



# Harmony Valley Farm

An update for our Community Supported Agriculture Members - Since 1993

[www.harmonyvalleyfarm.com](http://www.harmonyvalleyfarm.com)

July 15-16, 2016

## You Reap What You Sow... In Garlic & Relationships

By Farmer Richard (as told to Andrea)

A little over a week ago, Monday, July 4th to be exact, we finished harvesting the 2016 garlic crop. We got it in just in time—it started raining within 30 minutes of closing the greenhouse door where it is stored. Every garlic crop is a labor of love and despite the number of harvests I've been through, every crop meets me with a feeling of anxiousness around harvest time. I can't rest until it's all in, safe and sound. Learning how to grow garlic is a skill and an art I've learned over many years. My lessons in garlic go back to the mid 70's when I first started farming....and tried to learn how to grow garlic from old Dave Frattalone. Here's the story.

I started my farming career at my first farm, Blue Gentian, in St. Paul, Minnesota. There were several old-timers I learned a lot from in those early days of farming. Henry Hildebrandt & Dave Frattalone were two farmers who were in their 70's and 80's about the time I started farming. Their families had a long history of growing vegetables for the people in the St. Paul area and sold their produce at the farmer's markets. Henry's family had a long history of being good tomato growers and had 2 acres of cold frames that they used to grow vegetables in during the off-season—they even pulled off radishes in March! Dave Frattalone was from a well-respected Italian family who had been supplying St. Paul for years. Both of these gentleman were instrumental in teaching me many important things about farming that you just can't learn about in a text book, seed catalog or really in any way other than by doing it. So how do you get an old-timer to teach you things and share their knowledge? You offer to plow their fields! That tactic worked well with Henry who lived close to my farm. In exchange for my labor, we developed a good neighborly relationship that opened up many doors for me to learn about growing vegetables. Conversely, Dave lived further away in Little Canada and was a little harder to warm up to. In Atina Diffley's book, *Turn Here Sweet Corn*, she describes Dave as "The King of the Saint Paul Farmers' Market." At that time, Dave was the only one at the market who grew and sold garlic. I was intrigued by Dave's garlic and tried to talk to him about growing it. Unfortunately old Dave had no interest in talking to me about garlic. It was clear he did not want to teach anyone else how to grow this valuable crop, so he remained tight-lipped for several years!

## This Week's Box

**FRESH PORCELAIN OR ITALIAN GARLIC:** Enjoy fresh garlic the same as you would dried garlic or store it on your counter in a well ventilated area to dry for later use.

**PURPLE CIPOLLINI OR SWEET ONIONS:** Add thinly sliced onions to a creamy slaw or salad. They are also a great addition to your favorite stir-fry recipe with broccoli and zucchini.

**CAULIFLOWER:** Grilling cauliflower is simple and delicious. Cut the cauliflower into slices like a "steak." Brush both sides with olive oil, season with salt and pepper and grill until golden and tender.

**CUCUMBERS:** For a quick summer salad, slice cucumbers and sprinkle with salt. Let set for 2 hours, drain off any liquid and add sliced onion,  $\frac{1}{4}$  cup of red wine vinegar and  $\frac{1}{2}$  cup sugar.

**GREEN TOP CARROTS:** See this week's vegetable feature for more information and recipes.

**SWEETHEART CABBAGE:** This variety is known as a salad cabbage and is at its best when eaten raw.

**AMARANTH GREENS:** This beautiful and nutritious green can be sautéed, steamed or stir-fried with garlic, onions, ginger and a drizzle of sesame oil. See last week's newsletter for more information and recipes.

**GREEN AND YELLOW BEANS:** Beans are great steamed, sautéed or added to your favorite salad. If you have more beans this week than you think you can eat fresh, consider freezing them. Simply blanch for 3 minutes, drain and transfer to an ice water bath until cool. Pat the beans dry, then put them in freezer bags and freeze.

**CHOICE--SWEET ITALIAN BASIL:** Please only take one small handful per vegetable share.

Let's put the story into perspective. In the late 1800's and early 1900's farmers' markets were thriving. It was the place people went to purchase their "groceries." Food was produced and purchased within the region, so people relied on their local farmers to show up at the markets each week. The Frattalone and Hildebrandt families sold everything they could grow and left each market with an empty wagon. Well, let me rephrase that. They didn't take vegetables home, but Henry's family did have the contract to clean up all the horse manure after the market (remember there were still a lot of horses being used for transportation at this time). They'd bring their wagon to market loaded with vegetables, and would take it home loaded with rich, nutritious horse manure for their cold frames! In the same wagon—yikes! Unfortunately, times started to change and with the development of grocery stores and transcontinental transportation, people shifted their purchasing from the farmers' markets to the grocery stores. By the time I entered the scene and started selling at the St. Paul farmer's market, times were rough and a lot of farmers were taking

large amounts of vegetables home with them each week instead of selling out. The competition was thick and old Dave was just protecting his livelihood and the "monopoly" he had on the local garlic market.

Well, I still wanted to learn how to grow garlic, even if Dave wasn't willing to help me. At that time I did know Dave was buying garlic from an old seed company in California, Basic Vegetable. He grew a softneck variety that he planted in the spring and produced small bulbs that he harvested in the fall. Knowing little more than that about garlic, I had to do my own research. I started reading and found a farmer in Canada who grew a different type of garlic, a hardneck variety. He produced beautiful garlic, but one of the keys to his success was planting it in the fall. I started experimenting with growing garlic and quickly learned some key lessons, including the importance of careful seed selection. Since seed garlic wasn't as readily available as it is today, I learned how to save "seed" from each year's garlic crop to replant. After several years of experimenting with growing garlic, I took one of my nicest bulbs

of garlic over to Dave Frattalone. When he saw the quality and size of my garlic, he perked up in interest and was all ears. I willingly shared with him everything I had learned about garlic and on that day I broke through to old Dave. After that experience, Dave was much more willing to share his farming knowledge with me, knowing I'd do the same for him.

To this day I still value the lessons I learned from these old-timers. Maybe old Dave's greatest contribution to my farming education was that he did not tell me his secrets to growing garlic! If I had not been forced to seek out information on my own, I may never have found the Canadian grower who introduced me to the hardneck garlic we grow and rely on today. In fact, our Porcelain garlic originated from seed garlic I got from him! We've carefully maintained this variety and have saved seed from it for over 30 years now! Thanks, Dave and Henry, for sharing your farming knowledge and experiences with me. It is true that you reap what you sow...in garlic and in relationships.

### Vegetable Feature: Carrot Tops

When I asked Richard which vegetable he thought we should feature this week his response was "Carrot Tops!" So first of all, let me clarify that the tops are in fact edible! Carrots are often sold with their green tops on as a sign of freshness. While most people discard the top, it's a shame to do so as there is a lot value in the tops!

Carrot tops are similar to parsley, however their texture is a bit coarser. The flavor of carrot tops is similar to carrots (go figure), but with more of a "green" character. Carrot tops may be used to flavor soups and stocks. If you are making vegetable or meat stock, add the carrot tops during the last 30-40 minutes of cooking. You don't want to cook them too long or the flavor will change to an overcooked vegetable flavor. If you are incorporating carrot tops into a soup, you will want to either finely chop them and/or blend the soup to yield a smooth texture.

One of our longtime CSA members, Carol, tipped us off to the beauty of carrot top pesto. You can find a recipe for this in the searchable recipe database on our website. I started thinking of other blended sauce type preparations that resemble pesto, such as chimichurri. Chimichurri is a fresh sauce made in Argentina that consists of parsley, oregano, garlic, vinegar and olive oil. I tried this preparation with the addition of carrot tops and found it was delicious! I've included the recipe for you in this week's newsletter.

As Richard was reflecting on carrot tops this past week, he told me about some of our original CSA members who actually encouraged him to pack the carrots with the tops left on the carrot. Prior to that Richard didn't realize there was a use for them so they topped the carrots and just delivered the root. Why did they want the tops? Well, these members were from Japan and they wanted to use the carrot tops to make Carrot Top Tempura! Tempura originated in Japan and consists of a light batter that can be made from cake flour, rice flour, all-purpose flour or a mixture of these. Vegetables, seafood and meat can be dipped in this very simple batter and is then deep-fried briefly. You can tempura all kinds of vegetables. In this week's box, you could use the carrot tops as well as zucchini, onions, green beans and even broccoli to make a mixed vegetable tempura.

So this week, we encourage you to "think outside the box" and consider including carrot tops in your meals. Have fun and reap the benefits nutritionally as well as enjoying yet another delicious vegetable!

#### Carrot Top Chimichurri By Andrea Yoder

Yield: about  $\frac{3}{4}$ -1 cup

$\frac{1}{2}$  cup coarsely chopped carrot tops  
 $\frac{1}{4}$  cup coarsely chopped parsley  
3 Tbsp red wine vinegar  
4 large garlic cloves  
2 Tbsp fresh oregano leaves  
2 tsp crushed red pepper  
Salt and freshly ground black pepper, to taste  
 $\frac{1}{2}$  cup extra-virgin olive oil

1. In a food processor, combine the carrot tops, parsley, vinegar, garlic, oregano and crushed red pepper. Process until the ingredients are finely chopped. Season with salt and black pepper and mix again, just briefly.
2. Transfer the vegetable mixture to a bowl and pour the olive oil over the mixture. Let stand for at least 20 minutes before using.

Chimichurri is a traditional sauce in Argentina. As with most traditional recipes, each cook will have their own variations, but the basic ingredients for chimichurri include fresh parsley, garlic, oregano and vinegar. Chimichurri may be used as a sauce to serve with food. Traditionally it's served with grilled meats, but it is also a nice accompaniment for grilled chicken and fish or tossed with roasted vegetables. You may also use chimichurri as a marinade to add flavor to cuts of meat such as flank steak.



### Produce Plus

Produce Plus is a benefit of CSA membership, allowing you to buy some of your favorite items in bulk to put up (can, freeze, preserve) for later use.

#### Produce Plus Current Offer:

Green Beans, 10 pounds - \$26.00

Produce Plus order instructions for Cross Plains, Mazo, Parkwood Hills, Argyle and local customers:

Order by phone (608-483-2143 x2) or email (csa@harmonyvalleyfarm.com) before 5 pm Wednesday, July 20 for delivery to your site July 22-23. Pick up your produce at your site, delivered in a box with your name on it. Please send payment the same day as placing your order.

Produce Plus order instructions for Madison customers:

Order by phone (608-483-2143 x2) or email (csa@harmonyvalleyfarm.com) before 5 pm Wednesday, July 20. Your Produce Plus items will be available for pick-up at our Dane County Farmers' Market stand between 6:30 am and 12:30 pm on Saturday, July 23. Our market stand is located on Mifflin St. between Pinckney and Wisconsin streets. Any market crew member can assist you with your pick-up and payment.

To order, please call 608-483-2143 x2 or email  
csa@harmonyvalleyfarm.com

Please be sure to include your name, telephone number, pick-up location and quantity of each item you would like with your order!