



LONG MEADOW FARM CSA

Weekly News

Week 13 www.longmeadowfarmmaine.com August 29, 2010

And now for something completely different! ~ Michele Roy

Happy end of August! It's been an amazingly beautiful summer. Our harvest is in full swing now. We dug our first potatoes on Friday. Well, dug is hardly the word, since this year we tried a "no-hill" method and just piled leaves around the plants. For whatever reason (late planting, good rotation, luck?) the plants still look great—usually by now there is no foliage left because of decimation by leaf-hoppers and the Colorado potato beetle. Same with our tomato plants—by now they are usually all yellowed leaves and are sad-looking in general. This year they still look great.

This week you are getting a taste of those potatoes. Historically we've never offered too many potatoes to our members, mostly because we just don't have the garden area to plant enough. We always plant some, though, because they are so much fun. Enjoy the few that are in the shares this week—they are meant to be a sample, not a major portion of the basket.



Heirloom tomatoes prior to canning. Many varieties make for a rich flavor!



Kohlrabi!

Another new item this week is the kohlrabi. Kohlrabi! Many of you may have never heard of this vegetable, let alone eaten it. We planted a purple and a white variety. The purple ones are up first. The leaves are edible. I've listed some tips on the recipe page.

And last but not least for unusual vegetables, we have Daikon radish in your baskets this week. To be perfectly honest I've not had much experience with this vegetable but aim to try the recipes that I've put on the sheet this week. We can trade notes!

There are plenty of tomatoes this week along with onions, pole beans, celery, kale (back again!) and summer squash. There is a huge amount of basil in the garden—we'll include it in the delivery shares this week. Everyone is welcome to come pick a bunch for pesto. It freezes well—food for the winter!

Title search leads to plea for squatter's rights ~ Denis Thoet

Inspired by Alan Taylor's must-read book, *Libertymen and the Great Proprietors*, I ventured into the Kennebec County Registry of Deeds last Tuesday.

My goal: to trace deeds on this property back to the "original squatter" who acquired the land from the "Great Proprietors," in this case, the heirs of Sylvester Gardiner. Gardiner was a Kennebec Proprietor who laid claim (along with a number of others including Charles Vaughan and James Bowdoin) to roughly three million acres on both sides of the Kennebec from the 1760s, from a patent granted by King George III.

The proprietors had a problem: thousands of immigrants settled on the land after the Revolutionary War, claiming the land for their own as payment for service in that war, denying the right of the proprietors to claim land granted by the king of England, and resisting the proprietors' claims, sometimes with violence. Farmers would threaten and injure surveyors and other emissaries



Kitty free for the taking — A cute male kitten, who we have dubbed "Ocelot" from his markings, showed up on the farm this week.. He is very gentle with a great little purr, but we are at our limit with cats after Balty showed up around this time last year.

Could it be that Long Meadow Farm is someone's favorite dropping off ground for kittens? Please adopt him soon, for the Humane Society is his next stop.

from the proprietors who attempted to gain control of land whose boundaries were very vague.

Maine — between the Androscoggin and Penobscot Rivers — was a hotbed of insurgency over a hundred years ago.

The Registry of Deeds on Weston Street in Augusta is a brightly fluorescent open space, ringed by banks of steel-bound books and chock-full of computer stations from which today's title searches begin.

The beginning was auspicious: my purchase from the Swansons in 1998 was the first marker; their purchase in 1978 was recorded.

The land had been part of a larger parcel called the Small Farm, worked by the Small family from 1944 to 1969. A dizzying succession of previous owners (Caswell, Card, Millman, Brann, Vigoreux, Bassett, and Philbrick) ended in 1898, with mention of the property being transferred by bequest but not mentioning the book and page numbers.

For me, that was a dead end, until I might be able to get back on the trail of ownership through tax records in the West Gardiner Town Office (incorporated 1850) and Gardiner City Hall, probably in the fall and winter.

Yet a major question remains: how did land in this area devolve to the present owners? And, since our search ended way short of the goal, how do I know the land I am living on actually belongs to me?

Irony of ironies — in the search for the "first squatter" it may have been revealed that we, indeed, are squatters here as well. Thank God for title insurance!

Come to the candidates' forum

All five gubernatorial candidates will address farm issues at a forum Tuesday, from 9-1 at the Sportsman's Alliance of Maine, Church Hill Road, Augusta.

If you can find the time, please attend. We will be there because our next gov-



Lunchtime prep at Long Meadow.

ernor has got to be much better informed, and more capable of positive action than our last series of governors.

The forum is sponsored by the Agricultural Council of Maine, which includes the Maine Organic Farmers' and Gardeners Association, Maine Farm Bureau, Maine Sustainable Agriculture Society, and Maine Farmland Trust.

Share your vision of the future of food in Maine!



Violet's nest — Free Ranger Violet (1, 2, or 3) has begun laying eggs in our front yard tomato beds. So far, she has carefully avoided pecking at the ripening tomatoes in her midst. She may have witnessed the demise of Lady Gaga, who paid the ultimate price for her indiscretion.