

# Chubby Bunny CSA Newsletter

August 14th, 2007

## Bernie's Notes

**CLEANING TIPS:** Many of you have been experiencing some of the "extras" that come with our farm-fresh produce like dirt, feathers, bugs, an occasional worm, etc. Occasionally these and other "extras" go unnoticed which is why it is very important to thoroughly clean your foods AND wash your hands after handling unwashed produce to avoid contamination and ingesting things you shouldn't.

There are many veggie cleaners that are now available from any health food store but did you know that a little bit of bleach in a large pot or sink full of water will also help remove the pesticides from your fruit as well?

**STORAGE TIPS:** Personally, I have found that NOT washing my produce before storing it makes it last longer especially the green leafy veggies. As soon as I get home, I simply put as much produce that will fit, into a zip lock storage bag, unwashed. If your greens are wet, you can put them in a spinner to remove the excess water and/or you can put a paper towel into the storage bag to absorb the moisture that may accumulate which will help your produce stay fresher longer. Recently, our site coordinator Leigh, turned me on to yet another storage tip that I have yet to try myself but here is her suggestion:

*There's a green disk thingy called "Extra Life" for about \$7 (I get mine at Bed Bath & Beyond) that you can put in your produce crisper drawer in the refrigerator. It has something in it that absorbs the ethylene gas, thus keeping your veggies fresher longer. I was dubious when I first tried it, but the darn thing works great! Lasts 3 months.*

We also discussed how to ripen our sometimes less than mature fruit. Both of us agree that storing in a paper or plastic bag for a few days helps to ripen. Remember you want *some* circulation so don't seal off this bag completely.



## Bernie's Nutritional Tip of the Week

I've really been enjoying the fresh corn these past 2 weeks as it's been absolutely delicious! Did you know that in addition to being grown locally, our yummy corn, like all our other veggies, isn't from Genetically Engineered (GE) seeds! If you don't yet fully understand the meaning of GE foods, don't feel badly as most educated people don't either, which is why I wanted to write a little about them.

**Bernie's Nutrition cont...**



## Notes from the Farm

This week at Chubby Bunny we'll be direct seeding fall spinach, arugula and daikon. It's also time to harvest all the onions. We'll be giving out sweet onions in the share and the storage onions will be brought into the barn and cure a little bit before distribution. It looks like a terrific onion year!

Now that the two eldest pigs have been sent to the butcher, we've brought out the four piglets to fresh grass. Go on behind the big greenhouse if you want to see them experiencing the good life. The chickens are on new pasture as well, directly behind the barn.

Harvesting is taking up more & more time nowadays. Here's this week's: onions, lettuce, tomatoes, peppers, cucumbers, squash, kale, fennel, melons.

Dan has sent off the soil tests for our new field. As I mentioned last week, we'll get a fairly detailed profile of the nutrients in the soil. Depending on how it looks we'll apply a number of amendments. On other fields we've applied our own compost made from a mixture of sheep manure & bedding, chicken bedding, horse manure and cow manure. We only have so much of this so we also use composted chicken manure. This adds organic matter and crucial nutrients like carbon and nitrogen. Here are a few of the other biologically sound amendments we use on our land and a bit on what they do:

Azomite (volcanic rock dust for trace nutrients)

Residue and Bio-Aid (basically like yogurt culture for soils)

Ocean water (for foliar feeding trace nutrients for BRIX increase and better shelf life)

Neptune's Harvest Fish Emulsion (for foliar feeding and soil application)

Menafee Humates (organic carbon source for soil tilth and nutrient conservation)

Organic Pro-Grow (a blend of plants, rock dusts, etc. for boosting NPK soil nutrients close to the plants)

Dehydrated Layer Manure (applied in bulk to feed microbes, increase N,P,K levels as well as Calcium.)

Soft Rock Phosphate (trace nutrients and phosphorus in "colloidal" form)

**Farmer's Notes cont...**

## Bernie's Nutrition cont...

The first thing that you should know is that *GE*, *GMO* (*Genetically Modified Organism*) or *GM* (*Genetically Modified*) foods are NOT natural. As Wikipedia states: a *GMO* is an organism whose genetic material has been altered using the genetic engineering techniques generally known as recombinant DNA technology. With recombinant DNA technology DNA molecules from different sources are combined in vitro to one molecule to create a new gene. These new genes then create unnatural foods and unfortunately, these GE foods have been flooding our marketplace for years now. Some statistics show that up to 70% of foods on our grocery shelves are genetically engineered! The vast majority of ALL of the corn, soy, and canola foods as well as their byproducts (corn syrup, soy lecithin, canola oil etc) are now.....GE!

We consumers aren't made aware of this because our government doesn't require the labeling of all these GE foods. BTW in Europe labeling is required as they, and countries like Japan and Mexico, continue to be very skeptical of the safety of these new "frankenfoods" and with good reason. Consider the fact that most of the safety testing is done by the companies (ie Monsanto) that are producing the *GMOs*. The FDA (who employs many ex-employees of Monsanto) historically has claimed that they don't need labeling because *GMOs* are no different than hybrids created by cross breeding but there is a huge difference. Hybrids result from breeding 2 or more of the same species like say a fingerling and a russet potato. With *GMOs* there aren't any boundaries so therefore animal, bacteria and even viral genes can be injected into a GE plant... without anyone forced to inform us. Now with this recent DNA technology, unnatural, never-before genes are in our food supply and thus in our bodies without *anyone* fully understanding the risks we are taking and the damage we may be doing to ourselves.

Thankfully with our Chubby Bunny CSA produce, we can be comforted knowing that the foods we receive are not only without hormones, antibiotics and dangerous chemicals, but they are NON-GE as well! BTW Not all CSA's and/or organic foods are GE free so if you want to know...simply ask or call the appropriate party.

Next week we'll delve further into GE and their impact on our food supply.

Be Educated, Become Empowered and Be Healthy!



## Farmer's Notes cont...

Potassium Sulphate (a rack based source of Potassium and sulphur)  
High Calcium Lime (for calcium and pH adjustment)  
Gypsum (for calcium when pH is already high)

In a perfect world, one might think that all we'd put on the land is compost made from our own animal manure and their bedding. However, we are dealing with a hungry soil. It is no small feat to correct nutritional imbalances. It happens gradually over time and by adding not just what the plants need to grow but what the soil needs to be a healthy ecosystem. Yes, there is a whole hidden microcosm in the soil that we rarely think of when we are tucking in to that first bite of juicy, ripe tomato. You can't have one without the other. If the soil isn't healthy, neither is that tomato. We consider ourselves caretakers of the soil and strive not only for tasty, nutrient dense vegetables, but for a diverse, well mineralized, well balanced soil ecosystem.

## Chubby Bunny Field Trip to the farm this weekend!

We plan to meet at the church on Saturday morning at 8:30am, to drive up to Stone Wall Dairy, our dairy farm. We'll meet the cows and see how the milk is bottled, and get a chance to walk around the dairy farm. We'll move on to Chubby Bunny to have lunch, take a tour of the farm, meet the hens, pigs and sheep - and we may also get to do a little farm project for anyone interested in that. Those that have signed up for the day will be receiving an email with all the details. And it's not too late to join us! Please be in touch if you'd like to come, just email Sara Grady: [grady@chubbybunnynyc.org](mailto:grady@chubbybunnynyc.org).

## Recipe of the Week

This quick and easy dessert is a perfect way to use up extra peaches, and it works with nectarines, too.

### Peach Cobbler

6 medium peaches, sliced	1/3 cup sugar, plus 1 tablespoon divided
1 tablespoon cornstarch	1 tsp fresh lemon juice
1/2 tsp cinnamon	1 cup of all-purpose flour or whole wheat flour
1 1/2 tsp baking powder	1/2 tsp salt
3 tablespoons butter or margarine	1/2 cup milk

Preheat oven to 375 degrees. In a large saucepan, combine peaches, 1/3 cup sugar, cornstarch, lemon juice and cinnamon; toss to coat peaches. Set pan over medium heat and bring to boil; cook until mixture thickens, about 1 minute. Remove pan from heat and transfer mixture to an 8-inch square baking pan. To make topping, combine flour, remaining tablespoon of sugar, baking powder and salt in a large bowl. Work in butter with a fork until mixture resembles coarse crumbs. Add milk; stir until flour mixture is evenly moistened. Drop 8 tablespoons of topping mixture over peach mixture. Bake until topping is golden brown, and filling is bubbly, about 20 to 25 minutes. Serves 6 - 8.