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Greetings CSAers,



Want to see the farm and meet some of the people who help grow your food? Come to the **Volunteer Day next Saturday, 10am to 3pm**. Volunteers help with farm chores in the morning and enjoy a **complimentary hot lunch**. Then in the afternoon, Volunteer Program Coordinator Kelly will lead a **workshop on raising backyard chickens**. You'll meet our new chicks, 25 females. They are shipped at one day old and will arrive in the mail next week! In 6 - 7 months they'll join our laying flock. Hope to see you there.

### What's in Your Box

- January King Cabbage
- Lettuce—green romaine and either an oak leaf or red romaine
- Cilantro
- Sweet Onions
- Butternut Winter Squash
- Rutabaga



### Beth's Farm News: What's Growing On

While I write this Wednesday night, I'm grateful to be drying out finally while my dryer tumbles my coat, hat, and gloves. What a soaker! I watched water accumulate in the south field all day today. I intentionally did not plant overwintering crops in that part of the field since I have observed it flood in the past. The soil is so saturated in the collards and chard that sometimes our boots sank down about half a foot and we needed a hand to pull free.

We didn't let the rain dampen our spirits, though. Glenn and Shane ran errands and made compost; Jane, Michael, and Doug sorted winter squash in the greenhouse (the driest job of the day); intern Ty cut down sunflower stalks. It's great to be cleaning and re-organizing after summer's haste.

**Sharon's Corner**     *with an article on buying local. The article is in italics; Sharon's commentary is in regular type face.*

#### ***WHY GO LOCAL?***

*Fresh, local fruits and vegetables may retain more nutrients than produce shipped hundreds of miles. Estimates for how far American produce travels from farm to fork range as high as 1,500 miles, and the "food miles" for grocery store purchases can be up to an estimated 27 times higher than the food miles for local food. Your Left Foot food is traveling no more than 10 (Olympia) to 35 (Tacoma) miles to get to you. Local farmers also typically grow regional varieties, rather than produce bred to withstand shipping and long store shelf life. In southern California, I used to see huge tractor-trailers on the road heaped with corn, or lemons, or TOMATOES. Imagine a tomato*



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bred to resist the pressure of being on the bottom of a ten foot deep stack of tomatoes, bouncing down the freeway at 55 mph! Or a tomato bred to be slightly square so it won't roll around on a conveyer belt. *Not surprisingly, some consumers also claim that local food tastes better.* Food harvested at the peak of ripeness hasn't lost all of its nutrients and flavor by hanging around on shipping docks for a week or two.

*Local food can help cut back on climate-changing carbon dioxide emissions, and help protect air, water and soil quality. About 10 percent of all commodity shipping is dedicated to food and agricultural products.* Having been involved in the trucking industry, I know that as much as 50 percent of a produce shipment can be lost to spoilage, before reaching the consumer. Ask any restaurant that orders fresh Basil or Lemon Grass shipped from warmer climates about how much is spoiled. That spoiled product creates a waste disposal problem too. Your vegetable wastes can be composted in your backyard, fed to your chickens, or composted with your yard waste (in Olympia). *Because local food travels shorter distances, it also typically requires less packaging and refrigeration, and if unprocessed, can save even more energy.* The packaging for Left Foot Organics is one waxed cardboard box, which you return to us. There are also twist ties to bunch up your parsley and greens. We use a very few bags in the summer, for beans and peas. Compare that to the pallets, boxes, bags, clamshell containers, cartons, etcetera, that are needed to transport produce and display it in a grocery store.

*Buying local supports rural and urban farmers alike, and helps to create a stronger local economy.* 80¢ of every dollar spent at locally owned businesses stays in the local community. This includes wages, supplies, rent, and services. *It's estimated that the U.S. loses an estimated two acres of farmland every minute to development—a total of 1.2 million acres annually—and farms closest to urban centers are the most threatened. When you buy local food, you "vote" with your food dollars to help nearby farmers remain profitable and keep their land in agriculture.* Your local farmer has expenses similar to yours. Their gas prices are the same as yours. Their children go to the same schools, with the same field trips, extra-curricular activities, and lunch costs as yours. Their power comes from the same power company as yours. They pay taxes on their land. Many of us talk about wanting open space around us. What do we really mean by 'open'? Do we want native vegetation? A rural atmosphere? Sports fields? They are very open, after all. Parking lots? They are the most open of any! Someone has to pay taxes on any 'open' land around us. They need to either be very affluent, or have the ability to make money on the 'open' land. Which do you want to support, acres of parking lots, or acres of food crops?

*If you grow some of your own food, you can transform suburban or urban spaces, whether a backyard lawn or a pocket-size perennial patch, into gardens that produce bounty for your table.* The smallest CSA I've heard of is one grower raising produce for 3 families in her Seattle backyard. *Doing so can not only be rewarding, but good for your health and your wallet.* For many, trying to lose weight can be discouraging, and expensive. Gardening burns 350-500 calories per hour, comparable to tennis and jogging. *Apartment dwellers can grow herbs on a window sill or tomatoes on a fire escape.* Coming to monthly farm volunteer days is another great way to participate in growing your food. You can directly appreciate the people energy that goes into it.



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*Here's another way you can support Left Foot:*

**Left Foot Wish List** *if you have any of these items to spare, drop them off when you pick up your share—thanks!*

- Scissors (for trimming leeks).
- Spoons and forks.
- Single serving (generously sized) microwavable bowls, with lids and handles.
- Small make-up or pencil bags.
- Crock pot (great for having honest-to-goodness hot cider ready at all times on cold days).
- Green discount cards from Olympia Food Coop, for buying cider. (or eggnog!)

**Recipes** *a reminder-the website has hundreds of recipes from past newsletters, all sorted and available by major vegetable ingredient. Look there for further ideas. This week I decided to hunt for recipes featuring a frequently neglected vegetable, the Rutabaga (pictured in the lower left corner, above)*

**Rutabaga Puff** *this rutabaga puff is a casserole made with mashed rutabaga, eggs, butter, dill, and other seasonings.*

4 cups cooked, mashed rutabaga, about 1 large (2 1/2 to 3 pounds) rutabaga  
4 tablespoons melted butter  
1 teaspoon fresh chopped dill weed or 1/2 teaspoon dried dill weed  
1 teaspoon salt  
dash pepper  
dash paprika  
4 eggs, separated

Combine mashed rutabaga, butter, dill, salt, pepper, and paprika. Blend in egg yolks. Beat egg whites until stiff peaks form; fold into the rutabaga mixture. Lightly pile into a greased 1 1/2-quart casserole. Bake in a preheated 375° oven for 30 to 40 minutes, until set and top is golden brown. Spoon into a serving dish and serve.

#### **Rutabaga-Apple Casserole**

3 cups peeled sliced rutabaga  
2 med. apples, sliced  
1/2 c. brown sugar, packed  
3 tbsp. butter  
Salt

Cook rutabaga slices in boiling salted water until just tender; drain. Place half of slices (rutabaga) and half of apple slices in greased 1 quart casserole. Sprinkle with half of brown sugar and dot with half of butter. Sprinkle with salt. Repeat layers. Bake, covered, at 350 degrees for 30 minutes.

Enjoy!