



# Harmony Valley Farm

An update for our Community Supported Agriculture Members - Since 1993

December 4-5, 2015

## Looking Ahead to 2016!

by Farmers Richard & Andrea

Winter isn't joking with us anymore....it's officially here and with it, the transition to yet another season. Winter is the time of the year when we dance between two growing seasons. While we still have a lot of work wrapped up in washing and packing the 2015 crops we have in storage and completing this year's deliveries, we are already looking ahead to the next growing season. We'll receive 17 pallets of potting soil this week for next year's greenhouse plantings and the seed catalogs have started coming. Richard and I have already started our planning conversations about next year's crops as we need to start ordering some hard-to-get seeds before Christmas. We're also thinking about our plans for the 2016 CSA season. Our 2016 CSA Sign-Up form will be ready very soon, so we wanted to share with you some of our thoughts related to next year.

First, let's talk about price. We are happy to announce there will not be any major pricing changes this year. We will be holding our prices for all of our main shares including Vegetables, Fruit & Coffee. As in year's past, we are offering an "Early Bird" coupon for those who sign up before February 14, 2016. This is a great way to earn as much as \$40.00 towards a future HVF purchase, simply by sending your sign-up form in early! If you pay for your shares with monthly electronic debit, please watch for the "Rollover" email that will be coming to you within the next 7-10 days. If we do not hear back from you before January 3, 2016, we'll roll you over into the next season, sign you up for the same shares you received this year and start monthly withdrawals for these shares starting in January. Easy! If you'd like to continue to do the electronic withdrawals, but would like to change your shares, you will need to reply to that email to let us know what changes you'd like to make so we can adjust the amount of your January withdrawal.

Next, let's talk cheese. This year we reduced our cheese share to a 6-delivery Winter Cheese share. Over the past few years we've lost some of our very important cheese producers as life & business circumstances have changed for them. This, in conjunction with a few late springs and some tricky logistics, has presented us with some cheese challenges. We have chosen to stick to our founding criteria for our share and continue to source certified organic cheese from producers practicing rotational grazing on mineral-rich pastures. Yes, we've all been spoiled with some very delicious cheese. We had hoped to identify some new producers we might work with in order to keep some variety in the share, but we just haven't found anyone

## This Week's Box

**ORANGE CARROTS:** Carrots will store very well kept in their plastic bag in the crisper drawer of your refrigerator.

**RED & YELLOW ONIONS:** For long-term storage, keep your onions in a cool, dry location. If you don't want to store your onions, make homemade French onion soup with crusty bread and Parmesan cheese.

**ITALIAN GARLIC:** Sauté Brussels sprouts in olive oil, then stir in 3-5 cloves of minced garlic and a healthy amount of Parmesan cheese.

**SWEET POTATOES:** Don't fret if you're starting to stockpile a lot of sweet potatoes-they'll store well if kept in a dry location at about 55-65 degrees. If you're running out of storage space, you can also cook them and puree the flesh to freeze for use later in soups, casseroles and baked goods.

**ORANGE KURI OR CELEBRATION SQUASH:** Orange Kuri squash has a sweet, rich flavor and can be steamed, baked or roasted. You can puree the cooked squash for use in pies and other baked goods. Celebration squash is excellent when halved and roasted stuffed with apples & maple syrup.

**BUTTERNUT SQUASH:** This versatile squash is delicious when roasted. Check out The Kitchn's recipe for Pasta Pan-Fried with Butternut Squash, Fried Sage and Pine Nuts.

**BEAUTY HEART RADISH:** See this week's vegetable feature for more information.

**RED BEETS:** For a fresh twist on preparing beets, check out Nigel Slater's recipe for Extremely Moist Chocolate-Beet Cake.

**GOLDEN TURNIPS:** Golden turnips are sweet and mild-flavored. They can be eaten raw or added to salads. They're also a great addition to soups or stews.

**RED SUNCHOKES:** Sunchokes have a nutty flavor and are quite versatile-they can be eaten raw or cooked. Anything you can do with a potato you can do with a sunchoke! You can pan fry, boil, steam, roast or even deep-fry your sunchokes.

**BRUSSELS SPROUTS:** Don't overcook your Brussels sprouts-when the color fades from bright green to olive green the flavor fades too. Brussels sprouts may be steamed, roasted or sautéed until their color is bright and they are just tender.

**DESIREE OR RUSSET POTATOES:** Desiree potatoes have a pink skin and gold flesh. They are a very waxy potato most appropriate for pan-frying or roasting. Russet potatoes are more starchy & dry, making them an excellent choice for mashed potatoes or baking.

**PARSNIPS:** Parsnips can be stored in the same way as carrots. If you enjoy their flavor and sweetness, try simply roasting or steaming them. Parsnips can also be added to soups, stews and baked goods.

who meets our criteria. In an effort to focus on what we do best (vegetables), we have officially decided to discontinue our cheese share in its entirety for the 2016 season.

For many years, we have continued CSA deliveries into January. Years ago, with influences from Madison chef Odessa Piper, we decided we wanted to provide food for those choosing to eat a year-round seasonal Midwestern diet. Long before "eating local" was the campaign, we were encouraging our members to embrace the bounty available to us in the Midwest during the winter. While we are no longer harvesting, we do have the ability to store many crops making them available to us throughout the winter. This includes a wide variety of root crops, cabbage, dried peppers & beans, onions, garlic, winter squash, etc. For many years, we had a very good response to our Extended Season Vegetable shares in January. Unfortunately, we've seen a

steady decline in interest for this share over the past few years. This year we're delivering about half the amount of vegetable shares in January as we did just several years ago. This has really made us stop to think about those January deliveries, especially since they are not easy deliveries to make. We never know what kind of weather January will hold and it's challenging to run a truck and delivery route in very cold temperatures, snow storms, etc. In order for this to work, there needs to be enough interest to make the economics of these trips even out. This has brought us to the decision to discontinue January deliveries for the 2016-2017 CSA season. Yes, we will still do our deliveries this coming January (January 2016) and follow through on our commitments for the Extended Season shares, Fruit, Cheese & Coffee shares some of you have signed up to receive. However, this will be our final January CSA delivery. Our main season vegetable shares will continue as they are, starting in May and extending

through December with our final delivery shortly before Christmas. We will continue to offer a Full Fruit share including 10 Summer fruit deliveries from June through October followed by an Autumn Fruit share which will include 4 deliveries in November & December. Currently, our fruit shares include two additional deliveries in January. Since we will not be doing deliveries in January for the upcoming season, our overall Fruit share offering will be decreased by two deliveries for a total of 14 Full Fruit deliveries instead of 16.

We're excited to be able to continue working with the folks at Kickapoo Coffee Roasters and we'll be offering the same coffee share options as we offered this year, minus the two January deliveries. They continue to produce consistently awesome coffee and are doing some really exciting things in their business. They recently celebrated their 10-year anniversary and are now running almost completely on solar energy! They also continue to work directly with some excellent coffee growers, not only purchasing coffee from them, but also working with some growers to help them develop new processes for post-harvest handling of their beans, make needed equipment purchases and support them in their efforts to suppress pests and disease on a coffee plant while maintaining organic integrity. A minor change to the coffee share this year is no steel storage canister with the first delivery. They have phased this out and are no longer offering it. Since we will no longer be offering January deliveries, our full Coffee share will have a total of 17 deliveries, and our once a month coffee share will have a total of 9 deliveries.

We will be doing an end-of-season survey again this year and plan to send that out by the end of December. We value your thoughts and suggestions regarding your CSA experience and find this information very helpful as we refine our plans for the upcoming season. For those of you who have taken advantage of the January vegetable deliveries offer, please take a few minutes to brainstorm some other ways we can still provide you with storage vegetables for the winter. We'll include a question or two on this topic in the survey and we're hoping someone might have a creative idea for us! Richard really enjoys reading your individualized comments, so please give thoughtful consideration to your survey responses.

While we're looking forward to a time of rest and rejuvenation this winter, we're also very excited to start planning for the next CSA season and a new season of farming. With each new year we learn new things about farming. Yes, even after 40 plus years of farming, we still find we have a lot to learn about growing vegetables! We're always looking for ways to improve our practices and grow the best crops we can. We appreciate your support of our farm and hope you'll join us for another season!

### Vegetable Feature: Beauty Heart Radishes

by Sarah Janes Ugoretz

This week, we're focusing our attention on the aesthetically pleasing and oh-so-delicious beauty heart radish! Also called watermelon, Chinese red meat or misato radishes, beauty hearts are an Asian variety that offer a vibrant splash of color that stays with us as the long days of winter set in and—depending on whether you're a winter person—drone on.

A member of the mustard family, *Raphanus sativus* are one of the oldest cultivated foods. Today, radishes can be, and often are, classified by season. Beauty hearts are typically included in the winter radish bunch and are excellent for storing, their light green skin concealing their captivating magenta-colored interior and mildly spicy flesh.

For those who shy away from radishes, beauty hearts are most definitely deserving of your attention. While more straightforward varieties may be regarded as pungent, spicy and bitter, beauty hearts have more of a delicate flavor and lack an in-your-face bite. This, along with their versatility, lends them to a variety of preparations. Slice them thinly and serve raw—plain, as a garnish or on salads. Beauty hearts also make an excellent addition to stir fries or Asian soups. If you opt for heated preparations, be sure to cook these radishes lightly so as to preserve their color and pleasant crunch.

An admirer of these unique radishes, I decided to make them the star of my Thanksgiving contribution. I decided to keep things simple by following *Edible Madison's* Beauty Heart Radish and Sesame Seed Salad (see recipe below). I'll admit that I was certain many of my extended family members would take a pass on this dish but, to my delight, they proved me wrong. This is all to say that beauty heart radishes are a unique and exciting crowd pleaser!

Radishes in general are valued as a digestive aid, as well as a detoxifier and blood cleanser. Beauty hearts provide a solid source of vitamins B, C and K, along with folate and essential minerals like manganese, calcium and iron. Store them in a sealed plastic bag in your refrigerator and resist the urge to peel them when you're preparing them. There's no need!

#### Beauty Heart Radish & Sesame Seed Salad

Yield: 4 servings

- 1 large beauty heart radish
- 1 Tbsp roasted tahini
- ½ tsp stone ground mustard
- 2 tsp rice vinegar
- 2 tsp mirin (sweet rice cooking wine)
- ½ tsp tamari
- 2 tsp black sesame seeds, toasted
- Parsley for garnish (optional)

1. Wash and cut beauty heart radish in half lengthwise (do not peel), then carefully cut each half into very thin half-moon slices. Array the slices prettily on a platter.
2. In a small bowl, whisk together tahini, mustard, rice vinegar, mirin and tamari with a fork until well-combined.
3. Drizzle over beauty hearts and sprinkle with sesame seeds and thinly sliced parsley, if you wish.

**PREPARATION NOTE:** If you're looking for a slightly less fancy version of this salad, try this approach. Cut the beauty heart radish into thin matchstick sized strips. Double the ingredients for the dressing. Toss the radish strips in the dressing to make more of a slaw. Mix in the fresh parsley & some cilantro if you like (highly recommended). Finish the slaw by adding the sesame seeds.

\*\*This recipe was created by our friend, Dani Lind. Her recipe was published in *Edible Madison* magazine and can be found on their website along with her feature article all about beauty heart radishes.

#### Mushroom & Miso Soup with Beauty Heart Radishes

by Chef Andrea Yoder

Yield: 4-5 Servings

- 6 cups chicken stock or broth
- 2 cloves garlic, minced
- 1 Tbsp fresh ginger, minced
- 1 medium yellow onion, minced
- 1 oz dried mushrooms
- ¼ tsp red pepper flakes, or to taste
- 1 small carrot, diced very small
- Salt, to taste
- Black Pepper, to taste
- White Pepper, to taste
- 1 large beauty heart radish, diced very small
- 4 Tbsp miso

1. Put chicken stock in a medium saucepan over medium heat. Heat the chicken stock until the liquid is just hot.
2. Add the garlic, ginger, onion, dried mushrooms and red pepper flakes. Simmer for about 10 minutes, then add the carrot as well as the black and white pepper. Simmer an additional 3 minutes.
3. Remove from the heat and adjust seasoning with salt and pepper. You want to add just enough white pepper so you get just a hint of its flavor and enough black pepper that it tickles your tongue and brightens up the soup.
4. Put about 2-3 Tbsp of beauty heart radishes in each person's soup bowl. Ladle the hot soup over the radishes and serve each bowl of soup with 1 Tbsp of miso (any variety you choose will work) to stir into the warm soup.