

Raphael Garden CSA Newsletter

3937 Bannister Road Fair Oaks, CA 95628
916-965-0389 Harald 916-966-0938 Apprentice House

October 2007

HARVEST LIST FOR OCTOBER

Amaryllis Family:

Onions
Garlic

Sunflower Family:

Lettuce
U-pick flowers

Legumes:

Beans

Goosefoot Family:

Beets

Mint Family:

Rosemary
Basil
Sage

Carrot Family:

Carrots

Brassica Family:

Kale
Kohlrabi
Broccoli

Nightshade Family:

Potatoes
Tomatoes
Peppers

Cucurbit Family:

Zucchini
Winter Squash

DISTRIBUTORS (need 2 each day):

Tuesdays

10/9 **NEED 2**

10/16 Allen/Allen

10/23 Pualowski/Langill

10/30 Pualowski/Langill

11/6 Richmond/**NEED 1**

Fridays

10/12 Mitchell/Mitchell

10/19 **NEED 1**
Quick-Cleveland

10/26 **NEED 2**

11/2 **NEED 2**

11/9 Diane G/**NEED 1**

Several slots need to be filled! Please sign up!

GARDEN NEWS

What an unusual year this continues to be! After a warm August and September now the weather has dramatically shifted to cooler weather, with a light storm front coming through in the first days of October and the fall colors showing already. Some farmers in Mendocino County have already seen the first killing frost.

The productivity, particularly in the fruit bearing crops, has been enormous. Our fruit harvesting is over, but we can see all the oak trees being loaded with acorns. We have never seen as many tomatoes, peppers and eggplants come from our garden; this has been the biggest eggplant harvest we have ever had. Nothing different was done this year, except that maybe things were transplanted earlier. The weather we had was very conducive to fruit crops.

Now comes the shift. The tomatoes have finally slowed down. Peppers are still strong, but the eggplants have given up. We still have more potatoes, which is also very unusual. The fall brassica crops are just starting. We have a rich kale crop. Kohlrabi and very shortly broccoli will be in your baskets. Carrots have been unusually abundant. Part of the trick may

GARDEN DAYS

October 27 (9-noon)

CSA PAYMENT

Have you put in your 6 mandatory volunteer hours? There is one more garden day or contact Harald to see what needs to be done at a time more convenient for you.

have been that we have been planting seeds by hand rather than by machine which ensures a thicker emergence of plants. But right now, very quickly before it gets too late, the last crops--carrots, fennel, cilantro, beets, chard, hon tsai tai, mustard and corn salad--need to be directly sown into the soil. There are still lots of crops that need to be transplanted--lettuce, chinese cabbage, the last leeks, celery and endive.

The gardeners have to rush to get all this work done before the rains settle in. **This is the time for help!!** The apprentices are attending Consciousness Studies program classes, studying bones and metamorphosis and now weather. With the time needed for pre-harvest and harvest activities, not enough work is getting done in time on bed preparation. Anyone who can help would be greatly appreciated. It is also the time when the melons stop producing and will be replaced by a cover crop. Everything has to be pulled out of the beds. The beds will be cleared of weeds and then replanted with a mix of nitrogen-fixing legumes, like bell beans, winter peas, vetch, as well as oats. This mix will grow four feet tall by next march and will provide the fertility for next year's potatoes.

An interesting appearance in the garden is that all the life that grows high up (sunflowers, tomatoes and pole beans) are

descending ever more down to the earth. All the sunflowers are finished; beans and cucumbers are coming down, and shortly the tomatoes will be down as well.

The summer squash are also coming to the end. Within a couple of weeks, all the winter squashes will be harvested. It will be a very good crop. Soon, you will get slightly unripe squashes in your basket. These unripe ones need to be eaten quickly. The later, more mature squash, will keep till spring. (Harald still has some butternut squashes from last year in the garage that still look fine!)

On the whole the garden has been fairly weed-free. Last week the whole brassica block was weeded by the Foundation year students who have classes with Harald for a couple of weeks.

We are almost done with all the seed harvests. Harald is busy getting all the seed samples ready that will be sent to Turtle Tree Seed Company before the full batches will be sent in a month or so. This year, the income from seed sales became more significant for the garden.

Life is very different now on campus with school in progress. People walk through the garden and a few volunteers work in the morning and afternoon. The social life is different for the apprentices, meeting new people and getting caught up with old friends. The days are a lot shorter now after the fall equinox. The gardeners are starting at 7:00 am with breakfast already eaten. Soon the starting time will be pushed even later into the morning. The evenings are getting shorter as well. There is some recognition among the apprentices that soon there will be more to life than just work! But it is still a busy time for the apprentices---classes in the morning, Monday night Human Being and the Stars with Brian Gray, Tuesday day night study of Rudolf Steiner's agricultural lessons with Harald, in addition to any other individual interests the apprentices may have.

GARDEN DAYS

We hope the weather is going to be good on October 27. You can ask to work on another Saturday earlier in the month (or any other time that fits your schedule). Please call Harald for suggestions of possible tasks. We are counting on you! If you know you cannot fulfill your 6 hours of volunteer work, please make your payment instead.

DISTRIBUTION

It seems that many people have not signed up for distribution. Harald cannot recall a time when so many spots were still open. The lists have never been policed to make sure that everyone is doing what is required of them (4 distributions per family), but we may need a person to go through our lists and make the phone calls. If you are not sure about whether you have put in your 4 times, look at the calendar in the shed and count them!

When you decide on a date(s) to do the distribution, make sure you write it on the calendar in the shed. We have had times when people have decided to do distribution and didn't write it down and then extra people were present!

BASKETS

People should return the baskets that their cherry tomatoes come in. We can recycle them and use them for a number of years.

APPRENTICE NEWS

The apprentices need:

vacuum cleaner
printer for a computer
soccer ball

If you have any of these items, please contact the apprentices directly (number is at the top of this newsletter).

They also very much appreciate the gifts of olive oil which they have been getting and which they hope can continue.

ANIMAL NEWS

Bella, our cow, is definitely pregnant. She is looking larger now, even though her due date is not until March 10. Right now she is getting dried up after a long milking period. That means first shifting from 2 milkings a day to one and cutting back on the richer alfalfa hay and replacing it with more lean grass hay. By next week she will be all dry and in some ways more mobile.

We got a donation of three lambs from Soil Born Farm in Rancho Cordova. These animals were taken on by the new farm team that was not able to care for so many animals properly. In the future they may build a larger herd, however, this year the donated lambs are helping our pasture which has been under-utilized since only one of our own sheep had a lamb this spring.

For the last 2 weeks, Thor, the ram from the Sacramento Waldorf School has been with our sheep to do his yearly servicing of our flock. It is always quite a sight to see the beginning of courtship as soon as he arrives. Normally, all the ewes that are old enough will conceive within a week or two, even if they were not quite in cycle. There should be more lambs next Feb.

This week some of the older chickens will be butchered. They are not spring chickens anymore; they are just-good-enough-for-soup grade chickens, now that their egg laying has slowed down and will slow down even more next year if we keep them alive. We also need to make space for the 25 new arrivals which came by US mail. They came from the midwest, and when they hatch they are equipped to endure 3 to 4 days without any nourishment. They will be reared in one of the chicken tractors with extra protection and a warming light. Please bring your children to see the new arrivals.

CLASS VISITS

This fall two classes from Waldorf schools are visiting the garden. The 9th grade from the Waldorf School of the Peninsula will visit for 4 days, and the 3rd graders from Camellia Waldorf School will come for 2 days.

This is always an interesting time for the gardeners and a great learning experience for the students. It opens them up to the life on the farm and all its tasks. There is some work that gets done better; other work will get done more slowly. However, it always

feels like a true enrichment for everyone involved.

BIODYNAMIC ASSOCIATION FALL MEETING

All gardeners left for the fall meeting at Live Power Community Farm at Covelo in Mendocino County. Sixty people attended, most of them young people. This was one of the largest gatherings of this kind. Four of the BD preps were made: the horn manure prep for enlivening the soil and the chamomile, oak bark and dandelion preps for enriching of the compost. It was beautiful to see how interested many of these young people were involved in this healing method of agriculture and how sincerely they helped in the making of the preparations. Our newest apprentice, Jim Bowen, has written a report of his experience at this meeting. This report is attached to this newsletter.

On Monday after the meeting, Harald took the apprentices up the hill to the mountains to bury some of those preparations and make more. The oak bark was buried in a little stream at Jeanne Schwarzkopf's place. One hundred horns were filled with Bella's manure at Dan Crebbin's farm and buried there. The foothill clays have a much better drainage than our soils here, and the preparations that are buried there always turn out exceptionally well. The chamomile prep was buried in the highest part of the Sierras in an alpine meadow where there is snow in the wintertime. This improves the quality of this particular preparation. It is always a special excursion to go up there both in the fall and then again in the spring to retrieve the preps.



CROP OF THE MONTH

Beets

The Beet is a variable plant that can develop as a beet or a chard, sugarbeet, fodder beet for animals or mangel. The plant grows wild along the seashore in southern and western Europe, North Africa and Asia. The beet is easy to grow. It is a perennial and, if not harvested in the garden, will stay alive. The Greeks were the first ones to develop chard, while the Romans developed the beet root. Sugar beet is only slightly lower in sugar than sugar cane and was developed during the Napoleonic Wars when Britain interrupted the trade of sugar cane.

It is a fairly carefree plant, with few problems associated with it. At Raphael Garden we grow it mostly in the winter months. We grow the *Barbietola di Chioggia*, a more reddish beet that has inside stripes of red and white; *Early Wonder*, a variety that forms nice greens; and also Golden beets, which are more cold-sensitive. Beets can be grown almost any time of the year, but will bolt (go to seed) if it is planted in late fall and not harvested by April. The beet keeps very well in the bed, even if you don't irrigate it. The leaves might suffer from a lack of water, but the beet root stays fine. Normally we don't grow as much beet in the summer, but when the cooler fall begins, it is a welcome change to use used in soups.

Healing characteristics

The Beet is high in sugar and also rich in sodium and potassium. Medicinally, it works as a diuretic, flushing the system of salt. It has the effect of cleansing the blood and has a strong effect on blood formation, as well as stimulating the stomach, intestines, liver and gall bladder. Very beneficial effects can be experienced by drinking a cup of freshly pressed beet juice before a meal. Beets have been shown to have a very important dietary role in cancer healing; it has been shown to suppress cancer growth. One might think of it as a highly organized organ that is well-organized and has high structural integrity.

Beats can be grated raw or cooked into salad, together with apples and some oil. Mostly it is used in soups. To easily peel beets, boil them in hot water. When they are cool, you can easily rub the peel off.

RECIPES

Beet Kvass (From Nourishing Traditions, Sally Fallon)

Makes 2 quarts

3 medium or 2 large organic beets, peeled and chopped up coarsely
1/4 c. whey
1 T sea salt
filtered water

This drink is valuable for its medicinal qualities as a digestive aid. Beets are just loaded with nutrients. One 4-oz glass, morning and night, is an excellent blood tonic; promotes regularity, aids digestion, alkalizes the blood, cleanses the liver and is a good treatment for kidney stones and other ailments. Beet kvass may be used in place of vinegar in salad dressings and as an addition to soups.

Place beets, whey and salt in a 2-quart glass container. Add filtered water to fill the container. Stir well and cover securely. Keep at room temperature for two days before transferring to refrigerator.

When most of the liquid has been drunk, you may fill up the container with water and keep at room temperature another 2 days. The resulting brew will be slightly less strong than the first. After the second brew, discard the beets and start again. You may, however, reserve some of the liquid and use this as your inoculant instead of whey.

NOTE: Do not use grated beets in the preparation of the beet tonic. When grated, beets exude too much juice, resulting in a too rapid fermentation that favors the production of alcohol rather than lactic acid.

RUSSIAN BEET SALAD (Enchanted Broccoli Forest, Molly Katzen) 4-5 servings

8 beets
1/2 c. cider vinegar
1 medium clove of garlic, crushed
2 tsp. honey

1/2 c. minced red onion
2 scallions, minced (whites and greens)
1/2 medium cucumber, peeled and finely chopped
2 hard-boiled eggs, chopped
2 T. fresh dill, minced (or 1 tsp dried dill)
2 c. mixed sour cream and yogurt
salt and pepper to taste

1. Boil the beets, whole, for about 20-25 minutes. Rinse under running water as you rub off their skins. Chop into 1/2 inch bites and while they are still warm, marinate them in vinegar, garlic and honey. Let stand 30 minutes.
2. Add all remaining ingredients. Mix well and chill until very cold.

BORSCHT Serves 7-10

3 beets, peeled	3 - 4 oranges, peeled, seeds removed
1 small root ginger, sliced	1 c. olive oil
3 - 4 cloves garlic, peeled	sea salt to taste
6 - 7 bay leaves	1/2 c. walnuts
2 carrots, chopped	1/4 head cabbage, diced or grated
2 T. apple cider vinegar	1- 2 carrots, diced or grated
1 T. honey	1 bunch parsley, diced or grated

Blend the beets, ginger, garlic and bay leaves with 2 c. water in a blender. Pour into a big bowl.

Blend the carrots, celery, apple cider vinegar, oranges, honey, olive oil and salt with 2 c. water for 30 sec. Add walnuts and blend on low speed so they break up into small pieces but do not blend. Pour in the same bowl and stir. Add cabbage, carrots and parsley to the mixture. Stir and serve.