

# Erehwon Farm

Week 3—June 20, 2010

## Farm Report

### Hello from Erehwon!

Fine weather continues and most crops are growing almost as fast as the weeds! Last week we began to get a few small summer squash, a couple of cucumbers, first of the Swiss chard and a few beets. Everyone has been diligently picking off the Colorado potato beetles and only minor damage has been seen; we hope to see some new potatoes in about two weeks.

Farmer Tim has been sharpening his Italian grubbing hoe and attacking the advancing Canada thistle with vigor. These invasive weeds can march across a field very quickly and any plant that gets over a foot tall will feed the vast root system that can send up new shoots at least fifteen feet away from the mother plant. If plants are tilled in, each piece of root can start a new plant. Now Farmer Tim, ever mindful of Mother Nature's probably unknowable master plan for managing the fragile soils of the earth's crust, is not trying to eradicate weeds but merely attempting to work with Mother to lessen their effect. He suspects that the thistles have some important role to play but he just doesn't know what it is yet.

His current strategy is to mow the pathways closely, lightly till unplanted beds to keep little ones from becoming big ones, and to hoe down (maybe with some fiddle music playing in the background) any that he comes across. If all else fails, he may be forced to trot out his Firedog model Ultra 50, 500,000 BTU propane flamer and burn them to a crisp! This tool also works well as a campfire starter; a pile of wet, green wood can become a roaring bonfire in about thirty seconds! When using the tool this way, Farmer Tim's eyes seem to glaze



Potato plants in full bloom.

over and we think he is imaging himself as Harrison Ford, who, looking a bit bored while watching an approaching knife-twirling attacker, calmly pulls out a large pistol and blows him away. (*Why do boys like to play with guns and fire?—beth*)

Speaking of large pistols, last Sunday the coyote was back sitting a few yards off in the soybean field taunting Bucky, barking and yapping at the fearless farm dog. When our hero, unafraid of any intruder, got too close, the invader would circle around and try to attack him from behind. Finally Farmer Tim, who loves all of Nature's creatures (except maybe potato

beetles!) and would never hurt a flea (well, maybe a flea beetle if he could catch one), had had enough. He called a friend who promptly arrived bearing a shiny, large caliber pistol, which was loaded with shotgun shells. He fired a few rounds in the direction of the coyote who, completely startled by the loud noise and flying buckshot, zipped and zagged across the soybean field and disappeared into the woods a quarter mile away. After watching the fleeing animal, Bucky, unperturbed by the commotion, calmly turned and trotted off to check the perimeter of his farm. As of today the coyote has not been back.

### At the Farm This Week

#### This week's produce:

Some combination of carrots, cabbage, radishes, green onions, chard, kale, summer squash, lettuce, broccoli, cauliflower, green garlic and whatever else we can find.

#### Pick Your Own:

H8 (look for the small wooden stakes with numbers on the east or south ends of beds and see the farm map at the pick up station for areas): herbs

D1: Cilantro (small bunch)

S8-10: dill.

Section B: Raspberries, \$4.50 a pound from Belles Berries. See Izabella in the field for location.

#### Foraging:

Mulberries, trees near S15, behind the shade hoop house, and also behind the big shed. See Farmer Tim for locations, tarp, and long pole for branch shaking.

Black raspberries for snacking near the pickup area.

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## Gleaning:

S20/21: Broccoli small florets. (one row per customer)

## Activities:

Rye Maze (no catcher on duty): Farmer Tim added a second feature last week and may add a third this week.

Cabbage moth catching.  
Beetle scouting (see Farmer Tim)  
Hammock lounging: two hammocks, no waiting.

**Note:** Delivery customers are welcome to come to the farm any time for the above activities. Call 630-485-9963 or 630-485-9964 to make sure someone will be there.

## Farm Pick-up Times

Wednesday 4:00-6:30  
Friday 2:30-5:30

## Delivery Times (Tuesday)

1:00-1:30 Van leaves farm  
1:45-2:15 Drop off at Wheaton  
2:15-2:30 Drop off at Bartlett  
2:30-2:45 Drop off at Elgin

## Visiting Farmer Days

We have had many inquiries over the years from our subscribers and potential subscribers about the possibility of including items such as eggs, meat, and cheese in our shares. We do not offer those items now, nor do we intend to in the future. The licensing and logistics of doing so are more than we feel we can manage adequately. However, this year we are trying another alternative-Visiting Farmer Days.

On Visiting Farmer Days, farmers who offer items that we do not will come to the farm during subscriber pick-up hours. They will be available to talk to subscribers about their products and their farms. You will be able to purchase items directly from them, thus eliminating us from the process. After they have been to the farm once, you will be able to order from them

## Events

Every Thursday all summer long

[Geneva Green Market](#)

Every Saturday all summer long

Community Farmer's Market at  
Inglenook Pantry, 9:00-1:00

Saturdays starting June 26

[Batavia Farmer's Market](#)

Visiting Farmer Days

June 30 and July 02

prior to their visits to ensure a sufficient supply of popular items.

At this time we plan to hold Visiting Farmer Days once a month. **These events are not open to the public, but are for subscribers and farm friends only.** Delivery subscribers are welcome to come to the farm to visit with the farmers. We're sorry we cannot offer to drop off items at the drop points at this time because we have no way to guarantee that the items stay at the correct temperature until you pick them up. If you have any ideas how we might manage this, we will be happy to consider them.

The first Visiting Farmer Days are scheduled for the week before the July 4<sup>th</sup> weekend. That way you can stock up on all of your grilling needs from local farmers. The actual dates are Wednesday, June 30, and Friday, July 1. At this point we have 2 farms scheduled. The first one is [R Family Farm](#), from Poplar Grove, IL. (This is north of Belvidere.) The other is [Farm Direct Black Angus](#) located just this side of Sycamore.

We'll have more information about Visiting Farmer Days as we get closer to the event. If you have any suggestions for making these events more successful, we would love to hear about them.

## The Climate Crisis at the End of Your Fork

Written by [Anna Lappé](#)<sup>1</sup> for Sustainable Table

## Taking a Bite out of Climate Change

On September 8, 2008 Dr. Rajendra Pachauri, chair of the United Nations Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, spoke to 400 people gathered for an event hosted by the animal welfare organization, Compassion in World Farming.<sup>2</sup> Pachauri, an Indian economist (and vegetarian) who had just been reelected to a second term as chairman, made one of the most public and bold statements about the connection between our diet and global warming on the world stage: Choosing to eat less meat, Pachauri said, or cutting out meat entirely, is one of the most important personal choices we can make to address climate change.

"In terms of immediacy of action and the feasibility of bringing about reductions in a short period of time, it clearly is the most attractive opportunity," said Pachauri. "Give up meat for one day [a week] initially, and decrease it from there."

To many of us, Pachauri's specific prescription for addressing change might come as a surprise. When we think about the culprits behind the climate crisis, we tend to think about Big Oil or dirty coal-fired powered plants. We picture cars and industrial skylines, or imagine factories and smokestacks. It's time we start thinking about another sector of the economy that is increasingly exacerbating the climate crisis. The global food system—including deforestation to make way for crops for cattle and cars—is responsible for an estimated one-third of total greenhouse gas emissions (see below, Main Sources of Emission from Agriculture). ([more](#))

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# Grandma Beth's Cookbook

## Swiss Chard

from *The World's Healthiest Foods*

Swiss chard, along with kale, mustard greens and collard greens, is one of several leafy green vegetables often referred to as "greens". It is a tall leafy green vegetable with a thick, crunchy stalk that comes in white, red or yellow with wide fan-like green leaves. Chard belongs to the same family as beets and spinach and shares a similar taste profile: it has the bitterness of beet greens and the slightly salty flavor of spinach leaves. Both the leaves and stalk of chard are edible, although the stems vary in texture with the white ones being the most tender.

Both the leaves and the roots of Swiss chard have been the subject of fascinating health studies. The combination of traditional nutrients, phytonutrients (particularly *anthocyanins*), plus fiber in this food seems particularly effective in preventing digestive tract cancers. Several research studies on chard focus specifically on colon cancer, where the incidence of precancerous lesions in animals has been found to be significantly reduced following dietary intake of Swiss chard extracts or fibers. Preliminary animal research also suggests that Swiss chard may confer a protective effect on the kidneys of those with diabetes through reducing serum urea and creatinine levels.

If vegetables got grades for traditional nutrients alone, Swiss chard would be one of the vegetable valedictorians. The vitamin and mineral profile of this leafy green vegetable contains enough "excellents" to ensure its place at the head of the vegetable Dean's List. Our rating system awards Swiss chard with excellent marks for its concentrations of vitamin K, vitamin A, vitamin C, magnesium, manganese, potassium, iron, vitamin E, and dietary fiber. Swiss chard also emerges as a very good or good source of copper, calcium, vitamin B2, vitamin B6, protein, phosphorus, vitamin B1, zinc, folate, biotin, niacin and pantothenic acid.

Read more about Swiss Chard at The World's Healthiest Foods web site:

<http://www.whfoods.com/genpage.php?tname=foodspice&dbid=16>

### A Few Quick Serving Ideas:

Wrap Swiss chard leaves around your favorite vegetable and grain salad and roll into a neat little package. Bake in a medium-heat oven and enjoy this nutrient-superstar alternative to stuffed cabbage.

Toss penne pasta with olive oil, lemon juice, garlic, and cooked Swiss chard.

Add zest to omelets and fritatas by adding some steamed Swiss chard.

Use chard in place of or in addition to spinach when preparing vegetarian lasagna.

### Creamed Swiss Chard

2 lbs Swiss chard  
2 tbsp butter  
1 tbsp all purpose flour  
½ cup heavy cream  
2 cloves garlic, minced  
1 tsp dried thyme  
½ tsp ground nutmeg  
salt and pepper

Roughly chop Swiss chard into manageable pieces. Separate the stems and leaves. Bring 6 cups of salted water (about 2 tsp of salt) to boil in large saucepan. Add chard stems and simmer about 4 minutes. Add in chard leaves and simmer 2 minutes more. Drain chard stems and leaves, squeezing out any excess water. Set aside. In large skillet, melt butter over medium high heat. Stir in flour and continue stirring until mixture forms a paste. Slowly add cream, garlic, thyme, and nutmeg, whisking constantly until mixture thickens. Add in drained Swiss chard and stir. Season with salt and pepper to taste.

### Swiss Chard with Onions

2 teaspoons olive oil  
2 cups thinly sliced onion  
8 cups torn Swiss chard (about 12 ounces)  
1 teaspoon Worcestershire sauce  
¼ teaspoon salt  
⅛ teaspoon black pepper

Heat oil in a large skillet over medium-high heat. Add onion; saute 5 minutes or until lightly browned. Add chard; stir-fry 10 minutes or until wilted. Stir in Worcestershire, salt, and pepper.

### They'll Never Say "No" to Chard Again

This is one of my favorite recipes. A market customer gave me the idea last year and then, with my usual inability to leave a recipe alone, I added to it. Farmer Tim says we can have chard every night if I cook it this way.

Swiss chard  
Onions  
Olive oil  
Garlic  
Raisins (or dried cranberries, cherries, or blueberries)  
Walnuts (or sliced almonds, pecans, or pine nuts)

Crumbled blue cheese (or feta)

Chop onions and chard stems in olive oil. Cover and cook about ten minutes.

Slice chard leaves and add to skillet. Cover and cook about five more minutes.

Chop garlic and add. Stir and cover again for about five minutes.

Add raisins and nuts. Cover for about 3 more minutes.

Turn off and add cheese immediately. Stir and let sit for a few minutes until cheese begins to melt.

This would also be good with kale, cabbage, Chinese cabbage, pak choi, komatsuna, or broccoli. Or a mixture of the above.

## More Broccoli Recipes

### Quick and Easy Broccoli Stir Fry

Sauté onions and garlic in olive oil until onion is slightly tender. Add broccoli florets. Continue to stir-fry until broccoli is tender. (It helps to par-boil or nuke the broccoli before stir-frying.) Add a little balsamic vinegar. Serve over a bed of greens (very low cal and healthful), over pasta, or as a side dish.

Variations: add or substitute other veggies, like cauliflower, summer squash (doesn't need to cook nearly as long as the broccoli), beets, beans, sugar snap peas, carrots, parsnips, kohlrabi. Add fresh herbs. Omit the balsamic vinegar and add red pepper flakes, paprika, or cayenne pepper.

### Oriental Broccoli Stir-Fry Variation

Stir fry onions and walnuts (or almonds) in hot sesame oil for about 1 minute. Add broccoli florets and toss for 3-4 minutes. Add red pepper (sweet bell, not hot) strips and a couple of TBS of soy sauce. Cook for another minute and serve immediately.

½ c chicken broth  
½ tsp. dried thyme (or about 1 tsp. fresh thyme)  
3 c broccoli florets  
2 TBS sour cream  
2 tsp. flour  
2 tsp. Dijon mustard

Bring broth and thyme to boil. Add broccoli and return to boil. Simmer broccoli covered until tender crisp—about 5 minutes. Retain cooking liquid in saucepan, but remove broccoli. Keep broccoli warm.

Blend sour cream, flour and mustard. Stir into cooking liquid in saucepan. Cook over medium heat until

thickened, stirring constantly. Continue to cook and stir for another minute after thickening, but do not allow to come to a boil. (If sauce gets too thick, add more broth a tablespoon at a time.)

Return broccoli to saucepan. Stir gently until coated. Serve at once.

**Grandma Beth's Note:** This sauce would also be good on cauliflower, Brussels sprouts, or green beans.

### Broccoli with Herbs

1 head of broccoli, cut into florets  
2 tbsp. butter  
2 tbsp. fresh herbs (dill, thyme, lemon basil, mint)  
1 tbsp. lemon juice

Steam broccoli about 6 minutes until just tender and bright green.

Melt butter. Stir in herbs and juice.  
Pour butter mixture over hot broccoli and serve at once

### Roasted Cauliflower Recipe

1 head of cauliflower  
2-3 cloves of garlic, peeled and coarsely minced  
Lemon juice from half a lemon  
Olive oil  
Coarse salt and freshly ground black pepper  
Parmesan cheese

Preheat oven to 400°F. Cut cauliflower into florets and put in a single layer in an oven-proof baking dish. Toss in the garlic. Sprinkle lemon juice over cauliflower and drizzle each piece with olive oil. Sprinkle with salt and pepper. If the oven hasn't reached 400°F yet, set aside until it has.

Place casserole in the hot oven, uncovered, for 25-30 minutes, or until the top is lightly brown. Test with a fork for desired doneness. Fork tines should be able to easily pierce the cauliflower. Remove from oven and sprinkle generously with Parmesan cheese. Serve immediately.

## [World's Healthiest Foods](#)

If you are not familiar with this website, you should check it out. I use it a lot for nutritional information as well as cooking ideas and links to recipes. It includes all foods, not just veggies.