

September 2, 2003

## **Food for Thought**

### **From the Fields:**

We got more than 8" of rain this August, compared to the 1" or so last year! Year -to-date we've got about an extra 10" of rain. Whereas the water-table is much improved, the lack of sunshine is definitely making itself felt in the garden. Our tomato harvest will be short-lived, with fruit rotting on the vine instead of ripening - total crop loss of about 80%. We've never seen anything like it. We planted more tomatoes than ever before, many of which were the more susceptible, tastier heirloom varieties. It's very sad.

Even the melons which we had great hopes for are rotting instead of developing delicious flavor. Summer was sort of skipped over, and all those low night time temperatures, cool, rainy days do not make for happy sun-loving crops.

The fall lettuce is going strong, and we'll have more brussels sprouts than you can shake a stick at! Apples are slowly making an appearance, but are also behind in ripening.

Edamame soybeans are coming up!

### **CrickFest Rocked!**

What a great crowd on this almost magical misty day! If you missed it this time, make sure you try to come out next year. Even the rain did not deter our wonderful Penns Valley friends, and friends from further afield, from coming out in full force and celebrating the watershed (hah - just perfect for a day SO full of water) and the abundance of local food by eating well, laughing and listening to great tunes.

Sabine and Tom

### **From Organic Consumers Association -**

Question: How is it that every industrialized nation in the world has banned Monsanto's rBGH (recombinant Bovine Growth Hormone used to increase milk production in conventional dairy hers) as unsafe, but it's legal (and unlabeled) in the United States?

Answer: In order for the FDA to determine if Monsanto's growth

hormones were safe or not, Monsanto was required to submit a scientific report on that topic. Margaret Miller, one of Monsanto's researchers put the report together. Shortly before the report submission, Miller left Monsanto and was hired by the FDA. Her first job for the FDA was to determine whether or not to approve the report she wrote for Monsanto.

In short, Monsanto approved its own report. Assisting Miller was another former Monsanto researcher, Susan Sechen. Deciding whether or not rBGH-derived milk should be labeled fell under the jurisdiction of another FDA official, Michael Taylor, who previously worked as a lawyer for Monsanto.

### **Goodies this Week:**

#### **- Tomatoes -**

Ah, poor tomatoes. An abysmal year for our favorite crop. We've never seen anything like it. Tomatoes rotting on the vines instead of ripening. Read the weather summary below, and you'll understand why. We grow a lot of heirloom varieties, which are even more susceptible to diseases, so that made the losses even greater.

Usually a bountiful crop that lasts well past the first frost. We've planted more tomato plants this year than ever before, but we'll be done with them next week - with a total crop loss of at least 80% - devastating.

#### **- Brussel Sprouts -**

Don't dread these tasting like those bitter little things you buy at the store. Fresh brussels sprouts are a favorite in our household, and we usually freeze some for the middle of winter. We've had little 4-year old dinner guests ask for seconds of those little cabbages! Clean them up a little, take a sharp knife and cut a little X in the stem end, and steam lightly. Dill, parsley and mustards are good seasonings for brussels sprouts. Just before serving, sprinkle with lemon juice.

Please don't store in fridge too long, they'll develop a very strong odor!

#### **- Sweetie Melons -**

also yearning for sun to sweeten up. Usually one of our favorite melons. We grew an awful lot of melons this year, but it just wasn't the year for them either. Another crop that loves it hot and dry, most of the melons are rotting in the field, or are just not developing any sweet flavor. Still, these sweeties are tough, and they did ripen and

slip off the vine all by themselves, so enjoy these little treats.

**- Apples -**

An assortment of earlier apples, picked a little under-ripe for those of us who do like 'em tart and crisp. Will sweeten up if stored for a few days. We also have apples specifically suited for cooking up into apple sauce (large, soft apples that cook up quickly into a flavorful sauce), so if you'd like some of those, let me know.

**- Peppers -**

great source of vitamin C, so keep eating them up in salads!

**- Potatoes -**

boy these are popular this year. We had a good potato harvest, so we're glad to have a cold-cellar full of these tasty spuds. Hmm, hmm, these are Creamy!

**- Green Beans-**

Still tasty and beautiful!

Sabine Carey

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