IN THE SPOTLIGHT

Post-Hurricane Update
We prepared for Hurricane Irene primarily by taking down our canopy tops and bringing in most of the items (bins, clippers, etc.) that might blow all over the place. We were mostly worried about wind and not the rain since we are on high, well drained ground. Luckily, the wind didn’t turn out to be too bad for us, and our topography saved us from the devastating floods that many farms experienced. Unlike many farms along the rivers in the Hudson Valley, Mohawk Valley, Vermont and other points in New York and New England, we still have crops to harvest this fall.

Even so, there are side effects of the 8+ inches of rain we had with Hurricane Irene and the 7+ inches soon after with Tropical Storm Lee. Even with our well drained soil, the plant roots were saturated for periods of time, and are worse for the wear from the lack of oxygen. Rain leaches nutrients from the soil and though we applied additional fertilizer after the storms, the plants have not had ideal nutrient availability. We couldn’t get onto the fields for a period of time so we got behind in our late fall plantings. Rain exacerbates disease, so there is a higher level of disease than usual this fall. This is all coupled with some loss from weed pressure since we were short on help to get to all
So what does this all mean for the PFP’s crops? In order to bring our broccoli in before it turns all yellow and/or black, we are picking the heads on the small size and we suggest eating them right away as they will not store for long. Most of our cabbages are quite small this year. We have to discard a large number of kale and chard leaves that have bad spots, resulting in smaller weekly harvests than usual. We have had a fair amount of rot in our leeks, though we planted a lot so hopefully we’ll still have a decent number. Several of our carrot beds were lost to weeds and most of the ones we have weren’t thinned adequately so the carrots are small and not plentiful. Some things are looking pretty good despite all the challenges though – the winter squash harvest is holding up against rot pretty well as are the potatoes we have dug so far. The fall radicchios, escarole, bok choi and radishes are looking good. We’ve had a great garlic crop this year, and a pretty steady beet supply. The parsnips are looking nice and we have a lot of lettuce coming along. The sweet potato vines still look good from the top, although we won’t really know how they did until we dig them in a few weeks. All in all, we have food – not all of the quality and quantity we planned for the fall but it was probably a record year for eggplants, peppers and melons and many other CSAs’ entire fall crop was destroyed by flood water.

So PFP will weather this major weather event without too much disruption, but not so for many other farms in the Northeast. I am thinking a lot these days about how the increase of unpredictable and severe weather will affect our food system. Much of our viable farmland is in the floodplain because when it is not flooding, floodplain soils can be very good for farming and because floodplain land is more affordable for farmers - it doesn’t have a development value since building isn’t generally allowed in the floodplain. “Upland” soils that are good for agriculture are priced at development values, making them unaffordable for farmers unless they are very rural and therefore far from direct marketing possibilities. The conservation easements that are supposed to preserve land for farming by having the owner sell the development rights to a land trust who will protect the land does not necessarily make the price of the land affordable for farmers since such land is still desirable for those who can afford estates.

What if we start having 100 year floods more often than 100 years, not to mention more hurricanes, tornados, odd frost dates, droughts and changing insect patterns? “Disaster assistance” often takes the form of low interest loans, which only serve to put farmers into debt. Crop insurance is either expensive (and also unavailable to new farm businesses) or pays out at such low rates that it isn’t worth having. The profit margins in farming are slim enough that a major loss year can put a farming business in a perilous position. The CSA idea of risk sharing is one model that addresses how farmers might be able to keep farming through the losses that happen due to weather and other unforeseen circumstances, though there is no guarantee that CSA shareholders will return after a bad season. Farmers need support to keep a farm going season after season, through good times and unexpected turns of events. Thriving local farms will provide fresh, healthy food; preserve open space; provide jobs; and build the knowledge and infrastructure needed to feed ourselves if the
day comes that we can’t rely on the majority of our food coming from elsewhere. Buying local and regionally produced food is a very important way to support local farms. We also need to encourage our conservation organizations to help farmers keep, access, and pass on farm land and to support policies that support local and regional food systems. For more information on how to support local farms affected by the flooding, please see http://www.hvfoodnetwork.com and for more information on building our regional food systems please see http://www.foodsecurity.org/ and http://www.nofany.org/

Yours in the field, Wendy

How Did You Get Interested in Farming?

By Angelea DeFelice

*How did you get interested in farming?* is one of the most frequent questions I hear from members as we weed carrots or harvest beets. The easy answer – it started with my interest in learning how to grow my own food. Which I still believe it is a critical skill that we are losing as a country. In addition, it began while living abroad, where I learned first hand how unjust the global food system is and that many of the injustices are rooted in U.S. foreign and agriculture policy. I wanted to change the food system.

The harder answer to explain to members is -- community. While living in Nicaragua I was witness to and felt part of a very strong community, something that I hadn’t experienced since I left the tight knit neighborhood that I grew up in. The more people that I spoke to and the more I read I became aware of how critical the issue of community – or lack thereof – is in the U.S. I also came to realize that agriculture can be a key element in building positive and healthy communities. So that was it, my tipping point. By being a farmer I could grow food to feed people, change the food system, and rebuild community here in the U.S.

In my second year at the PFP it has become even more clear that small scale sustainable agriculture can build a sense of community. Healthy and delicious food inspires us to cook together and to share meals together. Although obvious, this is not to be taken lightly! It is relationship building time, story time, and learning time -- connection time. Parents and children, couples, neighbors, sisters, teachers and students, friends – can come together to cook, share, and feast.
There is also an intergenerational community of farmers that the farm managers and apprentices at the PFP are part of. We observe, we learn, we share, we support each other. Personally, the farming community has allowed me to move from coast to coast and still find people that I know and connect with. They are folks that understand the rhythm of the season and the effect that is has on one’s body, life and livelihood. Farmers also share equipment, offer unused seedlings to each other and to local gardeners, and lend a hand on each others farms when large projects arise. This is community. Farming is not just a job, but for most, it is a way of life.

The PFP and its members have a particular and maybe more intentional role in building community. The PFP promotes member and community involvement in the fields where strangers or families transplant lettuce side by side. The Pick-Your-Own fields are where members of all ages harvest, taste fruit right off the plant, watch dragonflies, and enjoy being in a shared space together. There are member potlucks, gardens to volunteer in, and committees and events where people get involved. Every year members of the farm open their homes to apprentices who need a place to live for the season. Local farmers, shoppers and previous CSA members come together every week at the PFP managed farmer’s market, sharing recipes, stories about the recent storms, and what their plans are for the weekend– in short, building relationships. Through the Food Share Program hundreds of people in Poughkeepsie have access to fresh, healthy vegetables that they otherwise would not. Countless groups of youth come to the PFP to experience the farm, learn, and even volunteer in the fields.

The farm has become the physical location where we gather as well as the reason we come together. It has become a place and a way to acknowledge and build on shared values. When I started farming I envisioned my own farm being just that… and I still do.

GROWING OUR COMMUNITY

**Soup-A-Bowl 2011~A Much-Enjoyed Success!**

The community came together to make the 4th annual Soup-A-Bowl great! The event raised more than $7,000 make healthy food and opportunities to learn about food and farming more broadly available in our community, Soup-A-Bowl makes 25% of the 60 tons of food we harvest available to low-income folks (subsidies, donations and purchased with public assistance programs like food stamps) and provides scholarship funding for farm visit experiences to local and urban youth.

Your support helps us, each year, to:

- Donate 10 tons of vegetables and fruit to soup kitchens, food pantries and shelters
- Educate more than 500 youths about food and farming
- Make 25% of the 60 tons of produce we harvest available to our low-income neighbors
Train 5 to 7 future farmers in sustainable agriculture

Soup-A-Bowl is possible through the hard work and generous support of many, many individuals. A committee of volunteers lends their time and skills to plan and carry out this event. If you are interested in getting involved with this dynamic group, contact susan@farmproject.org (473-1415) to learn more about the many different kinds of tasks. We are especially seeking someone who likes to organize and coordinate a team on a multi-faceted project to follow in Sophia Hsieh's footsteps (thank you for all your work, Sophia!)

Best of all, Soup-A-Bowl was fun! Here are some thoughts shared by attendees:

This was the first Soup-A-Bowl I could attend, and I loved it! Such a positive, nourishing event for 9/11. Delicious food for the present and hope for the future with all the wonderful young and very young folks there.

Barbara Lindsey

The Soup-A-Bowl this year was the best ever!--KUDOS.
Linda Gaines

The mood of the crowd this year was really jubilant!
Susan Tveekrem

...the soups were plentiful and delicious!!
Beverly Allyn

Thanks for putting on such a great event. Everything seemed to go so well and smoothly...no long lines, tasty soups and beautiful bowls!

Robin McAdoo

The volunteer soup servers second shift had fun! Congrats on a successful event!

Lynn Bartolotta

I really enjoyed helping out and am looking forwarding to doing it again next year.

Alicia Dean

I am so happy that I attended another of your events! You really know how to throw a great party. Everything worked, from soup to nuts! The space, pottery, soups, raffle,
silent auction all was fun. I will make this a yearly outing. Thanks!

Rhonni Hallman

I had a great time, and am very proud to have been a part of all this! We hope our music was a good addition to the event; if there are any comments, we’d love to hear them so we can do better in the future. Hooray for the PFP!

Susie Deane for the Deane Machine

I had a wonderful time even before we swept the prizes! I am delighted to hear that it raised so much! That is really wonderful and for such an amazingly worthy cause!

Jane Livingston

I feel blessed to be part of such a warm, creative, generous and thoughtful community. The celebration of people connecting to each other through the earth was renewing and inspiring. The staff and the volunteers are to be commended and thanked for giving us such a wonderful gift.

Alan Berkowitz

I was impressed by the great job the organizers did and what a good turnout there was on a weekend when there were three other food festivals going on in Poughkeepsie and nearby towns.

Joan Magnuson

I loved the Soup-A-Bowl! Delicious soup, wonderful people, lovely view, good music. What a great job you all did. I really enjoyed making bowls and am already planning to make more for next year. Oh, one complaint, I did not win the raffle but will try again next year. I wish I could come up with brilliant suggestions but to me it was already brilliant.
Angela Colclough

Ken and I had a wonderful time. The event is another wonderful way the PFP enables us to connect good food with community. We thank those who worked on this event.

Bonnie Scheer

If you have the opportunity, let our sponsors and our food, pottery, raffle and auction donors know that you appreciate their generosity in support of the PFP!

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Meredith's Bread
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RaeRae's
Soul Dog
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Twisted Soul
Vassar College Dining Services

Live Music
Susie Deane and the Deane Machine

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Sophia Hsieh
Women's Studio Workshop
Zinnia Gutowski
Pottery Donors
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Instructors Eileen Sackman and Amie Laino

Angela Colclough
Lia Harris
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Christine Owen
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Hudson Valley Pottery
Kaete Brittin Shaw
Laura Keller
Leigh Williams
Liz Lawrence
Polly Myhrum Pottery
Pottery Mountain
Smitri Kapuria
Stone Window Gallery
Women’s Studio Workshop

Farm Fresh Food at the Market in October!

Photo credit: Franc Palaia, of sidewalk chalk art from a farmers’ market event this season

October 28th~the last day of the Poughkeepsie Farmers' Market~is Customer Appreciation Day! Come early to make sure you one of the first 100 customers to get a
free market shopping bag! All the vendors will be in Pulaski Park...come out to support our local producers, get the freshest food available, and stock up for winter! And enjoy a walk on the Walkway, a block away, afterwards ~ the fall leaves are displaying their colors…

Here are some more updates:

- We are gathering input to help us plan the market in 2012. Whether or not you’ve had the chance to shop at the market this year, please take a few minutes to fill out this survey: https://docs.google.com/spreadsheet/ccc?key=0AddDw5x昼16Vi1jMWREcFEyZVYxQ3IOWWc6MQ
- If you use food stamps (SNAP/EBT) or know someone who does, let them know that New York Fresh Connect Checks are available at the market! For every $5 E.B.T. purchase, you’ll get a $2 Fresh Check to spend at any vendor that is registered with the Farmers’ Market Nutrition Program (fresh fruit & vegetable vendors). The checks are not limited - so the more you spend, the more Fresh Connect Checks you receive.
- Last, but certainly not least, we’d like to take this opportunity to thank the sponsors who make the farmers’ market possible, including Hudson Valley Office Furniture, Hudson Valley Federal Credit Union and the City of Poughkeepsie. More information on sponsorship is available on our website or by contacting us.
- Individuals can also support our farmers’ market with a tax-deductible donation of $20 (or more) – any amount helps! Your support helps the Poughkeepsie Farm Project bring this market to our community to provide fresh, locally produced products from local farms. Click here to make your donation today!

**Poughkeepsie High School Students Compete in CIA's School Lunch Challenge**

On Saturday, September 24th, high school students involved in the Poughkeepsie Farm Project’s City Seeds program competed in a School Lunch Challenge at the Culinary Institute of America. Each teen was placed on a team with Culinary Arts students. The teams competed to plan and prepare a tasty school lunch that met the required nutritional guidelines and fit the budget.

The judges, including high school students, CIA chefs and special guests of the CIA's
sustainability conference, such as Tim Cipriano (director of New Haven school food service program) and Eric Steinman (editor of Edible Hudson Valley) rated the meals on presentation and taste. After receiving their chef’s hats and aprons, the high school students joined their teams and headed into the kitchen to claim their workspaces and begin the four-hour cooking session. Knowing that the CIA’s nutritionist would be evaluating the meals, the teams paid particular attention to the inclusion of brightly colored vegetables and other nutrient-packed foods. The City Seeds students were important members of the teams; they learned new kitchen skills such as how to bake bread for bread bowls in which to serve pumpkin apple soup, and took on mundane tasks like grating lots of cheese for butternut squash macaroni and cheese. Each of the four meals was delicious, from creative twists like the frittata pizza to the simple grilled boneless turkey thighs. At the end of the afternoon, the winners of the competition were announced. Winning both first place and ‘people’s choice was Jessica Santos’ team which made the apple-cranberry turkey salad, pumpkin apple soup served in a homemade whole grain bread bowl, and an apple cranberry crisp made with the inside of the bread bowl transformed into the crisp topping. The students seemed to thoroughly enjoy the experience; they worked hard, learned new skills, and had fun. In fact, during the van ride home, Shanice Baugh exclaimed, “This was the best day of my life!” The City Seeds program, in which several interns drawn from Poughkeepsie Middle and High Schools gain new knowledge and leadership skills through gardening, cooking and other after school activities twice each week, began in the fall of 2010 and is now in its second year.

GET INVOLVED

**Poughkeepsie Plenty Survey THIS Weekend**

Poughkeepsie Plenty (formerly known as Building Bridges to a Hunger-Free Poughkeepsie) is seeking volunteers for our survey weekend on October 1st and 2nd! Come either or both days to be trained in survey administration and head out in pairs (via the Poughkeepsie bus, your own transportation or on foot) to administer surveys door-to-door at selected addresses for a few hours.

This is part of a community food assessment studying and creating action plans on food security in the City of Poughkeepsie. If you are interested in learning more about food in Poughkeepsie and helping to improve the food system, consider coming to help out! Contact Leonard Nevarez (lenevarez@vassar.edu) for more information.

**Thanks to the Herb Garblers!**

Thanks so much to the many volunteers who came to our Herb Garbling Party on Wednesday the 21st and helped us get our herbal tea prepared in one quick, fun, good smelling evening! We will be finishing our lip balms, salves, and tinctures soon and plan to have all these items for sale at CSA distribution within a few weeks.
SAVE THE DATE

Soap Box on the Barge
Poughkeepsie 20/20 will present the Poughkeepsie Soap Box Project this Saturday and Sunday, October 1 from 12-3 pm and 2 from 12-4 pm, at Waryas Park in Poughkeepsie. Tapping into the diverse population of Poughkeepsie and surrounding areas, the Soap Box Project will give residents and stakeholders of all ages and backgrounds a place to voice their vision for our community on a range of topics, including housing, food, arts, transportation, jobs, the environment, youth opportunities and more.

The short statements -- made on a real soap box -- will be filmed by the Children’s Media Project. As election season nears, the Soap Box Project will be used to inform candidates, along with educators, philanthropists and other community leaders, on the issues of importance to community residents. Children and adults are invited to participate. Members of the Half Moon Theater, as well as members of Poughkeepsie 20/20 will be on hand to encourage participation and dialogue.

Filming will take place on both days on the OurHudson Barge. Formerly the Pennsylvania Railroad Barge No. 399, this historic vessel has been re-born as a floating town hall, exhibition space and movie theater. The barge, which will tour several Hudson River cities over throughout the fall, is the latest phase of the OurHudson project, a broad-based effort to restore the economic vitality of our riverfront towns while improving the health of the river and protecting our valley’s world-renowned scenic beauty.

The Soap Box Project is an initiative of Poughkeepsie 20/20. Poughkeepsie 20/20 is the collaborative effort of a group of community leaders and activists who see the need for a guiding vision for Poughkeepsie’s future. 20/20 refers both to clarity of vision, as well the year 2020. Over the next months, the group will work to set goals to improve quality of life in Poughkeepsie by the year 2020, and will work to rally support from residents, businesses, elected officials, and others to achieve those goals.

Winter Farmers' Market at Vassar College
A small but friendly farmers market is open to the public on the third Saturday of each month from December to April at Vassar College. The market runs from 10am-1pm, and vendors sell delicious local food items such as local cheeses, root vegetables, grass-fed beef, pork, chicken, baked goods, and more. The market is sponsored by Winter Sun Farms, and held at the College Center. Check it out this winter!

FEATURED VEGETABLE AND RECIPES
Leeks

The leek is a relative of the onion and garlic family, the allium family, and thus exhibits the same anti-fungal, anti-bacterial, anti-cancer benefits. Leeks are high in dietary fiber, folate, manganese, iron, magnesium, and vitamin A, C, K, and B6. Though less research has been done on the health benefits of leeks, it is proposed that leeks must share with onions and garlic their effects on certain health problems such as atherosclerosis, type 2 diabetes, obesity, rheumatoid arthritis, and allergic airway inflammation.

In choosing leeks when shopping, they should be firm and bright green at the top with white bases. Leeks larger than 1 1/2 in diameter tend to be more fibrous and not as easy to cook with. Store leeks in the fridge uncut.

Image Attribution

Creamy Leek Soup

Summary

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Description
A warm bowl of comfort

Ingredients
8 leeks
1 onion (chopped)
1 carrot (chopped)
2 celery ribs (chopped)
1 t salt
1/2 t black pepper
1/2 c butter (1 stick)
1 potato (small)
1/2 c dry white wine
3 c chicken stock
3 c water
1 bay leaf
1 1/2 c flat leaf parsley
1/4 c flour
1/2 c heavy cream

Instructions
Preparation
Wash sliced leeks in a large bowl of cold water, agitating them, then lift out and drain well in a colander. Cook leeks, onion, carrot, celery, salt, and pepper in 4 tablespoons butter in a 5- to 6-quart heavy pot over moderate heat, stirring occasionally, until softened, about 8 minutes. Peel potato and cut into 1/2-inch cubes, then add to onion mixture along with wine, stock, water, and bay leaf. Bring to a boil, then reduce heat and simmer, partially covered, until vegetables are tender, about 15 minutes. Stir in parsley and simmer soup, uncovered, 5 minutes. Discard bay leaf and keep soup at a bare simmer. Melt remaining 4 tablespoons butter in a 1-quart heavy saucepan over moderate heat, then add flour and cook roux, whisking, until golden, about 3 minutes. Remove from heat and add 2 cups simmering stock (from soup), whisking vigorously (mixture will be thick), then whisk mixture into remaining soup and return to a simmer, whisking. Blend soup in 4 batches in a blender until smooth (use caution when blending hot liquids), about 1 minute per batch, transferring to a 3- to 4-quart saucepan. Reheat if necessary, then season with salt and pepper. Beat cream in a bowl with an electric mixer at medium speed until it almost forms soft peaks. Serve soup topped with cream.

Mama Voula's Spanakopita
Description
A Greek treat!

Ingredients
- 3 T olive oil (preferably Greek extra virgin, plus more for brushing)
- 6 leeks (white and light green parts chopped and well rinsed)
- 4 garlic (cloves, minced)
- 2 1/2 lb spinach (baby leaves, rinsed and dried)
- 1/2 t black pepper (freshly ground)
- 2 c feta cheese (preferably Greek, crumbled)
- 1/2 c dill (fresh, finely chopped)
- 1/2 c mint (fresh, finely chopped)
- 3 eggs (lightly beaten)
- 2 filo sheets or puff pastry (thawed but kept chilled)

Instructions
Preheat the oven to 350°F. Place a large skillet over medium-high heat and coat with the 3 tablespoons of oil. When the oil is hazy, add the leeks and garlic; cook and stir until fragrant and very soft, about 4 minutes. Add the spinach in handfuls, folding the leaves under with a spoon as you add each batch. Let the spinach wilt and cook down before adding more. Once all the spinach is in the pan, season with the pepper. Remove from the heat and transfer the spinach mixture to a colander over the sink. Using the back of a spoon, gently press out all of the excess liquid. Set aside to cool; the filling needs to cool down a bit to prevent the dough from becoming soggy. Once the mixture is cool, add the feta, dill, mint, and eggs. Fold the ingredients together until well combined.

Brush the bottom and sides of a 9-by-13-inch baking dish with oil. Working with 1 sheet at a time, lay the dough on a lightly floured surface and roll it out slightly to fit the pan. Line the bottom of the dish with the first piece of dough, pressing into the corners. Trim off any excess with a paring knife. Spread the spinach filling evenly over the dough. Cover with the second sheet of dough, trimming around the edges of the dish. Brush the top with oil.

Bake until the top is puffed and golden brown, about 30 to 35 minutes. Let stand for 10 minutes before cutting into squares. Serve warm or at
**MISCELLANEOUS**

**Eat Local All Year Long with a Winter Share**

Winter Sun Farms is once again selling winter shares of locally grown veggies and berries that have been carefully frozen so you can eat local all winter long. Registration is online ([http://csa.farmigo.com/join/wintersunfarms/winter2011-2012](http://csa.farmigo.com/join/wintersunfarms/winter2011-2012)), and pick-ups are third Saturdays from December through April at the Vassar College Center from 10am-1pm. Price is $122 (4 Month Share) and $153 (5 Month Share). Support your local farms and enjoy a variety of fantastic local produce this winter! [www.wintersunfarms.com](http://www.wintersunfarms.com)

**Just Coffee and Green Teen Salsa for Sale at CSA Distributions**

We have reordered! All the Just Coffee options listed below are now available at the PFP CSA distributions in the distribution room. This coffee is 100% fair trade and organic purchased from growers cooperatives in Central and South America and Africa. For more information visit [http://www.justcoffee.coop/](http://www.justcoffee.coop/)

We have several types including:
- **Gumutindo AA**: Dark roasted, fairtrade, shade grown, AA grade coffee from the Gumutindo grower cooperative in Uganda.
- **Decaf Peru**: Dark roasted, popular decaf coffee.
- **Bike Fuel**: This lovely blend combines the chocolaty smoothness of our light Bolivian coffee from AIPEP, with the smoky richness of our Super Dark from Chiapas, Mexico.
- **Revolution Roast**: A dark roast of coffee from the AIPEP Co-op in Bolivia.
- **Yirgacheffe**: A light roast, from the Oromia Grower Cooperative in Yirgacheffe Ethiopia.
- **El Corozon**: One of Just Coffee’s most popular blends of medium roasted Nicaraguan Le FEM, and dark roasted Ugandan

We also have **salsa for sale**, made by the youth from [Green Teen Beacon](http://www.greenteenbeacon.org). Green Teen works with teens in Beacon to grow vegetables, learn culinary skills, and help one of their partnering farms, Common Ground, deliver produce within the Beacon community through their mobile market- Common Greens. At the end of the summer, the Green Teens work hard to produce a salsa from their own recipe, using local ingredients - many of which they grow themselves.