

# Monroe Family Organics

## CSA Newsletter

SEPTEMBER 2, 2012

Hello everyone! I hope you are enjoying the holiday weekend and spending some good quality time with your friends and family!

### Farm Update

This last week was a little warmer and dryer so we started irrigating quite a bit again. There have been a few more insects that have started to come in because of the dry weather, like some aphids on the kale and Mexican bean beetles on some of the green bean plants. So far we have been able to keep the populations under control with the Pyganic, which is an organic pest control spray. The pigs have been very muddy again as they cool off from the heat. They have dug out a pretty significant mud pit that we fill with water every few days. September is a fairly busy month for us because we will be still seeding in the field, harvest is at its peak, and we will start building the two new coldframes shortly. Fortunately, we were able to get away for a few days this weekend to go visit Michele's parents, which was very relaxing!

This week we will have extra basil for sale for \$10 per pound and canning tomatoes for \$12 per half bushel.



*The CSA is still going strong, and will continue until our last drop-off on October*



### What to Expect in This Week's Share

- ❖ Sweet corn, watermelon, or tomatoes
- ❖ Broccoli, beets, or potatoes
- ❖ Beans or kale
- ❖ Green peppers or onions
- ❖ Cherry tomatoes or eggplant
- ❖ Salad mix or head lettuce
- ❖ Cilantro, basil, garlic, or parsley

*Have questions or comments? Email us at [mfororganics@yahoo.com](mailto:mfororganics@yahoo.com) or call Michele at*

*517-896-6884.*

## The Benefits of Pastured Eggs

We have been hearing for years that the food in the supermarkets has been becoming increasingly less nutrient-dense over the years, and I absolutely believe that this is true. Many farm production systems emphasize quantity over quality because this provides much higher profit margins, but the result is that meats, grains, vegetables, and dairy products have provided less and less of the most important nutrients for nourishing the human body. Eggs are a very healthy food and they should include a lot of important nutrients we need. However, eggs have also followed the trend of lower nutrient density. Even the store's organic eggs and most of their cage free eggs actually have a negligible nutritional difference from the eggs of conventionally raised chickens. How can this be? The main reason is that many of these organic and cage free systems still do not allow the chickens to follow their natural instincts and have the diverse diet they need to thrive. They may be slightly better for the chickens in that they are not in small cages, but their diet is little improved. Even some pastured systems, while better than conventional systems, have the chickens on dirt instead of green pasture. At our farm we pasture our chickens and feed them a complete organic feed ration, but the most important difference is that they run around on green pasture. They get a varied buffet of different types of green plants and insects. We even see them eating an occasional field mouse or frog. The chickens get to express their natural instincts and are able to find what their bodies need. So does our pastured system actually produce a nutritionally better egg? Here is the breakdown of some of the important nutrient differences for our bodies that were found for pastured egg systems:



*Our eggs are beautiful and brown on the outside, and they have dark orange-yellow yolks inside.*



*Our chickens run around on green pasture eating plants, insects, and the occasional mouse or frog. Here they are pecking at a leftover tomato.*

Vitamin A: 40-67% more than conventional systems

Vitamin E: 200% more than conventional systems

Omega 3 Fatty Acids: 250-400% more than conventional systems

Cholesterol: 67-75% less than conventional systems

The article from which we acquired the statistics is found on [greenliving.nationalgeographic.com](http://greenliving.nationalgeographic.com). There is also another very interesting article that actually shows even greater differences when the author acquired eggs from a local source like our farm. The link is <http://wholehealthsource.blogspot.com/2009/05/pastured-eggs.html>. We love our pastured eggs and have been eating a lot of them lately. In the end our system of raising them costs more, and that is why we have to charge \$4.00 a dozen versus the cheaper price you find for conventional eggs in the store. In this case though, you really do get what you pay for, and the hens are happier for it as well. It is easy to fall into a "more is better" mindset, where we purchase larger quantities of inexpensive, nutritionally lacking, comparatively flavorless food. Many of us grew up in families where stretching the food dollar was paramount, or just so ingrained in our culture that we didn't question it. Instead in our family we try to focus on quality and eating what is really delicious, and our focus has evolved from just quantity to nutrient dense and delicious quality. The eggs are part of this refocus of the way we eat. Life is too short to eat lackluster, mediocre food, because for us good food has added a lot more to our quality of life.



*This week's recipe is great for breakfast or any other meal, and it is really easy!*

### **Recipe: Eggs Fried with Tomato in Bell Pepper Ring**

This recipe comes from the website [www.enjoyyourcooking.com](http://www.enjoyyourcooking.com).

#### **Ingredients:**

2 eggs  
1 tomato  
1 bell pepper  
Butter  
Salt and ground black pepper to taste  
Leaf of fresh dill, parsley, basil, or cilantro for decoration

#### **Directions:**

Rinse bell pepper, remove stem and seeds and cut 2 big rings about 1/3" thick. Warm up skillet over moderate low heat and grease it with butter, add pepper rings to the skillet and fry on one side for about 3 minutes. Slice 2 thin circles of tomato and position them in the middle of the bell pepper rings. Fry for 1-2 minutes more (btw, you will not need the remaining part of the bell pepper or tomato, you can use them for decoration however). Carefully crack an egg into each of the bell pepper rings right over the tomato. Season with salt and ground black pepper. Cook eggs until cooked though the way you like (use lid if you want them medium or well done). Turn heat off, carefully remove egg white around bell pepper rings with spatula, decorate with fresh herbs and serve with toast.

*If you have ideas for an article, or you would like to contribute a recipe to a future newsletter, please email [mforganics@yahoo.com](mailto:mforganics@yahoo.com) or call Michele at 517-896-6884.*