

News from Tuv Ha'Aretz-Hazon CSA - A Community Supported Agriculture Project

News From the Farm

Dear CSA members,

I am sorry to announce that this will be our last year farming. It has been a decision we have struggled with. There are many reasons for this decision. The main reason is that it is not financially sustaining our family. I start working in late winter to get ready for the spring plantings and the work continues into long hours from April till the end of October. The work is just too much on me for the little salary I am making. We have compared our CSA deliveries with another one in the Kirkwood area and we have been giving the same items and weight as theirs yet they are charging \$1300.00 per share.



Diana at the J during a recent pick-up session.

Other reasons are that the weather has changed over the past four years and we can no longer predict what it is going to do. The wet springs and hot summers are a challenge to deal with. The stress of growing such a variety of items as well as the amount we are growing has finally taken its toll on me. I am constantly planting, picking, weeding, fertilizing and planning for what I need to do next. I can no longer keep up this pace.

I am sorry to disappoint any of you, but the stress of trying to please everyone and worrying about keeping everyone happy is just too much for me. I have worked very hard to plant and plan to have a variety of fresh delicious produce for you. I do

want to say thank you to Sara and Brad especially for all they have done to make this possible for you and for all the support they have given us. Sara has worked hard to keep everything organized and I am happy to have been able to get to know her and become her friend. She has always gone over and above to make things as easy as possible. To all the volunteers who have helped in any way, you also made this possible. Without your help Sara would have had to worked even harder. If any one has any questions please feel free to contact me through Sara.

Sincerely,
Diana Root

A Note from Sara...

I was very sad to learn of the news from Diana. A CSA is based on the premise that small farmers can use the money we all paid in advance to help the success of their farm. It is disappointing to hear how difficult it is to be a farmer today. I appreciate Diana's sincerity, seriousness, and all the time and energy she is putting and will continue to put in to finish the CSA.

As Diana has become our friend and farmer it will be hard to say goodbye. Meanwhile, we are busy looking for another farmer who might be interested in working with us for Summer 2012. If you have any leads, please pass on.

Thank you Diana for all your doing to finish out a strong season.

Keep enjoying your veggies!

All my best, Sara

Distribution Details

JCC, Staenberg Family Complex in Creve Coeur, 3:00-6:30 pm

- Next Week! July 26 will include a visit by our farmers. They will be selling their fresh eggs, dried beans etc. as well as be available to answer any of our questions and talk to us firsthand about our food.

JCC, Marilyn Fox Building in Chesterfield

Your pick-up will be available and ready at the front desk in pre-packaged bags. Bags will be available at the following times:

- Tuesday - 5:30 - 10:00 pm
- Wednesday - 5:30 - 10:00 am

Donating to the Food Pantry

If you are unable to get your produce for the week, someone else may pick up for you (using your name at pick up) or you can choose to leave your share for the food pantry.

Reduce, Reuse, Recycle

Don't forget to bring your own bag each week at pick up.

Upcoming Events - Mark Your Calendars!

7/19 - Farmers market at pick up – Our farmers, Diana and Ron will be at pick up selling their other goodies.

8/5 - Hazon CSA Shabbat Dinner – at the home of Sara Winkelman and Rabbi Hyim Shafner. Space is limited – Donate your bag of veggies that week or \$10/person or \$25/family to participate. Contact Sara for more details swinkelman@jccstl.org.

9/25 - Local Apples and Honey - Kick off a sweet new year at Mills Apple farm with a morning of apple picking, a chance to watch bees make honey and family fun! For families of all ages. For more details contact Marianne Chervitz, 314-442-3454, mchervitz@jccstl.org.

10/27 - Harvest Potluck at the home of Lesley & Stan Hoffman.

Some Great Articles to Check Out

So Many Beets!

I personally am a big fan of the lovely red (or golden, or striped) root vegetable. Here's what JCarrot has to say.

"Beets — most people either love them or hate them. It's amusing listening to other CSA members pick up beets with the consistent refrains of yippee or oh-no. They really are a polarizing vegetable."



From: <http://blogs.forward.com/the-jew-and-the-carrot>

Summertime Grilling

Tired of stir-fry? These mouthwatering suggestions will help you take your CSA veggies to new culinary heights!

- A Meatless BBQ Hearty Enough for Carnivores, by Leah Koenig
<http://www.forward.com/articles/139272/>
- Throw Another Melon on the Barbie, by Mark Bittman
http://www.nytimes.com/2011/07/10/magazine/bittman-throws-another-melon-on-the-barbie.html?_r=2

The "Dangers" of Gardening

My Teacher's Criminal Veggie Patch

By Tsvia Finman

<http://blogs.forward.com/the-jew-and-the-carrot/139720/#idc-container>

Zucchini Chips

One of our family favorites – adapted from cooking light by Sara Winkelman

Ingredients

- 1/4 cup dry breadcrumbs
- 1/4 cup (1 ounce) grated fresh Parmesan cheese (can leave out if you don't want dairy)
- 1/4 teaspoon seasoned salt
- 1/4 teaspoon garlic powder
- 1/8 teaspoon freshly ground black pepper
- 2 tablespoons fat-free milk (you could use eggs instead)
- 2 1/2 cups (1/4-inch-thick) slices zucchini (about 2 small)

Recipe

Preparation & Directions

1. Preheat oven to 425°
2. Combine first 5 ingredients in a medium bowl, stirring with a whisk.
3. Place milk in a shallow bowl. Dip zucchini slices in milk, and dredge in breadcrumb mixture.
4. Place coated slices on an ovenproof wire rack coated with cooking spray; place rack on a baking sheet.
5. Bake at 425° for 30 minutes or until browned and crisp.



Serve immediately.

Kashrut CSA-Style

My husband and I grew up in non-kosher homes, so when we each began to explore kashrut in college, we were swimming in uncharted waters. Our individual journeys towards kashrut began with separating meat and dairy products only at home. When we married, we both had complete sets of dairy and meat dishes, and had long brought only kosher meat into our homes. Before our children were old enough question us, we re-examined our practices, which resulted in the decision to stop eating meat in non-kosher restaurants; soon we began to buy only certified, hechshered foods.

When people ask why I keep kosher, I can give several reasons. One obvious one is that kashrut makes eating a Jewish action. When I choose kosher food, I am making a Jewish choice. However, a more compelling reason for kashrut is implicit in the blessing that accompanies the food I am eating. God has blessed me with the food I am preparing to eat, and with the ability to savor its flavors and appreciate the earth's bounty—and the labor involved in drawing it forth (hamotzi lechem min ha'aretz).

Being a member of a CSA has emphasized that lesson even more. On a rainy Sunday afternoon this summer, my husband and I visited Home Sweet Farm, which supplies the Tuv Ha'Aretz in Houston. We visited heritage tomatoes, winter squash, and Chinese long beans. Our farmer, Brad, lamented the recent rains (not knowing that the ones to come would drown several of his crops completely). He explained how he uses groundcover to enrich the soil, how he rotates crops, and how he allows land to lie fallow. Farmer Brad shared his dream for expanding his farm—while cognizant that he is responsible for providing vegetables for the eighty families in the two CSA's he supplies.

My family is one of those eighty families. My husband and I left the farm awed by Farmer Brad's devotion to sustainable agriculture and his closeness to his land. I have—and will continue to—expressed my gratitude to Brad in tangible ways: by remaining a CSA member (which will grant him a modicum of financial stability), by attending his market and purchasing additional items from him, by championing his cause. However, knowing how hard he works to provide my family with my favorite arugula—how could we not recite a blessing, thanking God for the gifts this farmer brings to our table each week? This, then, is my true understanding of kashrut: before my food is "acceptable" (the basic meaning of the word kosher), I must acknowledge that the earth belongs to God; therefore, we must be grateful to our Creator, not only for the earth's bounty, but also for its stewards.

Nancy Pryzant Picus is the Director of Jewish Learning at The Shlenker School, a Reform Day School in Houston, TX.

JCC's Hazon CSA Sustainers

Anonymous, Lesley and Stanley Hoffman, Sue Fischlowitz and David Roberts, Laurie and Michael Vander Velde

Hazon CSA is a project of the JCC's Helene Mirowitz Department of Jewish Community Life in cooperation with JF&CS Harvey Kornblum Jewish Food Pantry and the Jewish Environmental Initiative, a project of JCRC.

Do you have something you want to share in the newsletter? Please send your ideas and suggestions to swinkelman@jccstl.org.

