



# Weekly News

## This week in the garden ~by Michele Roy

Here we are in the last week of June.

The garden is shaping up very nicely, thanks to all of the wonderful help from our apprentices. It has been horribly hot and muggy, but we have managed to get so much done. I'm so grateful to have this crew this summer!

We are mulching furiously, and soon every bed in the garden will have a layer of our scythed hay over the soil. The tomatoes are first cultivated, then mulched, and then the cages are placed over them. The mulch helps reduce disease that is spread when rain splatters the soil up into the leaves—instead the mulch retains even moisture and also keeps the weeds down.

The strawberries are all mulched, and irrigation has been laid on the 1st year plants. The 2nd year plants have been producing. The berries from these plants are about half the size of the berries we got from them last year—I'm not sure if it's because they are in their 2nd year, or because of the lack of rain. I suspect both. I'll be curious to see what size berries we get off the



*I caught this moth in the greenhouse, on a tomato plant. It is the dastardly bug that produces the loathsome tomato hornworm! The moth is actually quite beautiful. I will save it for my granddaughter Gennah, who has a fascination for hornworms.*

new plants.

The new little carrots, freshly sprouted, are now mulched also. They can't tolerate dry crusted soil. Also mulched were the basil, dill, cilantro, and fennel. We still need to do all of the brassicas: cabbage, cauliflower, broccoli, and brussel sprouts.

The beans are up and hilled. The squashes are doing well, especially the summer ones. I don't mulch these, because it gives cucumber and squash bugs too many places to hide. It has been hard work keeping these guys under control. The cucumbers in the greenhouse are starting to vine. The potatoes are blossoming. Be sure to take a tour around the garden when you come!

## New skills

Denis and I have been doing farm-related activities for an awfully long time. Along the way we've picked up quite an assortment of skills.

This is our 4th year with MOFGA apprentices. We enjoy these young people ever so much. They help us immensely, and in turn, we share our skills with them. Some of them have never picked a vegetable before, never mind planting or caring for them. Certainly scything *(continued on pg 2)*

## NEW POTATOES WITH BASIL

- 1 1/2 pounds small red-skinned potatoes (about 1 to 1 1/2 inches in diameter)
- 2 tablespoons (1/4 stick) butter
- 2 tablespoons finely chopped fresh basil
- 2 green onions, minced
- 2 large garlic cloves, minced

Pierce potatoes in several places with fork. Melt butter in heavy large skillet over medium heat. Add potatoes and season with salt and pepper. Cover and cook until potatoes are almost tender, shaking skillet occasionally, about 25 minutes. Add basil, onions, and garlic. Reduce heat to medium-low; cover and cook until potatoes are golden brown and very tender, shaking skillet occasionally, about 10 minutes longer. Season with additional salt and pepper. Transfer to bowl. Sprinkle with more basil if you wish.

## GRILLED NEW POTATOES WITH PARMESAN AND HERBS

- 1 1/2 pounds small red-skinned potatoes
- 3 tablespoons olive oil
- 1/2 cup thinly sliced green onions
- 1 tablespoons parsley
- 3 tablespoons grated Parmesan
- 1-3 garlic cloves, finely chopped
- 1 tsp oregano

Cook potatoes in pot of boiling salted water until tender, about 15 minutes. Preheat oven to 450. Drain potatoes; cool. Cut potatoes in half; transfer to large bowl. Add 2 tablespoon oil; toss to coat. Mix remaining ingredients together and set aside. Roast potatoes until golden, turning occasionally, about 5 minutes. Transfer to bowl. Drizzle oil/herb/cheese/onion mixture over potatoes, return to pan and place under broiler for a few minutes. Gently toss. Season with salt and pepper. Makes 4 servings.



# Advice from the farm...by Denis Thoet

*This is the first in a series (intermittent, you may hope) of advice columns straight off the farm. Our columnist is Barbara, lead ewe of the flock, whose wide range of experience, depth of wisdom, and high intelligence has earned her the privilege.*

**Dear Barbara:** My partner “Bob” (not his real name) always leaves the toilet seat up. It’s driving me crazy. Is it time to break up? “Crazy”

**Dear Crazy:** In one of Paul Theroux’ later books (“My Story,” I believe) a woman divorces her husband because she can no longer stand to turn his undershirts right side out when she did the laundry. (He obviously didn’t stop turning his undershirts inside out when he took them off, no matter how many times she told him.) Our advice to her, if we could have given advice to a character in a memoir, would have been to leave the shirts inside out when she folded them up. Message delivered, and perhaps, marriage saved.

So too, there may be an answer to the age old toilet seat up/toilet seat down dilemma. Here it is: the proper position

of a toilet seat when not in use is with the lid and seat down. Therefore, you are as guilty as he when it comes to proper seat position. Have a frank discussion, explaining how wrong you both have been over the years, and try to move, from this day forward, into a new and mutual understanding of what to do with a toilet seat. Give him two weeks, then make your move.

## Other products available in our Share Room:

1/2 lb. packages of kufta (middle eastern lamb patties)	\$3.50/ea
6 oz. Ewegurt (maple or plain)	\$2.25/ea
16oz. Ewegurt (maple or plain)	\$4.75/ea
6 oz. Sheep milk feta in brine	\$6.00/ea
Sheep feta in olive oil w/peppercorns	\$8.00/ea
Certified organic eggs from pasture-raised hens from Buckwheat Blossom Farm in Wiscasset	\$3.00/doz



*Molly using a shotgun for the first time.*

*(New skills, continued)*

has been new to everyone! Our assortment of hand tools is of great interest—the wheel hoe and broadfork in particular. Everyone has a favorite tool or two by the end of the summer.

Using the garden tools is mandatory. Other tasks and activities are not. Last year Mark wanted to learn how to butcher chickens, something we would never press on anyone. I still can’t do it—I’m okay plucking the feathers, but if I had to do the killing I’m afraid I’d have to pass.

This week Molly asked Denis to teach her how to use the shotgun, which we have on hand for the occasional woodchuck. He was happy to oblige. She was quite pleased with herself for having managed to hit the paper target that we placed over the hay bale.

Other new things apprentices will learn include canning, dehydrating, making jams, pickles, relishes, dill beans, pesto, salsa, bread—pizza too! They learn how to process raw wool into yarn, how to dye the yarn with natural dyes such as onion skins and calendula flowers. Many of the female apprentices already know how to knit, but knitting with homespun is a new pleasure!



*The scything crew is out nearly every morning, taking advantage of the early morning moisture in the grass that makes cutting easier. This week we obtained scythe #4, allowing 4 blades to be out there at one time. It is really a sight to see, especially on those lovely mist-shrouded mornings that we get on these hot summer days. One of our CSA members has come to try her hand at it—we welcome anyone who wants to give it a go. Besides the fact that it is an enjoyable physical activity, we are also cutting back the grass so the weeds don’t go to seed, and using it for all the mulching we need to do in the gardens. We are also hoping to get to the point where we can store some of the hay for winter to feed our sheep and goats.*