



# RED FIRE READER

A bimonthly newsletter from Red Fire Farm, growers of healthy organic food for communities in Massachusetts  
GRANBY, MASSACHUSETTS 01033 (413) 467-SOIL OCTOBER 13<sup>TH</sup> ,2008 ISSUE NUMBER X

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## CALENDAR:

October 18-19<sup>th</sup>: RFF at The River Valley Market Grand opening serving winter squash samples 5-7PM, Northampton.

October 24<sup>th</sup>: Ona's cooking demo at the Granby Stand

Dec 5<sup>th</sup>: End of Season Evaluation and Planning Meeting for Boston Area Distributions at 7:30PM in the Cambridge Harvest Coop Meeting Room. All CSA members are invited and encouraged to attend.

**Winter Share Dates: Nov. 7, 21,  
Dec. 5 and 19.**

### Now in season:

lettuce – spinach - carrots- chard –  
beets- parsley – dill - kohlrabi  
potatoes- cabbage- – radish –  
broccoli – cilantro– garlic bulbs –  
salad mix– kale – collards –  
peppers – onions–eggplant –  
winter squashes – turnips –  
rutabagas – leeks  
Locally grown Apples and Pears

## FINAL RED FIRE READER FOR 2008!

### **Hello Red Fire Farm Members and Prospective CSA Members,**

Fall is here, the leaves are changing, and we are harvesting the fall crops each day between the shortening light. We are squirreling away the storage vegetables for this winters winter shares, and as we complete the harvest on each field section we immediately plant cover crops in order to protect the soil during the winter which will soon be here. 2008 has been a difficult growing season in some respects. We suffered devastating amounts of rain during much of the summer and fall. Despite this, our farm has been able to work around the extra rain drops reasonably well, and many of our fields have yielded outstanding harvests! The crew this year has been outstanding, and many of us will be back again next year to grow another year of vegetables. We are hoping that you will also be returning as a member or joining us as a new CSA member as we enter the 9<sup>th</sup> season farming here in Granby.

The demand for our produce and memberships in Red Fire Farm has grown tremendously during the last two years. This year, even though we increased our plantings enough to grow 300 more shares than last season, we still sold out of shares by March. We then generated a waiting list of several hundred people who wanted to purchase a share and want to get one in 2009. We expect this year to sell out of shares even sooner than ever before. **If you want to make sure to keep your share for 2009 you need to make your renewal commitment according to the schedule outlined below.** In 2009 we will not be increasing our scale of plantings significantly in order to take more shares. We are capping share numbers at our Cambridge, JP and Somerville distributions at the same levels as in 2008. That means these locations will sell out especially fast! Other locations will also sell out fairly fast.

### **CSA Renewal Schedule:**

**-Existing CSA members need to renew and make a deposit by Dec. 1 to assure a space in 2009.**

**-Waiting List or past years Red Fire Farm CSA members need to make deposits by Dec. 5<sup>th</sup>. We will allocate shares in the order of our waiting list sign up dates. (If you don't make it in to your desired location, we will refund your deposit.)**

**-After Dec. 5<sup>th</sup> we will allocate any remaining spaces to other inquiries on a first come, first to get the space basis.**

Share Pricing- The cost of farming and running a business has continued to increase at an accelerated rate during the past year. Our cost of seeds, fuel, and growing supplies of all types has increased dramatically even when compared to just two years ago. Additionally we are raising the wages of all the employees on the farm in order to make them closer to a livable wage. These considerations mean that we need to raise the price of the shares for the 2009 season. Since the cost of food is going up significantly in all supermarkets, you will still find that a share of Red Fire Farm produce is still a great value for certified organic locally grown food that is grown with great care.

We hope you all have a great winter. Hopefully we will see many of you at the late December distributions, at our end of season meeting on Dec. 5<sup>th</sup> at the Harvest Coop, at the Winter Fare farmers market on Groundhog Day in February, or stop by the farm anytime!

Your Farmers, Ryan, Sarah, Patrick and the rest of the Red Fire Farm Crew



## SCARECROWS WINNERS!

Thanks to everyone who brought us a scarecrow. The stand is looking great for Halloween! Here are the winners:

### *In the Monster Category:*

First Place: Red Sox Fan, made by Joseph Bizon  
Second Place: Crazy Clown, made by Shaina Humphrey  
Third Place: Two Scarecrows, made by Mariah and Katelynn H.

### *In the Witch Category:*

First Place: Patches the Witch, made by Stephen, Lyndsey and Kristin Pisano - even though there weren't other entries into the witch category, this one is definitely great and deserves first.

### *In the Other Category:*

First Place: Ms. Hamaca Pepper, made by Tracy and Marcy Santana.  
Second Place: Scary Crow, made by Shaina Humphrey  
Third Place: Straw Princess, made by Emily and Katherine Vallee

*Winners, please come to the farm to get your prizes. Check in with someone at the stand to get your items.* Prizes for each category include: 1st, 2 tickets for the Fall Harvest Feast (a big dinner on the farm on October 11 with pumpkin pie, apple cider, and delicious fall foods) and two large carving pumpkins, 2nd, two large carving pumpkins and 10 bulbs of garlic to keep away the vampires, 3rd, one large carving pumpkin.



## Wanting to keep veggies through the winter?

Winter is fast approaching and it is time to fill the cellar. We have many vegetables for bulk order that need nothing more than a cool dark place to keep well through the long cold nights of winter. If you are interested in stocking up, we recommend ordering unwashed vegetables since these will keep better (and saves us time too!) These would be the potatoes, sweet potatoes and carrots in particular. Ideally, these vegetables should be kept in a cool (50 degree), dry, dark place (unheated basements are fine) If the space is not completely dark, make sure to cover your potatoes since they will start to turn green with even a little light. And just as a note for this season, because of the wet weather in the middle of the summer, some of the storage crops may not last as long as in other years, in particular the squash and onions, so check on them regularly and use them at the first sign of rot—the vegetable will still be good if the bad spot is removed, but if left too long, it could become an unpleasant mess and could cause the surrounding vegetables to go bad. Place your bulk orders soon and enjoy the bounty of the season through the winter!

### PAYMENT REMINDER:

**For those who have payed off their share for this year, thank you. If you have an outstanding balance, please send the remainder as soon as possible.**

## TURNIPS

The farm is growing many turnips that will be in the last of the fall shares and in the winter shares. In addition to the hakureis which you already know as a good raw turnip for salads, these later season turnips are more colorful, but probably tastier cooked. You can look forward to purple-top, golden and red turnips. They are all easy to cook and they keep well.

Here's one recipe:

### Turnip and Carrot Gratin

2 tablespoons unsalted butter  
2 pounds medium turnips, trimmed and left unpeeled  
1 pound carrot  
1 tablespoon chopped thyme  
1/2 tablespoon chopped savory  
1 1/2 teaspoons kosher salt  
Rounded 1/8 teaspoon cayenne  
1 cup heavy cream  
1 cup grated Parmigiano-Reggiano

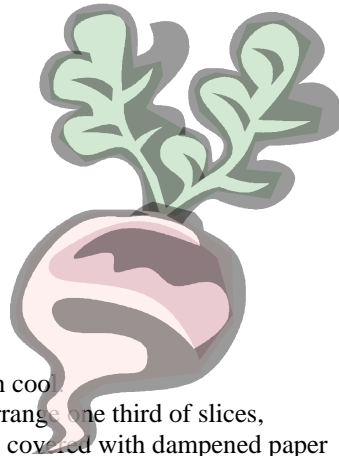
-Preheat oven to 450°F with rack in middle.

-Melt butter in an ovenproof 12-inch heavy skillet, then cook

-Slice turnips and carrots paper-thin with slicer, then arrange one third of slices, overlapping tightly, in skillet, keeping remaining slices covered with dampened paper towels. Sprinkle with about a third of thyme, savory, kosher salt, and cayenne. Make 2 more layers.

-Cook, covered, over medium heat until underside is browned, about 10 minutes. Add cream and cook, covered, until center is tender, 20 to 25 minutes.

-Sprinkle evenly with cheese, then bake, uncovered, until golden and bubbling, 10 to 15 minutes. Let stand 5 minutes before serving.



## Harvest Feast and Cider-Making Party, a sweet success

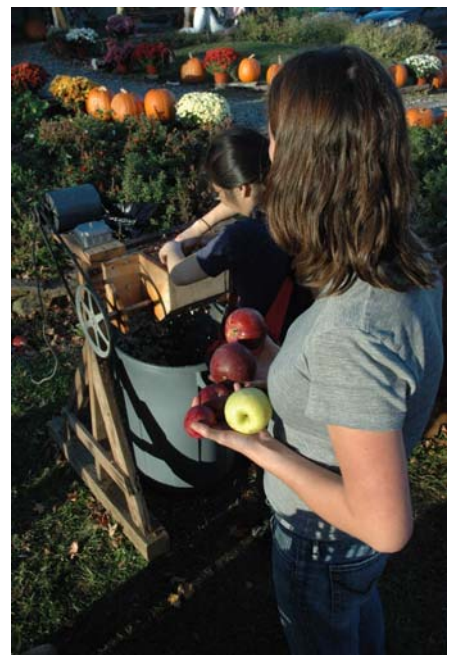
To the tunes of the farm's old-time band, families pressed cider all day last Saturday in front of the farm stand. Then, they moved out to a tent in the field for a yummy feast. There were about 40 in attendance to enjoy the bounty of the season on a warm (and buggy) fall evening. Thanks to all who came out for it. If you didn't make it to a feast this year, look for them next year.

### Bulk Orders:

SWEET POTATOES - \$30 per half bushel  
CABBAGE - for sauerkraut etc. - \$30 per bushel box, contains about 50 lbs  
CARROTS - \$38 per 25 LB bag  
POTATOES- \$30 per half bushel (Red (Pontiac or Chiefton), Yellow (Carola or Keuka) and White (Kennebec or Elba) Types)  
GARLIC -1.00 bulb  
BUTTERNUT SQUASH -\$20 half bushel, \$40 bushel  
RUTABAGA, TURNIP, DIAKON -\$25 per half bushel



The crew harvesting sweet potatoes. Our record potato is 8 lbs and the size of a loaf of bread. You can see where the frost killed the foliage on the right.





**Farm Cam:** This is all that is left of the tomatoes and peppers after our first frost of the season. Once we pull the plastic from the beds the field can get tilled in before being planted in vetch and oats for a cover crop. Next year this field will be growing sweet corn.

The Red Fire Reader is compiled and edited by Ona Lindauer, the Red Fire Farm culinary intern. Newsletter topic ideas, recipes, writings, poems, and CSA community announcements are welcome and should be submitted to [redfirefarm@gmail.com](mailto:redfirefarm@gmail.com).

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