



# Harmony Valley Farm

An Update for Our Community Supported Agriculture Members

Harmony Valley Farm, S. 3442 Wire Hollow Rd., Viroqua, WI 54665  
608-483-2143 harmony@mwt.net www.harmonyvalleyfarm.com

Aug. 3, 2002  
Vol. 11, iss. 13  
Week No. 31

## This Week's Box

### Green Beans

**Pink Passion Chard** - spinach is not a heat tolerant crop. Try chard in your summer spinach dishes.

### Cauliflower

### Carrots

**Savory** - Goes with beans

### Basil

**Sweet Spanish Onions**

**Banana Peppers (not hot)**

**Green Peppers**

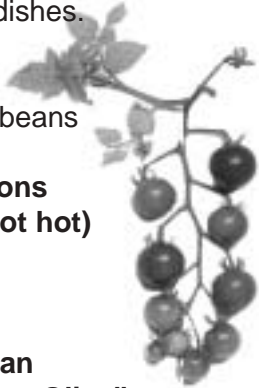
**Jalapenos**

**Italian Red Garlic**

**Zucchini or Patty Pan**

**"Sungold" or "Sweet Olive"**

**Cherry Tomatoes**



## Peppers

We are going to kick-off the first peppers of the season this week with banana and green bell peppers, (both types are sweet with no heat, so no need to worry about fragile mouths), and jalapenos, hot, but not objectionably so. I really enjoy the flavor of the banana peppers, so I like to put them in several things, like chopped up, seeds removed, then cooked with breakfast potatoes. You can also char the skins on the grill or on a gas stove top for a smoky flavor. Earlier this week I cut up the bell and banana peppers along with an onion into medium sized pieces, tossed them into some aluminum foil with a garlic clove, salt and pepper, and olive oil, then put it on the grill with some pork chops I was grilling. The vegetables were beautiful and clean in flavor and best of all I didn't heat up the kitchen by cooking it inside.

## Produce Plus

Members' opportunity to buy larger quantities to "put up." Here's how it works: Place your order by Tues. evening, pick up and pay for it on the following Saturday at our farmers' market stand **by noon**.

### This week's produce plus list:

Baby (2" diam) red beets - 25# - \$22

Reg. Red Beets - 25# - \$16

Basil - Some flowers, holes, little stem - 3# - \$15

To place order contact member-volunteer Cheryl

Thompson. Use e-mail only this week, next week and after there will be a phone option: thompck@hotmail.com.

## Green Beans

By Matt Overdevest

Green beans are one of those vegetables that most people assume there is only one type of, when really there are many types. They happen to be one of the few crops that U.S. seed companies have done a lot of development on. The seed companies have broadened the style in order to meet the demands of the industry in several ways. First, the bean plants were brought down in size from a pole bean to a bush bean in order to allow for easy mechanical harvesting as well as no need for trellis mounting. Second, the fiber content can vary from very low to very high, giving great flexibility in uses for the beans. A low fiber bean is wonderful for a salad or just steamed, but a high fiber bean would be more suited to long cooking or canning. Finally we have maturity, which directly effects the amount of time it takes from seed to finished bean (anywhere from 48 to 60 days). Other variances in beans are colors, ranging from yellow to dark green; shape, which can be round or flat and short or long; and flavor. European-based seed usually has the fullest flavor since the varieties are older, and selected for flavor as the most important characteristic. No matter where the seeds come from we look for the same two things, untreated and organic. This is not an easy task as most seed companies treat their entire seed stock with fungicide in order to prevent rot and disease.

There are six varieties of beans that we grow. Low fiber and lighter colored are the Tema and Carlo, which most of you will be receiving this week, are more suitable for fresh preparations such as the salads below. High fiber and medium green are the Festina, Matador, and Bronco, lending themselves to the same dishes as above but with the added strength to stand up to pickling or canning. Lastly we have a petite French style bean called **Nickel**.

Green beans and savory are definitely one of the best combinations of food. Both versions of this salad are really match the season and like to be eaten outside on a picnic or nice summer evening.

### GREEN BEAN SALAD ONE

1 lb. green beans, stemmed  
1 small onion (any type), small dice  
1 lemon, juice and zest  
2 tablespoons extra virgin olive oil  
2 tablespoons savory, chopped  
Salt and pepper, to taste

Blanch the green beans in boiling salted water (like the sea) for about 1-½ minutes and shock in ice water or cold running tap water in a colander. Beans should be mostly tender with a slight bite. Toss the onion, vinegar and oil in a bowl and let sit for one half hour to mellow the onions. Then combine the beans and savory with the onions, adjust the seasoning, serve chilled.

### GREEN BEAN SALAD TWO

1 lb. green beans, stemmed  
1 small onion, small type  
2 tablespoons red wine vinegar  
4 slices bacon  
2 tablespoons savory  
Salt and pepper, to taste

Blanch and shock beans as above. Cut the bacon into ½" pieces and cook it slowly in a sauté or cast iron pan till the fat is rendered out and the bacon is crisp. Remove the bacon and add the onions to cook until translucent. Add all of the ingredients to the bowl and adjust the seasoning. Serve this salad warm.

## The Fantastics

That describes the 2002 HVF farm crew! It is bigger than ever, but better than ever, too, if that's possible. The people we work with day in and day out really make a difference in not only our business but in our lives.

Cate, Lisa and Annabelle team up to keep the washing, packing and shipping under control. They all live in the same direction -- south of town-- and car pool to work when possible. Cate and her husband, Matt, are in the beginning stages of becoming the next generation of farmers. They are currently raising and selling flowers and vegetables at the Viroqua farmers' market and to wholesale accounts in the area. Lisa and Annabelle also live on farms. Lisa and her husband escaped the Chicago area and are gradually becoming involved in more and more agricultural (ad)ventures on their farm. We can vouch for her yummy honey and she's got a little egg business selling to some of our crew members, too. Annabelle and her husband moved to Viroqua recently to explore her long held dream of running a restaurant that uses local product and offers a seasonal menu.

Friends and family, Aldo, Herminia, Luiza, Zenon, Isabel, Luisa, Saul, and Pedro all commute from Norwalk. Originally drawn by jobs in a meat packing plant there, they now work for us and are happier for it. They continue to live in Norwalk, though it is quite a drive, because of the Hispanic community and amenities, like a good Mexican restaurant and Spanish language church services. Aldo and Herminia have a darling daughter and Saul is about to become a father, any day now. A surprising number of them were born in Oaxaca, Mexico, a very southern, tropical state, not far from Guatemala. For some of them Spanish is their second language and English is becoming their third.

Katie, not here for the picture, lives on the farm. She hails from Minnesota, via Edgewood College and a stint in Honduras in the Peace Corps. Her Spanish language abilities and her sunny attitude make her a very relied-upon and welcome part of the harvest and packing crew.

Benji, Jose and Ezequiel have worked here longer than anyone else. If we ever have to be gone, we could safely



*The HVF crew last Friday, July 26, 2002*

*Back: Zenon, Luisa, Isabel, Brian, Scott, Matt, Richard and Linda*

*Middle: Benji, Lisa, Jose, Ezequiel, Saul*

*Front, seated: Herminia, Cate, Aldo, Luiza, Annabelle*

*Not pictured: Carole, Katie, Noah, Greg, Ben*

leave the harvest in their hands. They live in Viroqua.

Scott, Brian, Greg and Noah are the farmers in the group. Scott and Brian each spent years milking cows and raising crops. Without these guys we'd never get the crops in on time and our machinery would be in disrepair. Noah and Greg are each here part time to lend valuable skills and, in return, to pick up knowledge about organic vegetable production. You may know Noah if you shop for potatoes at the Dane Co. Farmers' Market. He and his brother, the Rainbow Potato Guys, have been raising potatoes since before they could drive them to market. Greg, believe it or not, leaves his dairy farm in the hands of his hardworking family 2 days a week while he tackles all sorts of jobs here. It is all quite new to him, from the irrigation system, to the cultivators, to pest control. He says he's learning a lot while being very helpful -- a win/win situation.

Carole is our part-time bookkeeper. She keeps all the many CSA records in order, gets in on lots of payroll tasks and accounts payable and receivable, and helps us keep a much more current financial picture. She's really freed up Linda's time for other things.

Matt, our summer farm cook, is a familiar name, if not face, to most of you. He's been working magic in the kitchen, feeding about 12 people lunch, most of it grown right here on the farm or by friends who raise meats we don't raise. On Thursdays Matt puts together a lunch for the entire crowd, usually something with Mexican flavors and ingredients. When he's not busy in the kitchen he's writing and researching his newsletter articles and babying our 12 Angus.

Ben was playing photographer when this shot was taken. He's one in a long, illustrious line of young men who have graduated from Deep Springs College, tucked away in the California high desert, on a cattle ranch. He, like several other "Deep Springers" in the past, called at just the right time with the right offer -- a willingness to move irrigation pipe and do anything else we needed. With Deep Springs as his reference, we hired him nearly sight unseen. He seems to have brought the rain with him, so maybe he won't move much pipe, but we're certainly going to tap his other talents for the next few weeks!

I am repeatedly astounded by how well everyone works together, doing what ever it takes to meet goals and get the job done well. Lately, meeting the Wednesday wholesale trucks has been a challenge - big orders, weather hurdles, last minute add-ons! Thanks to the crew, our truckers know that they'll be in and out of our loading dock on schedule!

Richard and I are dedicated to this farm and get pretty demanding sometimes. The fact that our staff repeatedly meets or exceeds our expectations speaks volumes about the integrity of those who generously give Harmony Valley their best! It shows in the box and on our market stand each week! -- Linda