



# Bear Prints

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As I mentioned in the pre-newsletter, we usually have a couple shares that we donate to the Pawtucket House in Lowell. They are one of the few family shelters in the area. You can make out checks to us with a note that it's for the shelter, and we can give you the info to make it tax deductible. Any size is welcome. We haven't had any donations yet this season.

Don't forget the pick-your-own herbs. They are in the first 2 beds on the left, as you look out from the farm stand, next to the grass. It has Chinese chives, thyme, garlic chives, salad burnett, & regular chives. We also have sage, lovage, sorrel, winter savory & oregano. These are all perennials. The second row has a few kinds of mint (including chocolate mint), golden marjoram, more salad burnett (tastes like cucumber) lemon balm and a couple tarragon. I'll put temporary labels not to pick if something is getting wiped out. All the herb flowers are edible, so pick away. Basil will come later as part of your shares.

## Farm News

Welcome back & hello to new members. We survived our tenth year as a CSA & 200 members. We've cut back to 150 this season. As I mentioned in the pre-newsletter, we are using a field in Westford off Graniteville Rd. It's almost all planted & things are growing great, although a bit slow with the cold nights. This field is Conservation land, open to the public, unlike the land we rent in Littleton, which is private property & the owner would not like a lot of people wandering around. So stop in and take a walk around the fields. We have more in the ground now than ever before at this time of year, so be patient. Mike says it could be the best season yet.

Feel free to explore the farm. The baby pigs are in the main barn. The big pigs are out in a new area in the woods behind the barn. The sheep and goats are back to clearing brush in a big pen on the right heading towards the compost pile. The chickens are in the main barn to protect them from all the critters. We have a few loose from last year and the guinea hens are loose, too. The eggs are part of your share this week, but they are usually for sale in the fridge as extra for \$3.50 dozen. We can use your **clean** egg cartons if you bring them back. Don't forget to bring **clean** bags as well. Often people bring a bag of bags a couple times a season. That way you don't have to remember every week. Some people bring coolers, which is pretty smart really. Be careful near the poison ivy and road; people often drive fast. Trips to the irrigation pond need an adult.

Please remember to cross off your name and add any kids names and make corrections. Help me the first couple weeks by introducing yourself even. When switching pick up days, it's easiest for us if you write it down next to your name (next week Fri). If an emergency comes up, please call & get confirmation, since we don't always check our email. Thanks!

## What's New In Your Share This Week

You may want to save these newsletters over the season. You may forget about that kohlrabi recipe by week 16 or you may want to use the chard recipe on your mizuna. And Anna's words of wisdom on the back page can be fun to reflect back on.

This week it is **spinach, garlic scapes, lettuce, & eggs**. We wash most of the veggies to take the field heat out so that they are cooled and will stay fresh, but we don't really wash them to get all the grit off, so you definitely want to wash them yourselves a few times. Things get particularly dirty after a hard rain splashes soil up against the leaves. I find the easiest way to clean all the different types of greens is to fill the sink with cold water. (You can do smaller batches in a big bowl if you want to water plants when you are finished.) Then, trim the leaves into it and swish around a few times. Let them sit still for a minute, then all the dirt settles to the bottom and you can fish out the clean leaves. The fishing out is key, rather than pouring the water out. I usu-

ally repeat a couple times until there is no more dirt in the bottom of the bowl (or sink). Then dry them off in a spinner and place in a plastic bag in the fridge with a paper towel to absorb the excess. A plastic spinner is a great investment. It can even be used to store the greens in the fridge. If you don't have one, store the greens in a plastic bag with some paper towels to absorb the extra water so they don't get slimy.

**Garlic scapes** are the stalks that would turn into flowers. The whole thing is edible & tastes like garlic. Just chop up what you need & keep the rest in the bottom of the fridge. Add some to an omelet with your eggs.

The **spinach** can be eaten raw in salad or steamed, sautéed with some of the garlic scapes, or used in recipes. We grow quite a few different kinds of **lettuce** and sometimes you have a choice between colors to add to the variety.

## Bear Hill Farm CSA

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PICK UP MONDAY, WEDNESDAY, OR  
FRIDAY  
3 PM UNTIL 7 PM

(Please make arrangements at least one week  
in advance to switch your pick-up day.)

**CSA Since 1998**

COME ANYTIME —  
THIS IS YOUR FARM!

## “New Year” Resolutions?

“Hooray! The farm season has begun!” Yesterday I prepared my kitchen for the summer months—the refrigerator, especially, received a thorough cleanout. As Sophie, my almost-1 yo, said, “You sure must be excited, Mom!” Too true!

I wish I could say that a “thorough fridge cleanout” was a more regular event in our household. But consistency really doesn’t seem to be a part of how I operate. I tend to do things in fits and starts...and all the great ideas I have for organizing only last a few weeks or so. Well, I forgive myself. But those who can’t do, *teach*, so here are some organizational tips for making the best of the farm season ahead. If you are any better at follow-through than I am, they may serve you well!

- Keep all your farm supplies in one spot. Have a cooler for the back of the car (no point in letting those gorgeous fresh veggies fade on the trip home) ready to load with ice packs. You’ll also want shopping bags, smaller produce bags, empty egg cartons, and (later in the season) small berry baskets for cherry tomatoes. I recommend a bottle of Tecnu on hand for any chance encounters with poison ivy. And if you’re so moved, you might want to bring some carrot tops, lettuce cores and other scraps for the animals.
- When you get home, wash and dry your lettuce and do any other advance prep you can manage. You will really appreciate your forethought when you’re pressed for time later in the week. I always put my longer-lasting veggies in the bottom drawer of the (sparkling clean) fridge; they can wait while I eat the more tender leafy greens from the top.
- As you put the veggies away, make a list of what you have. (Actually, my list starts with anything leftover from last week.) This will make meal planning and shopping so much easier. Also, at least in my household, “out of sight is out of mind,” so a list tacked to the fridge door is a good reminder of what is waiting to be consumed.
- Plan your meals so that you have a soup, stew, or other “use-it-up” recipe for the end of the week. You’ll want the room in your (sparkling clean) fridge!

Hmmm, good advice? Maybe even I’ll follow it this year—all summer! - Anna Barker (annabarker@charter.net)

## Recipes: Spinach

*How do you like your spinach prepared? My husband has been a “spinach guy” since childhood; he’ll eat every last bite of a huge plate of boiled spinach. I prefer mine just barely wilted—enough to soften up the crunch, but before cooking intensifies the flavor. We both love this favorite from Mollie Katzen’s Still Life with Menu, the cookbook that got me started on my “foodie adventures” back in 1988.—AB*

### Wilted Spinach Salad with Garlic and Hazelnuts

1 1/2 lbs. fresh spinach  
9 TBS olive oil  
3 medium-sized cloves garlic, peeled  
1 C coarsely chopped hazelnuts  
4 TBS wine, champagne, or balsamic vinegar  
Salt & freshly ground black pepper

Clean the spinach as Anne directs (see front page). Transfer to a good-sized salad bowl, removing stems and breaking any large leaves into bite-sized pieces.

Heat the olive oil in a small skillet. Crush in the garlic and add the hazelnuts. Cook over low heat for 5-8 minutes, stirring intermittently. [Mind that you keep the heat low! Cooking the garlic crispy-brown makes it bitter.]

Add the hot mixture directly to the spinach, scraping in as much of the oil as you can. Toss until the spinach is coated and

the nuts and garlic are distributed. Sprinkle in wine, champagne, or vinegar and salt; grind in some pepper. Toss again and serve immediately. (Serves 6 as a side dish, or just 2 very hungry lunch eaters!)

**ADAPT THIS RECIPE:** *Substitute pistachios or pine nuts (if you can afford them) for the hazelnuts. After the spinach has been wilted by tossing with the garlic oil, add: goat cheese or feta cheese, shredded carrots, sweetened dried cranberries, hard-boiled egg, croutons. Or...? (Share with us what works for you!)*

### An Important Note on Recipe Sizes

We write the newsletter early on Monday morning, as soon as we know “what’s in your share,” but before we know “how much” (since the amount you get depends on the size of the day’s overall harvest). I try to choose recipes that can be adapted easily depending on the amounts we get—So for example, if a recipe calls for 1 1/2 pounds of fresh spinach and you only get 3/4 pound, please don’t freak out. :) Just change the rest of the recipe proportionately. Zap me an email (annabarker@charter.net) if you need help.—AB