

FLATBUSH FARM SHARE NEWS

3.9 / September 2011

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Wednesdays: Distribution from 5 – 8 PM at Flatbush Reformed Church,
890 Flatbush Ave (at Church Ave); Weekly share lists available on [Facebook](#) or at www.flatbushfarmshare.com

Hurricane Irene Strikes our CSA Farms

Source: Paula Lukats and Jen Datka, [Just Food](#)

In New York City Hurricane Irene was much less severe than projected, however, the same cannot be said for many areas in upstate New York, New Jersey, Vermont, and throughout the Northeast. While not all of our CSA farmers were severely affected, others sustained tremendous damage. All week we have been soberly witnessing images of farms under feet of water, hearing stories of farmers who are still unsure of the severity of the damage to their fields, helping farmers think through their next steps and beginning to have what I'm sure will be the first of many conversations with NYC CSA members.

Community Supported Agriculture is a partnership- a mutually beneficial long term relationship between farmers and their members. Shared risk is a concept that is included in every description of CSA and in every membership agreement form. **[Continued on p. 2]**



Half Share, Week 12 2011. Photo: Amy Dreher

Why Salt Can Be a Health Risk by Jacqueline Goulet

"Adults consume an average of twice the one-teaspoon recommendation of sodium a day."

While salt has been used to flavor and preserve foods for centuries, in recent years it has begun to be used excessively in processed foods, fast foods and even home cooking. Too much salt can cause high blood pressure (hypertension) which can lead to heart disease, heart failure, stroke, and chronic kidney failure.

While we commonly talk about too much salt being bad for you, it's actually the sodium in the salt that causes these health problems. Most standard table salt is made up of 40% sodium. The recommended amount of sodium is a maximum of one teaspoon, but many doctors and nutritionists recommend no more than half of that each day, especially for people who already suffer from high blood pressure or heart and kidney. **[Continued on p. 4]**

Hurricane Irene Strikes our CSA Farms (continued from p.1)



In most years, sharing risk means that a few of the crops that a farmer originally plants and plans to include in shares don't make it in. Occasionally it means a late start to the season due to a wet spring. In 2009, sharing the risk meant few or no tomatoes as most New York farmers were hit with tomato blight. But mostly we don't notice our risk as our shares are supplemented with the bounty of the other 100 varieties of vegetables that CSA farmers have planted.

But the concept of shared risk is very real, and in the wake of Irene we are all reminded of this. No matter how skilled a farmer is, no matter how hard she works, no matter how well he's planned, there was nothing they could have done to prevent the severe flooding. Farmers continue to wait for flood waters to recede so that they can determine the full extent of the damage.

In addition, area farmers received notice from the FDA yesterday that crops covered in flood waters should not be sold for human or animal consumption. While affected farmers are struggling to ensure that they have safe food to provide to their members, yesterday's FDA ruling will likely make it even harder for farms to recover.

Unfortunately, this all comes at the worst time of the season. Money has already been invested in crops that now cannot be harvested, and it is now too late in the season to replant many crops. When bad weather strikes in the spring, farmers have time to replant and recover. This late in the season there simply aren't enough days to start over for many crops, particularly for slower growing winter crops: for instance, winter squash takes 100 days from seed to harvest, potatoes take from 70 to 120 days, turnips

60 days, onions 80 to 150 days. Unfortunately, at this point in the season, there just isn't that much time left.

In addition, CSA farms often don't have crop insurance. Crop insurance is tied to a particular crop, rather than the farm as a whole, and as a result, is better geared for farms that grow large amounts of fewer crop varieties. For this reason, it's very difficult for CSA farmers--who grow 100-150 different crop varieties--to value their crops in order to apply for crop insurance. For CSA farms who do have crop insurance, the insurance doesn't come close to covering their losses, the claims process is incredibly complicated, and reimbursement can take months.

These losses are devastating, but CSA farmers are not just throwing up their hands and walking away. At the same time they greatly appreciate the support that CSA provides, they also feel a tremendous sense of responsibility to their members. As we speak, farmers and their crews are diving in and working hard to assess the damage, begin clean up, and make repairs to fences and barns to make the farm ready and viable for next season. They're also looking at their fields--those that aren't still under water--to figure out how, or even if it's possible, to make the best of the remaining season for their members.

"Community Supported Agriculture is a partnership—a mutually beneficial long term relationship between farmers and their members. Shared risk is a concept that is included in every description of CSA"

Many CSA core groups and members have reached out to Just Food to find out what they can do to help their farmers. As CSA members, you have already provided stability and support for your farms. Hurricane Irene is an all-too-real example of the kind of weather disaster that can put small family farms out of business. CSA is a vital partnership that can allow farms instead to survive, to return next season and provide the usual bounty to its members.

What your CSA farmers need the most now are your patience and understanding, as well as your commitment to their farm over the long haul. ♦

Our Farmers' Letter, August 23rd 2011

I can hardly believe that as our pumpkins turn orange on the vine and the trees begin to bronze only 5 months ago we were plodding around in the snow collecting maple syrup. It seems so long ago...

So far, 2011 has been a decent growing year, minus a few extreme moments. The rains have come (sometimes too much) and the sun has been bright (sometimes too bright) and most vegetables have thrived.

We are looking at an excellent crop of winter squash starting to ripen, and we'll begin to distribute that in the coming month.



Last year's biggest sweet potato

The sweet potatoes seem to be sizing up, although it is hard to see anything underneath the web of potato vines that cover the tubers. I have already seen quite a bit rodent damage in the field, which must mean they are sweet (sweet potatoes biggest predator are mice and voles burrowing in the beds!).

What has started out as a fantastic tomato crop is slowly heading south. After pondering why our tomatoes would begin to fade with so much time left in our

season, I remembered way back in early May (May 7th to be precise), the day after we planted our tomatoes, the pelting 25 minute hail storm we received.

There are never definitive answers in understanding how crops grow with all of the variables that exist—but our early onset of tomato problems has us thinking that the early hail, which stripped, broke and raked over our tender new transplants may be a real contributing factor.

Regardless, we're going to pick the tomatoes as long as we can, and then we'll say goodbye to them, and start in on the fall crops!

Having had tomato setbacks in 2 out of 3 of the last growing seasons, this experience has strengthened our resolve to erect high tunnels in our fields, and grow our tomatoes indoors again—Stay tuned for more details later.

One more word on the tomatoes—because of the heavy rains, we are noticing a shorter shelf life, so do not hesitate to chop'em up and eat them when you get them home.

Enjoy, Katie & Chris, farmatmillerscrossing.com ♦

The Farm at Miller's Crossing is a beautiful 200-acre farm situated in the Hudson Valley of New York. Meet Chris, Katie and their four children, Lael, Connelly, AnneMae, and Christopher on our CSA farm trip September 25th.



Greenhouse tomatoes in 2010,
Photo: Callia Piperides

Why Salt Can Be a Health Risk (continued from p.1)

According to a research study done by the University of Maryland Medical Center, American adults consume an average of twice the one-teaspoon recommendation of sodium a day. About 65 million Americans currently have high blood pressure, and 90% of Americans will develop high blood pressure if they do not change the way they eat.

You can limit the amount of sodium in your diet by reducing the amount of processed foods, canned vegetables, and fast food. When buying pre-packaged food, check out the nutrition label on the back for the percentage of your daily value of sodium.

If you are cooking with fresh ingredients at home, you can replace salt with some of the great fresh herbs in your share, or use other spices in your cabinet such as cumin, cayenne, black pepper, paprika,

rosemary, oregano, or nutmeg. Your food will have more flavor, and you can stay healthier! ♦



How to Avoid All the Salt. Source: [LA Times Blogs](#)

What's in Season? by Callia Piperides and Jacqueline Goulet



[My Recipes.com](#): Beet Salad over Beet Greens and Arugula

Beet and beet greens are now in season. Beets are a root vegetable belonging to the chenopod family, along with Swiss chard, spinach, and quinoa.

They are an excellent natural source of folate, with one cups' worth of beets providing 35% of the daily recommended value. Folate is essential

during the first 6 weeks of pregnancy as it helps develop the brain, spine and skull. Beets are also a great source of other nutrients such as Manganese, Potassium, Vitamin C, Magnesium and Iron. Along with having an abundance of nutrients, beets also contain anti-oxidants which help rid the body of toxins, and they also have anti-inflammatory properties, which help to reduce the risk of cardiovascular disease.

Beet greens, the bright green leaves with vibrant red stems, are often confused with Swiss chard. Both the stems and the leaves of beets are edible and can be

used interchangeably in recipes for collard greens or turnip greens. Beet greens are a great source of nutrients and contain Vitamin A, as well as 30% of the recommended daily value of Vitamin C in a half cup of cooked greens.

ALSO NOW IN SEASON

Fruit: apples, blackberries, blueberries, cantaloupes, grapes, peaches, pears, plums, prunes, raspberries, watermelon

Vegetables: arugula, Asian greens, beans, braising greens, beets, broccoli, rapini, cabbage, carrots, celery, celery root, eggplant, escarole, kale, leeks, lettuce, parsley, potatoes, onions, spinach, spring turnips, Swiss chard, tomatoes, summer squash, zucchini. ♦

Sources: [Pride of New York](#) and [The Farm at Miller's Crossing](#)

Local seasonal vegetables and fruit are tastier: Picked at their peak rather than when green, they aren't stored for long periods, thus retaining more nutrients and flavor.

They are also better for the environment: Because they travel short distances from the farm to your plate, less fuel is wasted. And because they're suitable to the local weather and soil conditions, growers aren't fighting the elements in intensive and unsustainable ways.

No Impact Experiment, A One-week Carbon Cleanse by Sustainable Flatbush

Sustainable Flatbush will be hosting a [No Impact Week](#) from **September 18-25th** in Flatbush. What is it, you may ask? It's a one-week "carbon cleanse", where an individual or group decides to reduce their negative impact on the earth through a cumulative set of behavior changes, culminating in a Give Back Day where they collectively produce a *positive* impact. (See flier here with some of the details.) The group meets each day (either in person or online), and each day of the week has a theme (Monday is Trash/Consumption, Tuesday is Transportation, etc.); by luck Wednesday's theme happens to be Local Food.

I'm writing to you not only to invite your participation, but also to see whether one or more folks from FFS would like to speak to the group about Local Food, and use the CSA pickup to illustrate eating the benefits of locally. Some of those who've already committed to do the Week are already CSA members, but for those who aren't it could be a great introduction to the Flatbush Farm Share.

Best,
Anne Pope, Founder, [Sustainable Flatbush](#) ♦



**Want to save money?
Lose weight? Have more time?
Live healthy and be happy?**

Perhaps, this manual will show you how.

This guide is not riddled with facts and figures about how you're destroying the environment. Thousands of web sites already do that, and thousands more show you how to reduce your carbon footprint for the sake of the environment.

This is different.

The focus of our program is to help you live a happier life that will result in a happier earth. And so, this manual is about you. If you haven't already registered, [sign up here](#).

Think of this guide as your personal trainer for a week. It's organized by day. You will stop consuming new goods on a Sunday, then on Monday you will stop making trash, and on Tuesday you will switch to non-carbon producing transport, etc. Each day builds on the day before, so by Friday you are not shopping for new goods, not making trash, only traveling by sustainable transportation, eating locally, using less energy, and wasting less water. We recommend reading through this guide and preparing for the experiment one week before you begin. We've offered some general ideas and resources to help guide you through each day, but don't limit yourself to what we've written. If you have great ideas about how to live lower impact, click [here](#) and share them with your fellow No Impact men and women.

The Experiment is about improving yourself, your community, and your country. In addition to changing your habits this week, we ask you to volunteer at least once for a local environmental organization and get involved in at least one of our non-partisan partners' national advocacy campaigns.

As you progress from day to day, you'll find tools we've created to connect you with other participants and help you stay motivated. You'll learn more about these inside. You can find answers to all of your questions about the week on our [website](#).

Good luck! (And please don't print this out.)



You Are Invited To The First Meeting of Hunger Advisory Board of NYC Coalition Against Hunger

Come discuss how we can work together to:

- Fight back against cuts in emergency feeding program funding and food stamps; advocate for living wage jobs; build political power for low-income New Yorkers
- Help more struggling families obtain government nutrition benefits
- Recruit more long-term volunteers, including skills-based volunteers that can help with web sites, accounting, publicity, technology, strategic planning, etc.

Anyone involved in any way with anti-hunger, anti-poverty, and nutrition programs is welcome to come at no cost. We welcome food program customers/clients, staff, and volunteers, including those involved with CSAs, food stamps outreach, and community garden programs.

Wednesday, September 14

3:30 – 5:30 p.m.

Trinity Church Office Building, Parish Room, 74 Trinity Place,
Manhattan, near many major subway lines at Wall Street and
Rector

RSVP to hungeradvisory@nyccah.org

212-825-0028, ext 215



SUBMISSIONS To contribute a regular column, article, or photograph, contact newsletter@flatbushfarmshare.com

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