

Enterprise Farm News

Week of March 16, 2009



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Dear Shareholders,

We've had several inquiries recently regarding the make-up of the shares. Some have expressed a desire for greater variety, others have lamented that there aren't more locally-grown items in the winter share. You're not alone, and we want you to know that your membership is part of the solution...

In recent history, there simply hasn't been a market for East Coast-grown organic produce.

Why?

The market for organic produce grew exponentially over the last 20 years. Stores and distributors focused on moving large volumes of lower-priced organic produce – as opposed to supporting local/regional growers – which meant buying from large-scale organic growers on the West Coast.

In order for farms here in our region to invest time, staffing and infrastructure towards growing a greater variety of produce throughout the year, they first need to be shown that the demand is there. And that's where our winter farm share, and you – our members – come in!

How?

The winter farm share is one starting point on the path to viable East Coast regional foodsheds. Each step of this change is critical. Your continual support for local and regional farmers leads directly to increased year-round production – eventually resulting in a wide variety of local and regional produce, even in the winter.

In order for farms in Massachusetts and throughout the East Coast to supply more winter food, there are many steps awaiting, such as: investing in season-extending greenhouses and crop storage infrastructure, maintaining year-round staffing, and planting additional acres with varieties specific to winter growing or storage. There are also many steps at the food system level, for example: regional storage and distribution centers are currently inadequate, and produce buyers at stores, restaurants and distributors stock out of season, non-local produce.

Your support will allow farmers in the Northeast to make infrastructure changes and update practices to grow and store food locally for more months of the year. It will allow farmers in the Southeast to grow a greater variety than currently grown, and to consistently distribute that produce throughout the East, providing needed winter quantity and variety of fresh items.

We share your concerns and frustrations with the current limitations of East Coast winter produce availability. Our goal is to be able to provide a much greater variety of locally-grown produce within the next 3-5 years. In the short term, this means supporting East Coast and local organic farms as they transition from a model of providing a limited menu of items seasonally, to growing a wide variety of items year-round. At Enterprise, we're more than grateful that you choose to be a part of these farm and food system changes.

Thank You,

Farmer Benneth (for Dave, Family and Crew)

ITEMS IN THIS WEEK'S SHARE

All items in this week's share are organic, except for the onions which are from a local conventional farm. Shares may differ depending on whether you have a large or small share, and whether you pick up at the farm or in the Metro Boston area.

Onions: Long Plain Farm, Whately, MA (*conventional*)
Sweet Potatoes (Beauregard, Ruby) Watauga Farm, NC
Potatoes (Red, Yukon, Kennebec) Deep Root, VT/CAN
Carrots: Deep Root, Quebec
Celeriac: Full Bloom Farm, Whately, MA
Rutabaga, Cottles Farm, NC
Purple Top Turnip: Somerset Farm, NC

Parsnips: LOCAL SPRING DUG FROM HADLEY, MA!

Kale (Dino, Green and Red): Lady Moon, FL
Collards: Lady Moon, FL
Swiss Chard: Lady Moon, FL
Parsley (Flat and Curley): Lady Moon Farm, FL
Lettuce: Lady Moon Farm, FL
Eggplant: Alderman, FL
Green Beans: Alderman, FL
Green Bell Peppers: Alderman, FL
Cherry and Grape Tomatoes: Alderman, FL
Citrus (Red Valencia and Red Grapefruit): Eagle's Nest, FL

- Parsnip Pie -

In honor of the first local crop of 2009, parsnips, we offer this recipe. Parsnips are dug in the late fall, or overwintered until spring, when time in cold weather turns their starches to sugars and offers them at their sweetest. The parsnips in the share this week are non-certified organic from grower Michael Doctor in Hadley, MA, 12 miles from Enterprise Farm, in the heart of the Connecticut River Valley.

Parsnip, Root Vegetable and Mushroom Pie with Rosemary Biscuit Topping

Adapted from epicurious.com Bon Appétit | March 2009

Yield: Makes 8-10 servings

Filling:

6 cups water
2 tablespoons vegetarian bouillon base
2 very large carrots, peeled, quartered lengthwise,
cut crosswise into 1/2-inch pieces
1 large celery root (celeriac), peeled, cut into 1/2-inch pieces
2 large parsnips, peeled, quartered lengthwise, cut crosswise into 1/2-inch pieces
1 large rutabaga, peeled, cut into 1/2-inch cubes
1 turnip, peeled, cut into 1/2-inch cubes
1 ounce dried mushrooms such as porcini, broken into 1/2-inch pieces, rinsed
3 tablespoons butter
3 cups chopped onions
4 large garlic cloves, chopped
1/2 teaspoon minced fresh rosemary
1/2 cup all purpose flour
1/4 cup heavy whipping cream
2 tablespoons imported dry Sherry
1/4 cup chopped fresh Italian parsley

Biscuits:

2 1/4 cups unbleached all purpose flour
1 tablespoon baking powder
2 teaspoons minced fresh rosemary
1 teaspoon salt
6 tablespoons (3/4 stick) chilled
unsalted butter, diced
1 1/3 cups (or more) chilled buttermilk

For filling:

Bring 6 cups water and bouillon base to boil in large pot over medium-high heat, stirring to dissolve bouillon. Add carrots and next 5 ingredients. Simmer until vegetables are tender, about 7 minutes. Drain; reserve vegetables and broth. Melt butter in same pot over medium heat. Add onions; sauté until beginning to brown, about 10 minutes. Mix in garlic and rosemary; stir 2 minutes. Add flour; stir 1 minute. Gradually whisk in reserved broth, then cream and Sherry. Cook until sauce is thick and reduced to 4 cups, whisking often, about 8 minutes. Mix in reserved vegetables and parsley. Season with salt and pepper. Transfer filling to buttered 13x9x2-inch baking dish. DO AHEAD: Can be made 2 days ahead. Cover with foil; chill.

Preheat oven to 400°F. Bake filling, covered, until bubbling, about 50 minutes. Meanwhile, prepare biscuits.

For biscuits:

Stir first 4 ingredients in large bowl to blend. Add butter. Using fingertips, rub in butter until mixture resembles coarse meal. Gradually add 1 1/3 cups buttermilk, tossing with fork until dough is evenly moistened and adding more buttermilk by tablespoonfuls if dry. Drop biscuit dough atop hot filling by heaping tablespoonfuls; sprinkle with pepper. Bake uncovered until tester inserted into center of biscuits comes out clean, about 45 minutes. Cool 15 minutes.