

# The Gannick\* Weekly

## Norwood CSA Newsletter

3400 Reservoir Oval East Bronx, NY 10467 (718) 514-3305 [www.norwoodfoodcoop.org](http://www.norwoodfoodcoop.org)

\* Gannick /GAN-nik/ - One who raises, eats or advocates organic foods and/or lifestyle.



### Message from the Farm

*In response to feedback from some members of his CSAs, Zaid has expressed concern that some members do not understand the crop situation. To help clear up matters, he writes:*

The tunnels were put up this year mainly for our markets, with two tomato greenhouses earmarked for CSA's. We have been taking product from the greenhouses and giving them to CSA members as we were not able to plant early crops. We were never able to plant five acres this year due to the wet weather and hence we dropped three markets so that we can serve the CSA's. We also had over two acres of plantings destroyed by the floods and 1.5 acres of our land under rocks and severely eroded that will never be able to plant again. If you add that all up we have lost at least 7 acres of production. Bad year to be starting a CSA. For example, those carrots (1/2 lb) I had to buy, to add insult to injury, the carrots I planted to give to the CSAs were flooded and had to be plowed under because they rotted and were weedy. This means that I had double costs on my carrots. Another example is potatoes, half of my early crop rotted in the ground due to wet weather. We just walked through our winter squash crop, it looks like it will yield 1/3 of what we yielded last year due to late planting, pests, and irregular weather. I had sent an email earlier explaining that this year I am giving people about a 10-20% discount from what I charge at markets so that I can survive (in talking to other CSAs this is what they give as a matter of policy every year and their market prices are higher than my prices). What you are getting is worth about \$12-\$14 a week using what I charge at my least price market.

Again, this is a really good example of how the tunnels saved the day. Had these tomatoes been outside we would have yielded much less or none at all given disease pressure and rain damage. This is why I am hoping to get support for tunnels dedicated for CSA's. [See page 2]

Here is the bottom line. I really appreciate the support and understanding I have had through the years from my older CSA's such as Prince George and Norwood. I hope to serve some of the newer CSA's as well. However, due to

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### This Week's Share

1 garlic  
2 pac choi  
1/2lb potatoes  
1 lettuce  
2 onions  
1 heirloom  
2 squash  
1 pot basil  
5lbs tomato mountain fresh (WOW!)

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# Meanwhile. down on the farm...

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changing weather patterns, increased costs (from 30%-200%, example: labor 33%), lack of understanding, and other issues I will not serve some of the CSA's next season. My goal is to do 1 delivery/week and serve 250-300 members at a maximum of 5 sites. I will have to get at least 50 members/site at a 3/4 share size @ \$375/member. I will discuss this with CSA coordinators by phone and I will give preference to my older and larger sites. I will need to discuss this ASAP as we figure out the future of our farm.

*Zaid Kurdieh  
Norwich Meadows Farm*

## **IMPORTANT!**

### **Please take one of the flyers on the Tunnel Investment Program (T.I.P.)**

The importance of the Tunnel Program and its success requires the help of as many people as possible. We seek your input and suggestions in this most vital project!

## **Winter CSA Program**

We are preparing three tunnels for the fall/winter crops that will be distributed. Crops being planted are those that can survive the colder temperatures, such as kale, collard greens, swiss chard, beets, onions, some lettuce and arugula. Along with these crops, members will also be receiving storage crops (cabbage, potatoes, carrots and winter squashes). Many of these items will be available in late fall and early winter. The chickens will also be moved into one of the tunnels to protect them from the continued devastation by indigenous predators.

What makes most of these crops available is the fact that they will be grown in the tunnels. We cannot emphasize the importance of the tunnels enough and the many advantages they add to the growing process. (See later discussion of the Tunnel Investment Program in this issue.) We urge all coordinators to continue to reach out to their members about the winter program.

## **Fund Raising**

Norwich Meadows Farm is seeking a grant from Ag & Markets, a state program, to set up a tour package of the farm and surrounding area. Its purpose would be educational, demonstrating to CSA members, students and the general public the advantages of producing food locally, how food is grown, and the benefits of eating and growing organic food. Martha Ma, from the Columbus Circle CSA (formerly IIN), is spearheading and writing the grant proposal. She is working under a very tight deadline as the proposal is due by September 11th. Anyone with experience in grant writing or who can assist in any way should contact the the farm or Martha.

Although final plans for the tour package have not been solidified, general plans are as follows; the tours would run from mid-May to mid-October, possibly once a week or twice a month, tours would take place on weekends, accommodations would be local and would include meals (vegetarian and non-vegetarian) with some of the meals being prepared from local organic produce. The grant, if obtained, would be a matching grant, meaning that whatever amount the state gives would have to be matched by the farm. This would necessitate help from members, interested corporations, local businesses, etc. All profits made from the tour packages would be re-invested into the farm for equipment, tunnels and more. We welcome all suggestions and any help we can get in making this endeavor a success.

## **Farm News**

The next two weeks are scheduled for planting fall/winter crops. There is still time before school begins for volunteers to help with the many chores on the farm. The weather has been near perfect for growing (mid to high 70s) with the exception of a few cool nights and the early morning fog. Temperatures in the 40s to low 60s along with fog promote the growth of fungus and mold. We have had ample rain until this weekend when we experienced three days of rain becoming heavy at intermittent periods.

This week everyone will be meeting the new driver, Dean Sacco. Dean is from New Jersey and has recently bought a home in Norwich. He wants to relocate to this area and we hope that his association and employment with Norwich Meadows Farm will be long and fruitful.

There has been a scheduled visit to the farm by bus on September 8th. Anyone wishing to come to the farm should contact the Prince George CSA. Other CSA visits can be scheduled until October 1st. When scheduling visits and contracting bus services, ALWAYS schedule a rain date. If the visit is cancelled due to rain, the bus companies will still charge you and you will lose all of your money.

# de holeribus

*(about vegetables)*

by Nicole Hanley

## You Like Potato, and I Like Potahto

*“My idea of heaven is a great big baked potato and someone to share it with.”*

— Oprah Winfrey

Way back in 500 B.C.E, they knew the value of a potato. In fact, in the Andean region in South America, you could say that the Incas were a big fan of the potato. Archeologists tell us that they grew over 240 varieties of the potato, and in addition to eating them, they dried them, carried them as sustenance on long journeys, and stored them in concealed bins for emergency use during wars or famines. Moreover, the potato was of religious importance, as expressed by this prayer:

*O Creator! Thou who givest life to all things and hast made men that they may live, and multiply. Multiply also the fruits of the earth, the potatoes and other food that thou hast made, that men may not suffer from hunger and misery.*

The Spanish, in their explorations during the 16<sup>th</sup> century, learned about the potato from the Incas. The Spanish were then fortunate enough to bring this mysterious product back to Spain and then to the New World to plant in Virginia. An Irish legend says that ships of the Spanish Armada, wrecked off the Irish coast in 1588, were carrying potatoes and that some of them washed ashore. Hence the beginning of Ireland's love affair with the potato. Of course that love would be severely tested in Ireland during the 19<sup>th</sup> century's devastating Great Famine.

But what can we learn from the Incas' great love of the spud? We can certainly appreciate the ingenuity of the Incas who developed creative ways of cultivating over 240 potato varieties. What would Thanksgiving be without mashed potatoes? Or Hanukkah without potato latkes? Or Catholic school lunch without tater tots? Clearly the potato is a multi-cultural food that brings people together.

## Epiphany Donation

Every season, we try to donate much-needed funds to our host, the Epiphany Lutheran Church, as a way of saying thanks. Coop members are encouraged to give what you can, IF you can. We will have the church donation box out at the pick-up site starting this week.

### Irish Potato Farls

- 2 tbsp butter
- 1 kg or 2 lb mashed floury potatoes
- salt
- 125g or 4 oz plain flour

Melt the butter and stir into the potatoes then add salt to season. Knead as much flour into this as it will take. Divide into two and using a floured board, roll out each half to form a circle the size of a large plate. Cut into quarters (farls) and fry in a little bacon fat (or oil) for about 3 minutes on each side in a heavy frying pan.

### Fingerling Potato Salad with Green Chile-Cilantro Salsa

- 4 lbs fingerling potatoes
- 4 Tbsp. cider vinegar
- 3 fresh jalapeños (remove seeds and ribs)
- 2 cups fresh cilantro sprigs, coarsely chopped
- 1 1/2 shallots or scallions, coarsely chopped
- 1 garlic clove, coarsely chopped
- 1/4 cup extra-virgin olive oil

Cover potatoes with salted cold water by 1 inch, then simmer until just tender, 10 to 15 minutes. Do not overcook or they will break apart.) Drain potatoes and rinse under cold water until slightly cooled. Halve lengthwise and while still warm gently toss with 1 tablespoon vinegar. Cool potatoes to room temperature, then season with salt and pepper.

While potatoes cook, coarsely chop jalapeños and pulse in a food processor with cilantro, shallots, garlic, oil, and remaining 3 tablespoons vinegar until finely chopped. Toss potatoes with salsa.

*Makes 8 servings.*

### Honey-Dijon Roasted Potatoes

- 18 fingerling potatoes
- 1 tsp. olive oil
- 1/4 tsp. salt
- 1 Tbsp. ground black pepper
- 2 Tbsp. Dijon mustard
- 1 1/2 Tbsp. honey
- 1 Tbsp. fresh chopped chives

Wash potatoes in cool water and pat dry. Cut into 1-1/2 inch pieces. Smaller potatoes will not need to be cut. Place potatoes in a single layer onto baking sheet. Coat potatoes with olive oil, salt, and pepper. Place potatoes into a pre-heated 425°F oven. Cook until golden brown, about 30 minutes. Stir potatoes once during cooking. Blend Dijon, honey and chives. Cool a few minutes, coat with honey mixture. Serves 6