

January 8, 2010

Happy New Year! We have decided it might be fun to keep our friends, members and former members posted on what is happening on the farm and with your farmers all year, so this is the first edition of our winter newsletter. We plan to send them out on a monthly basis in the winter, and, of course, still weekly with the shares during the CSA season.

The seed catalogs have been rolling in over the last couple of months, and we are just finalizing what we want to order for the coming season. Some highlights...Cincinnati Market Radishes (look like the radishes that Peter Rabbit steals from Mr. McGregor's garden; long and thin like a carrot), Cylindrical Beets (long rather than round – make nice slices), Hamburg Parsley Root (looks like a white carrot but tastes like parsley), Turga Parsnips (an old variety that gets great reviews), Celeriac, Fennel, Okra, Tomatillos, Heirloom tomatoes in all colors – red, pink, green, purple, yellow, orange and white. We'll send a comprehensive list in February or March, in case anyone is interested.

This weekend, Chris will attend the first of a year-long series of classes on growing Nutrient Dense food. He has been reading about this topic for several years; how depleted soils produce food that does not have the nutrients our bodies need to renew themselves, and what steps farmers can do to remedy this problem. Now, the Regional Farm and Food Project is helping to come up with a program for farms to become Certified Nutrient Dense. This is far more than a Certified Organic label – it will be a way for farmers to produce and consumers to find food that is nutritionally, ecologically and ethically superior to anything else they can buy. Food that can actually make you healthier. We are really excited to be a part of this cutting edge movement.

We are going to be expanding our poultry flock this spring, with more egg-laying hens and some meat birds, and are now deciding what breeds we want to grow and how many we should take on. We joke that we have a kind of cult following for our eggs now – we actually have a waiting list! So the hens will be first priority, especially since the ones we have now will be molting soon and will stop producing eggs for a while. If you think you might be interested in buying chicken from us, please let us know so we can be sure to raise enough birds. Email us for details.

Last summer was our first real foray into producing lactic acid fermented vegetables on any kind of scale. We are very pleased with the results and are now corresponding with New York Department of Ag & Markets to get our recipes certified and work out details so that we can sell what we produce this year. This will be a great way for us to begin to diversify the farm by selling other products – we take those cucumbers, green beans, cabbages, summer squash, etcetera and make them last well into the cold of winter. If everything goes as planned we will be able to offer pickles, dilly beans, sauerkraut and succotash at the farmers' market this summer and fall!

In December, Louise Frazier taught a cooking workshop in the Ziegler's home, here in New Baltimore. Everyone who participated had a wonderful time, and we hope to be able to offer something like it again this year. Thanks again to Louise, Nancy & Joe!

Don't forget to reserve your share if you haven't done so yet!

Best wishes from your farmers,

Samantha, Chris, Alex & Benjamin