

The Stanton Street Harvest

JULY 3, 2008

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE LOWER EAST SIDE'S CSA

VOL. 3, NO. 3

TODAY'S WEATHER AT WINDFLOWER FARM



88°/70°

Sunshine and clouds mixed.
Chance of precipitation 20%

TED'S LETTER FROM THE FARM

Dog Days at Windflower

By Ted Blomgren

Tim, a yellow lab from the farm down the road, regularly rendezvous here with the white and brown mutt from next door. The black labs from the Harrington farm frequently amble by as they make their way to the Skiff place. And a neighbor's beagle visits regularly. Our farm is something of a canine crossroads.

Bob, the beagle, appears to have moved to the farm permanently. Jan keeps him tied to a tree, where he has shade and water, while she waits for the owners to pick him up. But they don't come. He's very friendly. Sometimes Tim and Bob run together, like kids at play. Tim tackles the slower dog when he catches him, sending him rolling in the grass. Jan chases the beagle, too—out of the greenhouse, out of the barn, out of the kitchen—throwing rotten vegetables she's stored by the back door for the purpose. She's annoyed with him because he chases our cat and eats her food, and he tramples our plants. Bob also barks incessantly, howling all night, probably explaining why our neighbors refuse to keep him home.

So, Bob has been given a farm job. He, along with his food dish and water bowl, will be relocated to the lettuce field at night and placed in charge of the deer guard. During the day he will have the companionship of the farm staff, and at

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ANOTHER INSTALLMENT OF TALES FROM THE HOMEFRONT

I FED FOURTEEN PEOPLE WITH MY FARM SHARE LAST WEEK

We received this letter from shareholder Cia Bernales. Needless to say, we are impressed.

By Cia Bernales

Not a lot of people can say that they feed up to fourteen co-workers each week. With my Omakase Bento Project, I count myself among the few who can. *Omakase* means “to entrust” in Japanese. In Japanese restaurants, to order an omakase means to leave your meal in the chef's hands. *Bento*, or *obento*, is also a Japanese word that essentially means “home-packed meal.” In Japan, there are *bentogus* (ya means “store”) near the train stations so that salarymen can pick them up on their way to work. Japanese moms also make them for their children to take to school.

When I would bring my lunch to work, a few people would always inquire about the food. I like to cook, so I thought, what if I made some money doing it? If my co-workers are curious enough, maybe they'd eat something I cook for them. Even in SoHo, the food gets monotonous, not to mention expensive. If they pay \$8 for a sandwich, maybe they'd pay \$5 for a packed lunch.

To ensure that I'm not spending more than I expect to make each week, I keep the main ingredient to Swai fish fillets, a very affordable catfish I buy either in Chinatown or in Harlem. Sometimes, I throw in shrimps; other times, I'll use pork and beef. But I usually keep it down to a few vegetables so that the flexitarians in the group—those who call themselves vegetarians but eat seafood—may also enjoy the lunches.

I kept the kale fresh from our June 19 distribution by wrapping them dry in Glad Press 'N Seal. And after receiving

Swiss chard and radishes last week, I decided to stir-fry them all together with turmeric and soy sauce. For the second dish, I sauteed the bok choy with tomatoes and onions. Both were served with warm white rice and fresh watermelon. The result? A very nutritious dish with a whole lot of greens—a great way to start the week.

[You can find a link to photos of Cia's tasty bento boxes on our website: <http://stantonstreetcsa.wordpress.com>.]

The Season's First Beets



Beets, like the Japanese turnips, are famous for winning over CSA converts. We've lost count over the years of the beet-haters turned beet-lovers. Prepared correctly, beets are a real summertime treat. Ted says, “My favorite way to have beets is to boil them, peel them, and stick them in the fridge. I slice them and eat them cold.” You'll find some other easy beet recipes on p. 2.

night he'll earn his keep by using his one talent to prevent the deer and rabbits from eating our vegetables. Jan's only reservation is that the coyotes might find him and that he'd be helpless to defend himself because of his leash, but I think his howling will keep them away, too. Now, if we can only catch him again.

Community Notes...

NEXT WEEK'S VOLUNTEERS

Remember, we need three volunteers for each shift, and two shifts per season from each member.

July 10, Early Shift (5:00-6:30 p.m.)

L. Gutman, A. Sala, E. Cohen

July 10, Closing Shift (6:30-8:00 p.m.)

P. Agnew, C. Bernales, A. Kamenetz, A. Berenzweig

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JUNETEENTH PARTY IN THE GARDEN

Don't miss the M'Finda Kalunga Garden's (almost) annual Juneteenth celebration this Saturday, July 5. The fun starts at 11:30 a.m., rain or shine. Juneteenth commemorates the 1865 emancipation of the last of group of enslaved Americans. The party will be fun for all ages, with poetry read by some of your very own garden-folk, an art project using a traditional West African resist-painting technique called Adire-Eleko, story-telling, and, of course, lots of food on the grill.

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BRING BACK THOSE EMPTIES

If you have a fruit and/or an egg share, please do bring back the empty paper cartons. The farmers are happy to save money by reusing them.

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THE NEXT "EXTRAS" ORDER

Our friends at Lewis-Waite Farm want to remind everyone that the next delivery of wonderful breads, jams, meats, cheeses, and more will be on July 17. The deadline for placing your orders (at www.csapasturedmeatandpoultry.com) is July 12.

The Stanton Street Harvest is published weekly by and for members of the Stanton Street CSA (P.O. Box 971, NYC 10002; <http://stantonstreetcsa.wordpress.com>). Thanks to shareholder Lucinda Sears for the lovely illustrations. We plundered most of the recipes and food info from cookbooks by Alice Waters, Deborah Madison, Farmer John Peterson, and other food geniuses. We heartily encourage all shareholders to send questions, recipes, letters to the editor or other contributions to stantonstreetcsa@gmail.com.

BEET SALADS

(from *Chez Panisse Vegetables* by Alice Waters)

Simple to prepare and delicious: these cool, refreshing salads are a favorite way to enjoy beets during the summer. Roasted beets retain more of their vibrant color and lightly sweet flavor than boiled ones.

Preheat the oven to 400°F. Remove the tops of the beets, leaving about 1/2 inch of stem. Wash the beets thoroughly and put them in a baking pan with a splash of water. Cover tightly with foil and bake for 45 minutes to 1 hour, until they can be easily pierced through with a sharp knife. Uncover and allow to cool.

Peel the beets and cut off their tops and bottom tails. Cut them in halves or quarters, depending on their size; sprinkle generously with vinegar, and season with salt and pepper. Add a pinch of sugar if

the beets are at all bitter. Do not add any oil until the beets have sat for 1/2 hour and have had a good chance to absorb the flavor of the vinegar. The beets will never be as good if the oil is added too soon. The vinegar brightens and accentuates the beet flavor; the oil should be added sparingly, for balance only. Adjust the seasoning. The beets are ready to be combined with other ingredients in salads. Here are some suggestions:

- Beets, sherry vinegar, orange zest, and tarragon. A bit of crushed garlic is good too.
- Beets, sherry or balsamic vinaigrette, blood orange sections, and mâche.
- Chioggia beets, white wine vinegar, shallots, fennel, and watercress.
- Beets, balsamic vinegar, shallots, and toasted walnuts.

CLEAR (COLD) BORSCHT

(from *Jewish Home Cooking* by Arthur Schwartz)

Schwartz writes, "Clear borscht—called 'clear' to distinguish it from meat borscht—is a great hot weather food. Served very cold, it is immensely refreshing. I remember well the summer days when my father and I would make a pit stop at Yonah Schimmel's Kinishery to have a glass of cold borscht blended with sour cream. Glasses of the thick pink drink were already poured and waiting in a refrigerated case behind the counter. At home, my father would drink borscht straight, without cream, downing it like a glass of iced tea. Sometimes my mother would serve it in a soup bowl, with a big dollop of sour cream and a boiled potato."

1 1/2 pounds beets, washed, peeled, and halved

1 small onion, coarsely chopped

5 cups water

1/2 tablespoon salt

3 tablespoons lemon juice

1 tablespoon sugar

Sour cream, for garnish (optional)

Boiled potato, for garnish (optional)

In a large pot, combine the beets, onion, water, and salt. Bring to a boil over high heat. Boil, partially covered, for 1 hour, or until the beets are very tender.

Remove the beets with a slotted spoon, and cut them into julienne strips. Strain out the onion from the cooking liquid. Return the beets and any beet juice to the cooking liquid in the pot. Add the lemon juice and the sugar. Return to the pot and simmer, partially covered, 30 minutes longer. Taste for sweet and sour seasoning, adjust to please your palate.

Refrigerate in a tightly covered container and chill very well. Serve cold in a glass, as is or with about 2 tablespoons of sour cream blended into each cup of borscht, if desired. Or serve in a bowl with a spoon, garnished with a boiled potato and a dollop of sour cream.

Serves about 4

TURNIPS BRAISED WITH SOY SAUCE AND SUGAR

(from *World Vegetarian* by Madhur Jaffrey)

Pair these turnips with rice and greens.

2 tablespoons canola oil

2 pounds turnips, peeled and diced

1 cup vegetable stock

2 tablespoons tamari soy sauce

Salt and pepper

1 tablespoon sugar

1/2 teaspoon sesame oil

Put the oil in a large frying pan and set over medium-high heat. When hot, add the turnips. Stir and fry until the turnips are lightly browned on all sides, about five minutes. Add the stock, tamari, and sugar. Bring to boil. Cover, turn the heat to low and simmer for 15 minutes or until the turnips are tender. Turn every now and then so the turnips color evenly. Sprinkle the sesame oil over the top and toss.

Serves 4 to 6