

# Newsletter, October 22 - 25, 2013

Volume 10, Issue 20



## Farm News

This is the last newsletter of our 2013 CSA season. Thank you for all your help – your support of our farm helped us again to do what we like best: grow great produce. And what a year it was to farm... despite the excessive rains early on, the later mild weather, our replanting efforts and the diverse crops made for a great recovery. This comeback was evident over the season and is especially evident in the last regular share of this season. After ten years farming for our CSA members, we are still very impressed by the resilience that comes from growing a diversified crop – and by the economic stability you, as the members, provide for our small family farm. Our sincere thanks to all of you!

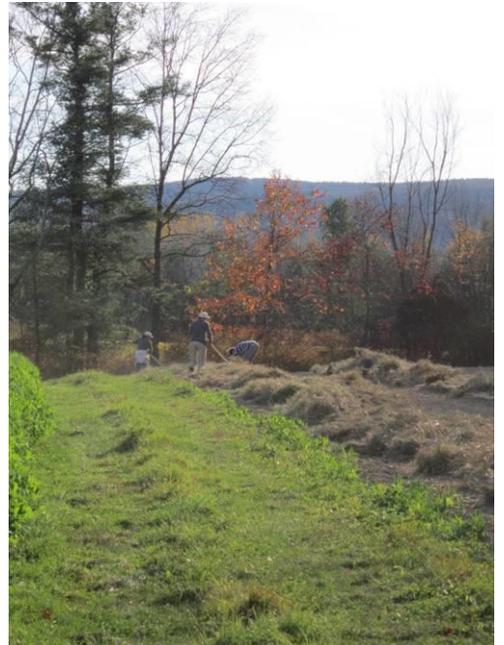
**“And so, what do you guys do in the winter ...?”** Well, after this last regular share, we still will harvest and deliver the optional Winter Storage Share. Thereafter, we’ll really put the farm to sleep: pack away supplies, the remaining irrigation materials, and seed the last cover crops. By mid-December, we’ll have to get our seed order together for the 2014 CSA season – before that, Sara will review all the farm notes to make sure we make any necessary changes based on what went well or not this year, and what we hear from members in the questionnaire (more on that below).

Meanwhile, Raymond hopes to finish the work on the new barn. As you may remember from one of the earlier newsletters, we raised our timber frame barn and got a roof over it in March, just before the first plowing and planting. Last week we put in the wood order for materials to frame-in the walls and put up siding. With a little luck, we’ll get this project completed before the snow really flies!

We’ll again have to do all the “H2A” paperwork. We all really enjoyed working with Teresa and Angelica, who both return to Mexico in the next two weeks. Fortunately they want to come back next season, as do Jean and Karin to work with us again. From last year we learned a lot about the ‘nuts-and-bolts’ regarding the visa application process – but it still is a lot of administrative work.

And then, come the end of February, we’ll be back in the greenhouse seeding our earliest transplants – and by late March, we’re hopefully back plowing and planting in the field – to bring you the first greens of the season in mid June. Then we did not yet mention the “deer-proofing” of 8 acres of new land by building fence and clearing overgrown hedgerows, the maintenance of equipment, upgrading our irrigation system to get water to the new fields we will plant next year, or all the other farm related projects that are on lists accumulated over the season awaiting ‘down-time’. We’ll also, of course, catch up on family time and recuperate from the strenuous physical demands of the growing season so we can be refreshed for next year!

**The “End-of-season” questionnaire:** Attached with this email is our “End-of-season” questionnaire. As always, we *do* appreciate your feedback: it’s the only way we can find out if our selection of vegetable varieties meets the needs of our diverse membership: no reason to grow produce that is not liked – or not to try something new that is in great demand! As we mentioned before, we need to get our seed orders in by mid-December: to get your voice heard, we need to hear from you by early December at the latest. Please print out the questionnaire, fill out and return to Fox Creek Farm at the address below.



### **Fox Creek Farm CSA U-Pick: *Ready to harvest***

- |             |                |
|-------------|----------------|
| Thyme       | Basil          |
| Oregano     | Chives         |
| Marjoram    | Scallions      |
| Parsley     | Sage           |
| Leaf fennel | Cutting Celery |
| Dill        | Cilantro       |
| Flowers     |                |

*Harvesting in the U-pick garden is part of your CSA share – come anytime!*

**Early sign-ups & membership referral:** Thanks to all of you who already submitted their 2014 CSA membership form. As you can see, we have quite some work ahead of us to get the next season off to a good start. The deposits that come with the membership forms provide us with the needed financial support. And as a token of our appreciation, we offer a free Fox Creek Farm T-shirt to all members who renew before November 1. See the membership form for more details.

We're continuing to call on your help: historically, our renewal rate is around 80%, which means that we'll be looking for about 75 new CSA members next year. We encourage you to share your enthusiasm for your farm with friends and neighbors. We offer a member referral discount - \$ 75 for each full share, \$ 50 for each medium share – in the form of a credit towards your 2015 CSA share. Just refer them to our website ([www.foxcreekfarmcsa.com](http://www.foxcreekfarmcsa.com)) for more information on how to join, and make sure to tell them to put your name on the “referred by” line!

**About this week's share:** Full share members will receive Carnival winter squash, potatoes, Batavian head lettuce, onions, Danvers carrots, red beets, Savoy cabbage and garlic. We are rotating Swiss chard and spinach. The beets may be big but they are super tender. Enjoy more beet with less work peeling! As always, medium share members will be getting a variation on these items.

Your farmers,

Raymond Et Sara



## RECIPE: Onion soup

A suggestion for a great onion soup – we found the original in Bert Greene's *“Greene on Greens and Grains”*, one of Raymond's cookbook favorites, and adapted it to fit our tastes.

2 Tsp unsalted butter, plus 1 Tsp melted	½ cup sour cream
4 Med. Yellow onions, peeled, sliced thin	½ cup grated mozzarella cheese
4 cloves garlic, sliced thin	Salt and pepper
1 Tsp all purpose flour	4 thin slices of dry French bread
4 cups beef broth	
¼ cup milk	

Melt 2 Tsp butter in a medium sauce pan over medium heat. Add the onions – cook until golden. Add the garlic until fragrant. Stir in the flour and keep stirring for 2 minutes. Add the beef broth – heat to boiling stirring constantly. Lower heat and simmer uncovered for 20 minutes. Stir in the milk. Preheat the broiler. Combine the sour cream with ½ cup of the soup mixture. Add ¼ cup of the grated cheese, and return to the remainder of the soup. Cook, stirring constantly, until the cheese melts (do not let it boil!). Adjust flavor with salt and pepper. Pour the soup in an ovenproof serving dish. Place bread on top, and sprinkle with the melted butter and the remaining ¼ cup grated cheese. Put under the broiler until golden. Serves 4.

## RECIPE: Simple beets

In a byline of the same cookbook, we found a very old recipe (“Grandma Clemon’s Beets”), which we think fits well with our outstanding beets – it’s so short and simple we don’t want to omit it: *Cut cooked beets fine. Then make sauce as follows: a little sugar, a little vinegar and a little butter. If you like, add a few tablespoons of cream to thicken.* Enjoy!

**Pictures:** front – top: Harvesting Savoy cabbage. Middle: Mulching the 2013-2014 garlic crop on a rather pleasant late fall afternoon. Center page: planting over 300 pounds of garlic cloves (r), garlic planted, detail (l). This page: Raymond marking rows.

*As always, most pictures by Johanna.*



**Farm visits:** November 1 is our last harvest and distribution day for this year. November 2 is the start of our off-season. Due to the weather (snow, particularly), the farm road may be hard to travel. Please give us a call first if you’d like to visit.

**Directions to the farm:** From Altamont: Follow Rte. 146 towards Gallupville. Approximately 10 miles out of Altamont, make a right on “Larry Hill”. (\*) Go up for ¼ mile (there is a blue sided house on your left). Just past the blue house, you’ll find Fox Creek Farm Road on your left going in the woods. Follow this road to the end. From Rt. 443: Turn on 146 in Gallupville for approximately 2 miles. Make a left on “Larry Hill”. Follow directions as above (starting at (\*)).

**(from Schenectady:** take rt. 7 to Delanson, in Delanson, make left on Darby Hill – first right is Gallupville Road – this becomes Larry Hill when crossing the Schoharie County line).

***Support a viable, small family farm and eat some of the best locally grown produce available!***

Fox Creek Farm, c/o Sara and Raymond Lührman, 182 Fox Creek Farm Road, Schoharie, NY 12157.

Phone: (518) 872-2375 - [foxcreekfarmsa@earthlink.net](mailto:foxcreekfarmsa@earthlink.net) - [www.foxcreekfarmsa.com](http://www.foxcreekfarmsa.com)