

EREHWON FARM

Week 3-June 21, 2009

Farmer Tim Reports

Greetings, from Erehwon!

We had a bit of excitement at the farm yesterday. Seems that a woman, who apparently had been visiting someone at the youth facility just east of the farm, had headed west on Route 38 and, according to several carloads of concerned citizens, had veered off the highway and driven through the cornfield, emerging on our farm road near the field hoop house. Farmer Tim chatted briefly with the women who seemed okay but somewhat concerned about the quality of the directions she'd been given for going north to Dundee. *(So-o-o, the directions for getting to Dundee said turn right at the cornfield, cross a fairly deep drainage ditch, drive across several hundred acres of muddy field planted with 12" high corn, and then what?—Beth)* By this time a feet of patrol cars, summoned by the concerned citizens, was on the scene trying to figure out what had happened. We returned to our task of weeding onions. Soon, everyone had departed, the woman's light blue Dodge trailing a few long green stalks attached to her car's underside, and, aside from a few thousand bent corn stalks, everything seemed to be in order. So, if you're walking around the farm and about to cross the road, it just might be a good idea to look both ways (toward the cornfield!) before crossing. ;-)

We are continuing our daily planting but are still a couple of weeks behind where we should be. We sneaked into the potato bed



Lettuce plants—loving the rain!

Sunday and were able to pull out a couple of pounds of new potatoes so we should have a good supply soon. The recent hot weather and rain has caused a bloom of weeds and a spurt of growth in tomatoes, peppers, cucumbers and some other warm weather crops. We're racing today to mow the paths and erect tomato cages before the plants grow too large to fit. We have planted the initial herbs in our cutting garden so when you come to the farm, check it out to see what's ready to clip. Also, we have a thermometer installed nearby in the compost pile that we are building just west of the pickup area. Last time we looked, the temperature was 125 degrees and holding steady. We are planning to use this energy source to heat the small hoop house this winter so keep an eye on the temperature.

In your boxes this week

This week we should have strawberries (Wednesday subscribers, it is your turn to get the berries!), a few raspberries (possibly pick your own), Swiss chard, kale, mustard greens, fresh garlic and more scapes, spearmint, green onions, a few potatoes, peas, butterhead and red romaine lettuce, cilantro, and possibly another item or two.

Wish List

The list: Yard waste: Are you paying money to have bags of yard waste taken away? You can bring it to the farm when you pick up your veggies and contribute to our compost pile.

Delivery Schedule

12:30-1:00—van leaves farm
1:30-2:00—delivery at Lombard
2:00-2:30—delivery at Wheaton
2:30-3:00—delivery at Bartlett
3:00-3:30—delivery at Elgin

All times are approximate and may vary.

Be A Worm Farmer

Tuesday, June 23, 2009

If you've ever thought of being a worm farmer join Barbara for this hands-on class. Learn this clean and easy way of composting in your home. This is a great "green"

activity for families! Each participant will leave with a small worm farm.

Who: Barbara Powell of the Notebaert Nature Museum
Where: Inglenook Pantry, 11 North Fifth Street, Geneva, Illinois
When: Tuesday, June 23rd
Time: 6:00pm-8:00pm

Cost:
\$20 per person/member
\$30 per person/non-member
\$5 for each additional family member
\$15 material fee includes starter bin and worms

Sign up by sending email to genevagreengreenmarket@gmail.com or call 630-208-9321. Please include your name, email and phone number.

A Peck of Pickles

Tuesday, July 21st

Be prepared for pickle production after attending this basic instruction class. Tammy will review the basics of pickling, while focusing on everyone's favorite bread and butter pickle. Each class participant will leave with a jar of pickles.

Who: Tammy Caltagirone

Where: Inglenook Pantry, 11 North Fifth Street, Geneva, Illinois

When: Tuesday, June 23rd

Time: 6:30pm-8:30pm

Cost:
\$40 per person/member
\$50 per person/non-member

Sign up by emailing genevagreengreenmarket@gmail.com – give your name, email and phone number

Ways with Herbs

Tuesday, July 28th

They smell so-o-o-o good and they have lots of health benefits, too, but what on earth do I do with them? Learn how to use fresh herbs in cooking and teas, how to dry herbs and store them, and how to infuse vinegars and honey. Sample mint tea and other herb-enhanced dishes and take home a jar of herbed vinegar.

Who: Beth Propst of Erewon Farm

Where: Inglenook Pantry, 11 North Fifth Street, Geneva, Illinois

When: Tuesday, June 23rd

Time: 6:30pm-8:30pm

Cost: \$20 per person/member
\$30 per person/non-members

Sign up by emailing genevagreengreenmarket@gmail.com – give your name, email and phone number

Step Back in Time at Garfield Farm Museum's 1840's Days

On Saturday, June 27th and Sunday, June 28th from 10am-4pm, visitors can step back in time and discover what life was like over 160 years ago during Garfield Farm Museum's 1840's Days. The event offers children and adults the opportunity to learn about their rural heritage through guided tours and demonstrations.

Life in the 1840's was very different than it is today. Farm families, like the Garfield family, had to survive without electricity, running water, and many other modern conveniences. Farm work and

household chores were physically demanding and there was always more work that needed to be done. During the event, visitors will be able to experience daily life in the mid 19th century through period demonstrations by costumed interpreters.

The restored 1846 brick inn will be open for tours. Visitors will be able to see the kitchen, ladies parlor, taproom, ballroom, and customers' bedroom. Highlights of the tour include many original Garfield family items, such as, the spinning wheel that the family brought with them from Vermont when they moved to Illinois. The tour often sparks conversations between family members as they recall childhood recollections of growing up on a farm.

In addition to the brick inn, visitors will be able to walk through the museum's historic barns. The 1842 barn is the oldest building on the property. Although damaged by a lightning strike in 2005, this historic structure has survived and plans are underway for its restoration. The 1849 horse barn was recently re-roofed. It was originally built to house the horses for the customers staying at the inn.

Children will delight in seeing the museum's farm animals. These include rare heritage breeds of chickens, turkeys, geese, sheep, hogs, and oxen. Visitors will have a chance to see the oxen in action during several ox driving demonstrations over the course of the two days. Finally, Visitors can also tour the museum's prairie, giving them a chance to reconnect with nature while learning about native plants and the impact of human development on the landscape.

Mint

Mint, that well known mouth and breathe freshener, scientifically known as *Mentha*, with over two dozens of species and hundreds of its varieties, is an herb with remarkable medicinal properties. The market is full of products like tooth paste, chewing gums, mouth & breathe fresheners, candies and inhalers etc. which are based on mint. Most of us are familiar with only the refreshing part of it, but it has much more to offer than that. Let's have a look.

The health benefits of mint include the following:

Digestion: Mint is a good appetizer and promotes digestion, due to its typical aroma. It also soothes stomach in cases of indigestion, inflammation etc. This aroma of mint activates the saliva glands in our mouth as well as glands which secrete digestive enzymes, thereby facilitating digestion. Thus it is extensively used in culinary.

Nausea & Headache: Again, the strong and refreshing aroma of mint is an excellent and quick remedy for nausea. Whenever you feel it, just smell the oil of mint or crushed fresh mint leaves or use any product with mint flavor, whichever is available near you, and it will be gone. In fact, many people keep mentha oil or mint flavored products with them to avoid nausea, particularly when they are traveling. Balms based on mint or simply mint oil, when rubbed on forehead and nose, gives quick relief in headache.

Respiratory Disorders, Cough etc.: The strong aroma of mint is very effective in opening up congestion of nose, throat, bronchi and lungs, giving relief in respiratory disorders resulting from asthma, cold etc. As it cools and soothes throat, nose and other respiratory channels, it gives relief in cough too. Many balms are based on this property of mint. Unlike other inhalers which are based on aerosols, those based on mint are more effective and eco-friendly too.

Asthma: Regular use of mint is very beneficial for asthma patients, as it is a good relaxant and gives relief in congestion. But, over dosage may irritate as well.

Skin Care, pimples etc.: While mint oil is a good anti septic and anti pruritic, mint juice is an excellent skin cleanser. It soothes skin, cures infections, itching etc., and is also good for pimples. Its anti pruritic properties can be used for treating bites of insects like mosquitoes, honey-bees, hornets, wasps, gnats etc.

Oral Care: This is a well known property of mint. Being a germicidal and breathe freshener, it takes care of oral health by inhibiting harmful bacterial growth inside mouth and by cleaning tongue and teeth.

Cancer: Current researches show that certain enzymes present in mint may help cure cancer.

Other Benefits: Besides its wide industrial use in food

stuffs such as ice-creams, chocolates etc., alcoholic and non-alcoholic beverages, cosmetics, medicines, inhalers and mouth and breathe fresheners, it is used as a condiment and decorative item in culinary world-wide. Drinks and food-stuffs containing mint cools you off in summer. It is a good relaxant. One more peculiar property which is very much in contrary to its cooling and soothing effects is that it induces sweating if consumed in fever, thereby curing it. Mint juice can be applied on burns to heal and soothe them. It is also beneficial in rheumatism. It is also said to improve activity of the brain, although there are no sufficient proofs.

Cooking with Mint

Chopped mint leaves are great in salads, fruit desserts, and beverages. It adds delicious flavor to sauces [like chocolate sauce], curries, cold and warm soups, beverages, and as garnish.

Some herbs and spices that work well with mint: basil, garlic, ginger, lavender, rosemary, sage, thyme, and marjoram. Mix other spice with mint and you don't taste the mint as a separate flavor, but it makes all your other flavors seem to sparkle and dance on your tongue.

Minty Fruit Salad

Take any fruit salad recipe and add chopped mint leaves for a little something extra. It is especially good with strawberries. Strawberries fresh from the farm (or Farmer's Market), chopped mint leaves, and rich cream—YUM! (Okay, so maybe there are a *few* calories, but still YUM!)

Fresh Mint Lemonade

Herbal lemonades are a refreshing summer drink, and a wonderful way to sneak some nutritious greens into the family's diet.

4 cups fresh mint, chopped
1 gallon water
2 cups honey (1 lb)
1 ½ cups lemon juice

Gently simmer chopped mint leaves in a covered pot for 10 minutes. (Note: Covering your pot with a tight-fitting lid prevents evaporation of the volatile, aromatic oils in mint, keeping the flavor more intact.) Add honey, stirring until it dissolves.

Cover and let steep and cool for several hours or overnight. (This makes a strong, potent tea, maximizing the calcium and other nutrients in the mint.) Add lemon juice and chill in the fridge.

Mints make a classy lemonade, but this same recipe can

be made using any mild, nutritive herb. Some of my favorites to make lemonade with are Red Clover, Lemon Balm, and Comfrey.

Tabouli with Fresh Mint

This is a wonderful summer salad to make during the late summer when the tomatoes and cucumbers are fresh on the vine, but it's great anytime even if you have to buy your vegetables.

1 cup dry bulgur, (Can substitute rice, quinoa or other grain)
¼ cup olive oil
¼ cup lemon juice
¾ cup wild greens or substitute ¾ cup parsley
¾ cup fresh Mint
1 clove garlic
¼ cup minced green onions
1 cucumber
1 large tomato
½ cup chopped olives
1-1½ tsp salt

Cook bulgur or other grain. Cool, and chill thoroughly.

Mix olive oil, lemon juice and salt into the bulgur so that all the grain is evenly coated.

Dice the cucumbers and tomato, and mince the green onions, chop the olives.

Chop wild greens (parsley), Mint, and garlic (you can use a food processor) so that they are finely minced.

Mix all the prepped ingredients into the bulgur.

Serve chilled.

For the wild greens you can use Lambs quarters, Purslane, Chickweed, Violet leaves, or any green that is mild and tender. (We have plenty of these at the farm—you are welcome to pick your own any time you want.) Garden greens, parsley, or cilantro work fine as well.

Mint Granita

The cool burst of minty flavor makes this recipe a great palette cleanser between courses or serve it as a refreshing dessert or treat.

1 ¼ cup fresh mint leaves
2 cups water
¼ cup agave, or more to taste
2 tablespoons lemon juice

Place all ingredients in a high-speed blender and blend. Strain the liquid through a fine mesh sieve, twice. Pour the mint water into a shallow container and freeze. Every half hour or so, stir and crush any lumps. Repeat until evenly frozen, approximately 3-4 hours.

When ready to serve scrape the frozen mixture with a fork to fluff and loose into tiny ice granules. Spoon into glasses or bowls and serving immediately.

Mustard Greens

Mustard greens are jam-packed with nutrients. They provide good to excellent amounts of 9 vitamins, 7 minerals, dietary fiber and protein. And if that were not impressive enough, being a member of the Brassica family along with broccoli, cabbage and Brussels sprouts, they also feature the health-promoting phytonutrients known as glucosinolates.

Tips for Preparing Mustard Greens:

For basic mustard green preparation, wash the leaves and fold in half with the top of the green folded inward. Cut along the stem and remove. Or, if you plan to cook the greens for a long time, such as when using them in soup, you can keep the leaves intact with their center stem.

A Few Quick Serving Ideas:

- Young mustard greens make great additions to salads.
- Serve healthy sauteed mustard greens with walnuts and lemon juice.
- Adding chopped mustard greens to a pasta salad gives it a little kick. One of our favorite combinations is chopped tomatoes, pine nuts, goat cheese, pasta and mustard greens tossed with a little olive oil.
- For a simple meal with a southern flair, serve cooked mustard greens with beans and rice.
- Healthy sautéed mustard greens, sweet potatoes and tempeh and serve alongside your favorite grain.

Sauteed Mustard Greens with Onions and Garlic

½ cup thinly sliced onions
2 cloves garlic, minced
1 Tbsp olive oil
1 pound mustard greens, washed and torn into large pieces
2 to 3 Tbsp chicken broth or vegetable broth (vegetarian option)
¼ teaspoon salt
¼ teaspoon pepper
¼ teaspoon dark sesame oil

In a large sauté pan, sauté onions in olive oil over medium heat until the onions begin to brown and caramelize, about 5 to 10 minutes. Add the minced garlic and cook a minute more, until fragrant.

Add the mustard greens and broth and cook until the mustard greens are just barely wilted. Toss with sesame oil. Season with salt and pepper.