



NEWS TO GROW ON

June-July
2009

A seasonal newsletter of the Connecticut Farm Fresh Cooperative Association

Vol. II, No. 1

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Cheers, Summer's Here, and the Markets Are Back All Over CT!

Families, foodies and locavores are all flocking to enjoy the locally grown bounty at towns throughout Connecticut this summer. You'll be amazed to see what dedicated local farmers, growers, bakers and craftspeople are creating in our state these days. Their commitment to bringing quality goods direct to us, with all the hard work that it takes, is inspiring and exciting. To get the latest, most accurate info on where and when all the markets are, **visit the CT Dept. of Agriculture at: www.ct.gov/DOAG**

Inside this issue:

- Seasonally inspired recipes
- What's at the market now
- This month's Farm Visit
- Websites of interest
- **Smile! at the Market** Photo contest



A feast for the eyes and the table –seen at a recent Sunday market in Westport. *Photos by Michael Tomashefsky*

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Westport's Sunday market is now in a great new setting, with easy parking, behind Saugatuck Congregational Church on the Post Road.

**Announcing Our
"Smile! You're at the
Market"
Photo Contest for Fun**

Calling all budding photographers, natural hams (the human kind) and anybody else who has a camera in their phone . . .

We'd like to include a few photos taken by our farmer's market visitors next month in this space.

Please email your submissions to the editor, aliceely@optonline.net, and include your name, phone number and the name of the market where you took the picture. We'll publish our favorites, with your name, in an upcoming issue.



Photo by Michael Tomaszefsky



Make Your Own Hummus

Here's a quick and delicious recipe from Dana Angelo White, registered dietitian, culinary nutritionist, local food junkie, stalker of farmer's markets and all-around great cook. Especially wonderful now, made with fresh, tender herbs, like those at right, from the market! (For more of Dana's healthy answers to what's for dinner, visit her blog at healthyeats.com.)

Green Herb Hummus

- 1 (15-oz.) can chickpeas, drained and rinsed
- 1 clove garlic
- 2 tablespoons tahini
- 1/4 cup fresh parsley leaves
- 6 fresh basil leaves
- 1 medium scallion, chopped
- 1 tablespoon chopped fresh dill
- 1 teaspoon honey
- 1 tablespoon fresh lemon juice
- 1/8 teaspoon cayenne pepper
- 1/4 teaspoon kosher salt
- 1/3 cup extra-virgin olive oil

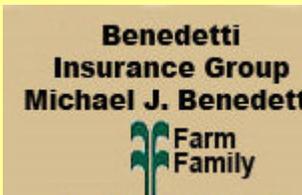
Options for dipping: carrot sticks, sliced cukes or radishes and whole-wheat pita chips.

DIRECTIONS: Place ingredients in a food processor fitted with a steel blade and pulse until smooth. Serve with dipping vegies.

NUTRITION INFO: Calories: 150, Total fat: 11g, Saturated fat: 1.5g, Carbohydrate: 10g, Protein: 3g, Sodium: 200 mg — per 2 tablespoon serving



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No-Brainer Spinach Egg Drop Soup*

**also known as Stracciatella Florentine, if you can believe that anything this simple can sound so elegant*

Serves 4; 15 minutes prep time

- 4 cups good quality chicken stock
- 3-4 cups spinach, escarole, tosoi, chard, ribs and stems removed, washed and roughly chopped
- 4 very fresh eggs
- ¼ tsp fresh ground pepper
- ½ cup grated Parmigiano-Reggiano

Heat the stock to boiling in a pan. Meanwhile beat the eggs, adding in the pepper, and grated cheese. When the stock boils, turn it down to simmer, add the greens and cook for 1-2 minutes. Then add in the beaten egg/cheese mixture, stirring for just a moment, to form the “rags” that give this soup its Italian name. Salt to taste.

Served with a hunk of good bread, this soup is as nourishing as it is delicious. The recipe is incredibly simple, but the flavor comes from using the freshest, highest quality ingredients (although using good canned stock is fine).



What's fresh now:

These are exciting times at the farmers' markets, with more of the season's crops coming in every day: look for tender baby greens, spicy arugula, vitamin-rich kale, spinach, chard, and herbs, strawberries, annuals, perennials, even rhubarb.



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A “hand-picked” selection of websites to visit, if you are interested in all things fresh, local and healthy:

Splendidtable.publicradio.org

Lynne Rossetto Kasper, host of the show ‘for people who love to eat,’ has a blog called Locavore Nation; lots of other good food topics too

Epicurious.com

Fell in love with a bunch of chard at the market but need to know what to make with it? Start here, in Recipe Search, type in “chard,” and dozens of recipe options will appear

gather.com

Find like-minded folks to enjoy recipe sharing and similar food interests.

Healthyeats.com

All about fresh, delicious and healthy foods -- to inspire folks to make better everyday choices, and enjoy the freshest, best foods out there. Daily articles, a weekly newsletter and healthy recipes, all of which are handpicked by registered dietitians.

Ctfarmfresh.org

The official site for the CT Farm Fresh Cooperative Association, this site is currently being upgraded but will re-launch very soon, with lots of farmer's market news including back issues of this newsletter.

Animalvegetablemiracle.com

Author Barbara Kingsolver's site, which features lots of locavore talk, and free downloadable recipes from her book, including a wonderful recipe for zucchini!

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Alice's Tuscan Beans and Greens

Serves 2-3 as a main dish – 30 min.
cooking time - a family favorite!

3-4 oz bacon (preferably all-natural), diced
2T extra virgin olive oil + more for drizzling
8 - 10 garlic cloves, peeled, cut in thirds
1-2 shallots, sliced
½ tsp. Herbes de Provence
¼ tsp. black pepper
Pinch red pepper flakes
1 can cannellini beans, rinsed and drained
About ½ cup canned chicken stock
Very large bunch of washed greens --
enough to fill a large salad spinner (kale,
chard, spinach, escarole, mustard greens);
big ribs and stems removed, roughly sliced
Aged balsamic vinegar and salt to taste

In a large sauté pan, cook the bacon over med. heat until very crisp, then remove the bacon to a towel to drain, and pour off the fat. Put the sauté pan back on low heat, add the olive oil, garlic and shallots, stirring occasionally till they are golden brown, almost caramelized; add herbs and pepper. Add the beans and stock, turn up heat to med-low, stir to loosen the caramelized pan juices, cook 3-4 minutes. Add the greens, tossing them in with the beans, add a bit more stock to moisten the bottom of the pan, then cover and let cook 5 to 10 minutes, depending on the type of greens. Just before serving, salt to taste, add the bacon back to the pan, toss well, and serve on warmed plates with a drizzle of olive oil and balsamic.



This edition's Featured Farm: Ox Hollow Farm, in Roxbury, CT. We caught owner Tammie Maynard during a rare moment when she was sitting down, and got a glimpse of what it takes to be a small farmer raising animals the natural way in our state.

When did you get started doing this?

Over ten years ago, we were selling big cuts of beef directly to consumers, but it was hard for people to make room in their freezers; then, we began selling at farmer's markets in 2000. The markets have really made our business possible. We go to six a week.



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How big an operation do you have now?

We began with beef, but added pigs and poultry by popular demand – we now average 130 registered Angus cattle, 70 pigs, 650 laying hens and 400 broilers. Our latest addition has been turkeys, which has proved to be challenging! Predators are always a big problem, but last year a coyote made off with six of our 20-lb. turkeys right before Thanksgiving. Worse, these birds were promised to people who wanted a 20 lb. bird; of course they couldn't use the 40-pounders that were too big for the coyote to run off with! **What does 'all natural pasture raised meats' mean?** Our poultry get organic feed, with no additives; we can't find organic feed for our pigs and cows, but they are pasture-fed and rotationally grazed; we never feed them hormones, steroids or antibiotics.

What makes the hard work worthwhile for you?

Mark and I do this for our kids – our son, 20 months, and our daughter, 3 years – to raise them in a healthy environment, and make sure this quality of food is always there for them, as they grow up. It's something to strive for.



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