliflower) are doing very well.

Recipe: Garlic Scapes with Grass Fed Beef and Tamari

Raymond put this dish together for one of our potlucks years ago. After stewing, the garlic scapes will get a very soft, green bean like texture.

Stew beef, approximately 1 pound, cut into bite-size pieces
½ - 1 whole bunch Garlic scapes, cut in 1-2" pieces (discard the tops and the very ends, only)
4 T olive oil
2 T (or to taste) tamari
2 T of lemon juice (vinegar will do, too)
1 T sugar
1 T peanut butter, optional
Pepper to taste

Heat the oil, and brown the beef. Add the garlic scapes, tamari, lemon juice and sugar. Stew covered for about 40 minutes, stirring often (check moisture and when needed add some water). Flavor with peanut butter and pepper if desired. Serve with rice (Serves at least 4).

July 2 Pastured Poultry Order Form

Name: _____ email address: _____

Indicate how many chickens you would like to pick up at the farm on SATURDAY, July 2 *between 3 and 6 PM*. Chickens are \$ 3.85 per pound dressed. Please bring a cooler with ice to the pick-up to insure freshness. We will be processing a limited number of chickens, and they go on a first-come, first served basis.

We will confirm availability from this batch with you. In case we sell out, we will put your name on the list for our second batch, which we hope to process around the middle of August. We will retain your deposit towards those chickens.

Please put me down for _____ chickens. Enclosed is my non-refundable deposit of \$ _____ (\$ 10 per chicken, balance due at pick-up). Make checks payable to Fox Creek Farm. Return the order form to the address below.

Fox Creek Farm, c/o Sara and Raymond Luhrman, 182 Fox Creek Farm Road, Schoharie, NY 12157
Phone: (518) 872-2375. Email: foxcreekfarmcsa@earthlink.net
www.foxcreekfarmcsa.com

Farm visits – Feel free to come and visit the farm. The farm is open to visit anytime, but on harvest days (Tuesdays and Fridays) our time is very limited – on other days we'll gladly show you around a bit. It's a great opportunity to see how we produce your vegetables, and to enjoy the scenic farm site. Bring some kitchen leftovers to feed the chickens and pigs! All the fencing on the farm is electric – please be careful.

Directions to the farm: From Altamont: Follow Rte. 146 towards Gallupville. Approximately 10 miles out of Altamont, make a right on "Larry Hill". (*) Go up for ¼ mile (there is a blue sided house on your left). Just past the blue house, you'll find Fox Creek Farm Road on your left going in the woods. Follow this road to the end. From Rt. 443: Turn on 146 in Gallupville for approximately 2 miles. Make a left on "Larry Hill". Follow directions as above (starting at (*)).