



Shareholder Newsletter June 3, 2009 Vol. 10, #1

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Welcome to Waterpenny Farm CSA 2009

We hope you enjoy your first, very green, share. Over the years, many shareholders have commented that they like our farm's versions of some vegetables that they had tried but never really cared for before. The spinach you'll find in early shares is very tasty raw or cooked—and you can get more mileage and nutrition out of it and many greens raw. Don't be fooled by the large leaves—this spinach is as tender as, and much more flavorful than, that you find in grocery stores, shipped across the country year round.

One of the fun things about the CSA can be trying new takes on things you've had before, such as in this shareholder recipe. The Kale Salad is a recipe that I became addicted to this winter. I had never really tried raw Kale—it sure is tasty!

We, and your fellow shareholders, very much appreciate your shared recipes and other contributions to the newsletter. Just e-mail them to us!

You can find more recipes for familiar and unfamiliar share items on our website:

www.waterpennyfarm.com/recipes.



Above: Nicholas (4 1/2) eats his spinach stem first.

Right: Isaac (1 1/2) grazes in the field.

Have Fun with your Food!



Sun-dried Tomato Spinach Sauce

From Arlington shareholder
Katrin Van Der Vaart

Fill your blender/food processor with:

Four big handfuls of washed spinach
(remove large tough stems)

2 cloves garlic

1 large tomato

1 tsp sea salt

3/4 tsp ground fresh black pepper

Blend until smooth and then add:

1/2 c pine nuts

3/4 c sun-dried tomatoes (soak these first
in warm water if they are very dry)

Blend again.

Add a little good quality soy sauce, a splash
of olive oil, a dust of basil and rosemary
(fresh or dry) and a bit of cayenne if you
like it.

Mix and decide which of the flavors you
want to strengthen.

If you have everything on hand it really is a
meal in minutes served over whole wheat
couscous.

From Serene Allison's *Rejuvenate Your Life,
Recipes for Energy*

Yummy-yummy Kale Salad

2 cups of fresh Kale, finely chopped
Juice of 1/2 lemon

1-2 Tablespoons minced Garlic tops
or 1 clove fresh garlic

2-3 Tablespoons good Olive Oil

1/4 teaspoon sea salt

Optional:

2 grated carrots

2 Tablespoons honey-roasted sun-
flower seeds, sprinkled on top when
served.

Toss all ingredients in a bowl. Taste
and adjust ingredients to taste. This
salad stores very well in the fridge.

*Adapted from conversations with
friends Kate and Sam Clifton*

Meet an intern...We're fortunate to have a stellar group of interns on the farm this spring. Our lives are enriched by living and working side by side with the amazing people who choose to spend a portion of their lives working, living, and learning on our farm. Miranda, who introduces herself below, was one of the first to arrive this year.

Hello Waterpenny CSA members! My name is Miranda Mosley, and I started as an intern at the farm in mid-March. My partner Tyler and I (he's also an intern here, you'll meet him in the next newsletter) spent the last year and a half living and working at a hostel and German-American cultural center in southern Germany. I loved my work there, but was ready to learn about sustainable food production.

As a dedicated healthy eater, I've always considered myself knowledgeable about issues within our food system. I've worked in several natural foods stores and read plenty of books, but I wanted to get closer to the day-to-day realities of farming. In the sea of literature, opinions, and organizations focused on local and sustainable farming, it's easy to forget that it takes hard work by farmers, every day, in all kinds of weather, to make any of it possible!

It's been so rewarding to see these plants develop from seeds into the gorgeous vegetables you're receiving in your box. It's an honor to help get this food to you, an honor to work here for Rachel and Eric, and an absolute pleasure to live and work in Sperryville. We are fortunate in so many ways.

What's new on the farm: A spader!

This spring we bought a new piece of equipment called a spader that is already making a big difference on our farm. Most organic farmers see tilling the soil as a necessary evil—it needs to be done in order to grow vegetables, but it's hard on the soil structure and soil life we depend on to grow healthy food (there are some successful organic farmers using no-till methods of growing, but not many, and our attempts at this approach were big disappointments).

A spader is designed to do the work necessary to prepare our soil, while minimizing the damage and even improving the soil. Without getting too technical, a spader has a rotating set of shovels that slowly dig up the soil, similar to a person double-digging their garden. The lower soil stays low, the topsoil stays on top, and all of the soil is handled more gently than it is by a rototiller, which chops up the soil, moves much faster, and can damage the structure of the soil with repeated use. The slow motion of the spader also allows us to work in soil that's slightly wetter than otherwise. In this rainy spring, the spader has really helped us plant things earlier, as we can get the ground ready much sooner after a rain.

When I say slow motion, I do mean slow--the spader works best at speeds less than one mile per hour. Even people stuck in rush-hour traffic would zip right past me on the spader. Even Isaac, at 18 months, could toddle right on by and have to wait for me to catch up. The spader does save time, though, as it can do in one pass what would normally take three or four trips with different implements to achieve a similar result. In the long term, the spader should help our soil stay healthy, well-drained, and productive for years to come.



Above: the spader's inner workings— the triangular “spades” rotate to effectively “double dig” the soil, tilling deeply while leaving the soil strata intact. The slowly rotating finishing tines (background) prepare a smooth planting bed.

Below right: Eric goes s-l-o-w-l-y— on our new tractor with a “creeper” gear (it's marked with a turtle on the controls) that allows the tractor to go less than 1 MPH.

Below left: Eric and the interns transplant tomatoes into the beautifully prepared field that was very recently growing its winter cover crop of wheat and clover.

