

# EREHWON FARM

Newsletter Week 19-October 10, 2011

## Farm Report

### Greetings from summery Erehwon!

Gotta love Mother Nature! She gives us October weather for the entire month of September, including a touch of frost on October 2. Now we're in the middle of a week of lovely summery weather. Hmm—wonder what's in store for the rest of the month. Or the rest of the year for that matter. The warm weather stuff is reviving a little bit—what has survived, and the cool weather stuff is starting to come in right on schedule, so you'll start to see more of that in your shares this week.

Last week we managed to replace the plastic on the first row of hoops—the stuff that blew down two weeks ago. Now if we can only get a couple more rows covered this week (unlikely), we'll be in good shape for cooler weather later this week and next.

Last Monday Farmer Tim was giving a tour to a Brownie troop. As they toured the farm, Farmer Tim kept asking, "What do you see over here?" and "Does anyone know what that is over there?" Finally, one observant little girl piped up "I see a hammock over there in the trees." "Er ... yes," replied Farmer Tim. "That is my outdoor office." Well, that is what he calls it, but all



Farmer Tim giving a tour to a group of Brownies.

we can tell you is that we can find him there most days after lunch, and we're not sure what kind of work he is doing, but it sounds suspiciously like snoring. Bucky the Farm Dog, while not a big fan of hammocks, has a few choice spots on the ground where he hangs out close to Farmer Tim while he is "working" there.

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We've added farm tours for the rest of the fall and winter—Farmer Tim has been working hard on setting them up. More information is available on our [website](#). Remember, subscribers get a discount on the price of admission (except for group tours).

### This week's produce:

Farmer Tim's Health Mix, choice of cooking greens (Swiss chard, kale, Mediterranean spinach, possibly endive), green tomatoes, dill, cilantro, French breakfast radishes (long and thin with white tips—great for salads), possibly a winter squash, and a mixture of other things such as peppers, eggplant, storage radishes, and potatoes.

### Farm events:

Catching cabbage moths—reward for any child who participates.

Herb cutting garden.

Please remember to not park in front of the house. That space is reserved for the people who live in the house.

### Farm Pick-up Times

Wednesday 4:00-6:30

Friday 2:30-5:30

Don't forget to bring your bags!

Please don't park in front of the house.

### **Delivery Times (Tuesday)**

12:30 Van leaves farm

1:30-1:45 Drop off at Wheaton

1:50-2:15 Drop off in Lombard

2:30-2:45 Drop off at AAR Corp

3:15-3:45 Drop off at Bartlett

4:15-4:45 Drop off at Elgin

### **Edible Farm Tours**

October 15 1:30-3:00

### **Fall CSA Shares Now Available**

You may now purchase your 2011 fall shares. There are a limited number of these available so sign up early. Just print out the form on the [website](#) or the one I will be e-mailing you sometime this week. Either mail it in with you check or bring it with you when you pick up your share.

### **Events**

October 15

Edible Farm Tour

Thursdays all summer long

[Geneva Green Market](#)

Saturdays through October 15

[Batavia Farmer's Market](#)

Sundays all summer long

[Logan Square Farmer's Market](#)

Wednesdays in June



Plastic back up over the eggplant.

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## Broccoli Raab and its Cousins

Rapini (also known as Broccoli Rabe (or Raap or Raab), *Broccoletti*, *Broccoli di Rape*, *Cime di Rapa*, Rape, *Rappi*, *Friarielli* (in Naples) is a common vegetable in the cuisines of southern Italy, Galicia (northwestern Spain), and China. The plant is a member of the brassica family along with cabbage, broccoli, kale, turnips, bok choy, and many others. Rapini has many spiked leaves that surround clusters of green buds that resemble small heads of broccoli. Small, edible yellow flowers may be blooming among the buds. The flavor of rapini has been described as nutty, bitter, and pungent.



The best Italian broccoli raab are from Puglia and Campania, and are quite leafy, with slender stalks; in terms of flavor they are pungent in a turnipy sort of way (the word *rapa* means turnip), with pronounced mustard overtones. In the United States the D'Arrigo brothers, two Sicilians who pioneered the shipping of Californian vegetables to Boston in the 1920s, developed a variety with juicy stocks, many buds, and smaller leaves that they felt would appeal more to American consumers; by comparison with much Italian broccoli raab it's also more mildly flavored. Rapini is now grown throughout the world. Rapini is available all year long, but its peak season in the Northern Hemisphere is fall to spring.

Rapini's cousins, the flower bud variety of Asian greens, includes Happy Rich, Green Lance, and Hon Tsai Tai. These Asian greens feature plants that you want to let go to flower. While most plants in the broccoli family turn bitter when allowed to flower, the flower bud types of Asian greens have flowers that are meant to be eaten, buds and all. Chinese kale (choi sum, gai laan) is the most noteworthy of the flower bud types. Like the Italian broccoli raab, this vegetable is harvested with its stem, leaves, and flowers and is used in sautes and stir fries. The flavor

is stronger than broccoli, but like most greens, cool weather tempers the taste. The flower, leaves, and stems are all edible, although the stems can become woody close to the base.

The cultivated vegetable probably descends from a wild herb related to the turnip that grew either in China or the Mediterranean region. Rapini is similar in shape to the Chinese *Brassica oleracea* cultivar called *kai-lan*. But what are they? Broccoli raab (*Brassica rapa* var. *cymosa*), which are also known as *cime di rapa* in Italy, are a wilder member of the broccoli family with small, fairly loose florets intermingled among the leaves of the plant; by comparison with broccoli, broccoli raab are much leafier and one eats the entire plant. They first appear in Italian markets in late November/early December, and they persist through March, or even April if it stays cold.

Broccoli raab are low in calories and sodium. On the other hand, they're rich in calcium, vitamin C, vitamin A, vitamin B2, phosphorous, and are also a good source of protein and fiber. They are also a good source of folate, which helps prevent spina bifida, and are therefore often recommended to pregnant women. And finally, they contain compounds that protect the heart, lungs, and intestines, and are thought to be cancer preventing. In short, they are quite healthy.

A common preparation involves sauteing rapini with garlic over low heat for 10 - 15 minutes.

### Italian Style Broccoli Raab

1 pound broccoli raab, trimmed  
5 tablespoons extra virgin olive oil  
1 clove garlic, minced  
1 tablespoon grated Parmesan cheese

Bring a large pot of salted water to a boil. Cut an X in the bottom of the stems of the broccoli raab and place in the boiling water. Cook until tender but still firm, about 5 minutes. Drain.

In a large heavy skillet over medium heat, heat olive oil and saute garlic for 1 to 2 minutes. Stir in the broccoli raab and saute 10 to 15 minutes, or until desired doneness. Dust with parmesan cheese, if desired.

## Cream of Broccoli Raab Soup

1 onion  
2 garlic cloves  
1 stalk celery  
2 tablespoons olive oil  
1/4 teaspoon black pepper  
1/4 teaspoon red pepper flakes  
4 cups chicken broth  
4 cups broccoli raab (washed and chopped)  
3 tablespoons margarine  
3 tablespoons flour  
2 cups milk  
cheese (to garnish)

In medium sized stock pot sauté onion, garlic and celery in olive oil until tender. Add broccoli raab and broth; cover and simmer for 10 minutes.

Remove from heat and purée soup with a hand blender. (you can use the blender for this but let the liquid cool first).

Return to heat.

In small saucepan, over medium heat melt 3 tablespoons butter, stir in flour and add milk. Stir until thick and bubbly, add to soup and stir well.

Serve over a mound of grated cheddar or mozzarella cheese.

## Hon Tsai Tai Stir Fry

1 cup dry quinoa  
2 cups water  
3 tbs sesame oil  
1/2 tsp red pepper flakes (use more if you want more heat)  
1/2 cup chopped onion (I used 11 baby onions)  
5 cloves garlic  
3 tbs chopped crystallized ginger (regular ginger is ok too, it's just what I had on hand)  
2 carrots, sliced  
3 radishes, sliced  
1 1/2 cups mushrooms  
2 tsp fish sauce  
4 tbs rice wine vinegar  
4 tbs gluten-free tamari sauce

8 oz (about 4 cups chopped) Hon Tsai Tai stems, leaves and flours- *if you can't find this green, substitute any leafy green of your choosing.*

In a small saucepan place quinoa and the 2 cups of water. Cover and turn to medium. When the lid starts to rattle, turn the heat to low and let simmer for 10-15 minutes, or until all the liquid is absorbed. Keep lid on and pull from heat so the pan doesn't burn.

Meanwhile, in a large wok or large saucepan (I used my 7 qt sauce pot because it's wide and has deeper sides than a traditional saucepan. Use whatever you think will work for you.) Add sesame oil and red pepper flakes. Turn heat to medium and when you smell the oil, (about 1 minute) add the onion and garlic and stir until translucent, about 2-3 minutes.

Add sliced carrots and radishes and stir another 2-3 minutes. Add fish sauce, rice wine vinegar and soy sauce, stir another 2 minutes. While carrots are still crunchy add mushrooms. Continue stirring until carrots are soft and mushrooms have thoroughly cooked, about 2-3 minutes more. Just prior to serving add the Hon Tsai Tai, or greens of your choice. These should be loosely chopped- remember, they'll shrink as they cook. Immediately pull from heat and continue mixing the greens into the stir-fry. The heat from the other ingredients will wilt the greens. For optimum flavor and nutritional benefit, it's important that the greens stay really bright. Serve over quinoa and garnish with a baby onion stem (scallions or chives are fine too) and a piece of crystallized ginger. My heat-loving husband also added a few additional red pepper flakes to his garnish.