



# Harmony Valley Farm

An update for our Community Supported Agriculture Members - Since 1993

January 24-25, 2014

## The Future of CSA by Richard de Wilde

When we started our CSA in 1993 with 35 boxes, CSA was a whole new concept. We were one of less than 100 CSA's across the country. Our early members were farmers' market customers who were willing to help us develop a new way of connecting with those few folks who were seeking out healthy eating with organic food. The CSA concept was already well established in Japan where it is known as Teikei. Japan has continued to protect and preserve their small local farms, as has Switzerland, France, Italy and many other countries, while much of the world's food production has slowly been taken over by large consolidated farms, international food corporations and chemical companies who profit from an "industrial" food production model and control of patented, modified seeds, synthetic fertilizers and pesticides.

There is no doubt that an ever larger percentage of people, worldwide, are questioning the health of industrial food production and seeking out alternatives. This is happening despite the industry funded "studies" that question whether organic is "worth the higher price." They can't continue to silence the increasing amount of research worldwide that shows that organic food is more nutritious, with higher levels of health promoting antioxidants, lower pesticide residues and without the problems associated with genetically modified foods.

As more families have turned to local and organic food, their choices have also increased dramatically. The number of farmers' markets in the US has exploded and continues to grow from just over 1,700 in 1994 (when data be-

## This Week's Box

(For more complete descriptions of the items in your box, their storage information, and preparation ideas, please refer to our January 9/10/11 newsletter).

**CHIOGGIA, RED OR GOLD BEETS:** Roast and serve with salads or try out the beet and lentil soup recipe on the back! Store in a plastic bag in the refrigerator.

**CELERIAC:** Celeriac makes a wonderful addition to soups or root vegetable mashes. It is also great when it is sweetened up in a celeriac-apple slaw. Store whole in the refrigerator or in a plastic bag/storage container with room to breathe.

**CARROTS:** With the abundance of carrots, make a warm shepherd's pie. This is a great use for many vegetables and is easy to reheat for lunches and dinners throughout the week and those to come!

**PARSNIPS:** Try a twist on fries and make your own homemade parsnip and carrot fries. Preheat the oven to 400°F and place matchstick pieces of parsnips and carrots on a baking pan and toss with olive oil, salt, and pepper. Bake for about 20 minutes, turning once for a golden brown finish. Store parsnips in a plastic bag in the refrigerator.

**BEAUTY HEART RADISHES:** Slice thinly and enjoy with a veggie dip, on a winter salad, with a creamy dressing or with crackers and cheese. Store in the refrigerator. If they become spongy, soak them in a bowl of cold water.

**GOLD TURNIPS:** Add turnips to a delicious winter gratin dish. Store in the refrigerator in a plastic bag or storage container.

**RED CABBAGE:** Cabbage is great for slaws and soups. Mix with a stir-fry of quinoa and other veggies, or shred up for your next taco night! Store in the refrigerator, loosely wrapped.

**RED AND YELLOW ONIONS:** Caramelize onions and add to the top of a homemade pizza or burger. Soups, quiches, salads and salsas make great uses for onions as well. Store in a cool, dark place with good circulation.

**ITALIAN GARLIC:** Garlic is extremely versatile and can be used in pasta, potatoes, with chicken or a sauté of vegetables. Store in a cool, dry place.

**CALYPSO BEANS:** Cook beans and mix with sautéed sweet potatoes. Top with a fried egg for a filling breakfast and start to your day!

**FESTIVAL, SWEET DUMPLING, OR WINTER SWEET SQUASH:** Refer to the January 9/10/11 newsletter for more preparation information. Use squash puree for a warm winter soup or add milk and/or cream to create a sauce consistency for use with pasta.

**KOHLRABI:** Cut Kohlrabi into cracker size pieces and enjoy with hummus or Andrea's White Bean and Beet dip. The recipe for this dip can be found in our January 9/10/11 newsletter as well. Store in a plastic bag or container in the refrigerator.

gan to be collected) to more than 8,100 in 2013 ([www.ams.usda.gov](http://www.ams.usda.gov)). That is not necessarily a good thing for farmers whose sales at a single market are reduced by the ever increasing choices for customers. Add to that the fact that organic food availability in stores has increased from only a few small natural and cooperative grocers to

almost every supermarket. Supermarket organic sections are most likely to be stocked with items from large western farms, using their existing supply channels, rather than dealing with individual local farms. Still, this is more organic choices for customers.

Meanwhile, CSA farm numbers have grown from less than 100 to

6,000-7,000 nationwide. Fortunately, and unfortunately, many of these new farms are 'new' farmers. That is good! We need good, new farmers to supply the increasing markets, BUT many new farmers who have started with the complex growing challenge of filling CSA boxes with variety and quality over a whole season have disappointed their members who tell all their friends. It has hurt the CSA reputation.

CSA has its own inherent challenges! Most new members join thinking they are signing on to a new source for their favorite organic vegetables, but in fact are embarking on a 'crash course' in local seasonal eating! For most this is a 180 degree turn around from "my shopping list of favorites" to "what do I do with what is in my box?" Our veteran members have told us over and over that it takes at least 3 years to make the "transition to seasonal eating." That means finding recipes and uses for some unfamiliar vegetables that they learn to love. In some cases, finding a family friend who likes, say, sunchokes and they become a valued 'gift'. We have a solid core of members who have made the transition to 'eating out of the

### Sign-Up Now for 2014!

Our 2014 sign-up forms are now available on our website!

Sign-up by February 1st to earn a coupon good towards a future purchase. Interested in our monthly payment option?

The sooner you sign-up, the lower your monthly payments will be!

### It's Never too Early to Think about Grilling Season!

A few short months separate us from the warmer weather of May and June! Don't wait to sign-up for you spring meat shares! Our sign-up forms are available on our website at [www.harmonyvalleyfarm.com/meat.php](http://www.harmonyvalleyfarm.com/meat.php).

Join our meat club and rest assured that your meat deliveries are all set up for the year ahead!

box' and do not wish to go back to having to choose. We have fed their children from conception to college and they are absolutely beautiful and super smart. These families have made a 'connection' to our farm and have broadened their food horizons, and look forward to the seasonal changes. This is a transition that brings great joy and satisfaction to both farmers and CSA members and does not come from any supermarket, co-op or farmers' market.

We do everything we can to help new members make that transition. Luckily you are connected with one of the best organic farms in the nation. If the market for local organic food shifts away from CSA, we'll continue to farm and

have to shift our focus to grow for more wholesale/resale markets, but growing for CSA is where our heart is. We'd certainly like to continue to grow for you. We hope our members will keep coming back year after year and successfully make that transition to seasonal eating. If the tide turns away from CSA, I think we all lose. Ultimately, the future of CSA is in your hands.



### Beet & Lentil Borscht

by Andrea Yoder

Serves 3-4

½ cup lentils  
 1 Tbsp coconut oil or butter  
 1 cup onions, diced  
 2-3 cloves garlic, minced  
 2 tsp salt  
 Freshly ground black pepper  
 2 tsp dried thyme  
 ½ tsp caraway seeds  
 3 Tbsp tomato puree or sauce  
 1 Tbsp Dijon mustard  
 2 cups peeled & diced beets  
 (color of your choosing, but if you include at least a little red beet you'll get a stunning colored soup)  
 1 cup diced carrots  
 7 cups water or vegetable broth  
 ½ tsp dried juniper berries  
 2 bay leaves  
 2 cups shredded savoy cabbage  
 1 tsp apple cider vinegar  
 Olive oil or Sour Cream for garnish

1. If possible, soak lentils overnight or for 4-6 hours in pure water. Drain and rinse well.
2. In a medium stockpot over medium heat, melt coconut oil or butter. Add onions and garlic and sauté until softened. Add the salt, black pepper, thyme, caraway seeds, tomato sauce and Dijon mustard. Stir to coat the onions and simmer for about 2 minutes.
3. Add the beets & carrots, water or broth, juniper berries and bay leaves. Stir to combine. Bring to a boil, then reduce the heat to simmer and cook until the lentils and vegetables are tender, about 20-30 minutes.
4. Add the cabbage and apple cider vinegar. Stir and cook for another 5-10 minutes until the cabbage is tender. Adjust the seasoning to your liking by adding a little more salt, pepper and vinegar as needed.
5. Ladle soup into bowls and garnish with olive oil or sour cream.