

# Monroe Family Organics

## CSA Newsletter

OCTOBER 16, 2011

Hello everyone! This will be the last week for most of you of our CSA program, and we hope everyone had a good experience with our CSA this season. There is a short list of survey questions that I hope you will have a chance to fill out. We will be using your feedback to help us plan for the next season and make future years an even better experience. We really appreciate your membership in our farm and are glad that we made the CSA the main part of our farming operation.

### Farm Update

Well, hopefully not everything will have blown away by the end of the weekend! This week we put a couple of low tunnels up over some spinach and lettuce for salad mix. We also planted more of the coldframes with salad mix. The pigs are really eating and rooting around like crazy so we moved them to new pasture, and they already had half of it turned up by the time I came back the next day. Most crops have really slowed their growth but the carrots seem to just keep growing no matter what the weather does. Like I talked about in one of the previous weeks, the root crops keep storing up energy in the root as they prepare for the winter. The carrots especially should keep growing for a few weeks yet. Our winter radishes were planted a little late, but at least they will be ready in time for this week. Most of you have probably never had them, but they are actually a mild radish with a dark pink interior that is very good for fresh salads and other fresh dishes. If kept in

the bag, they should last for several weeks like other root vegetables such as carrots or beets. As with the other root crops, they last much longer if you take off the tops.

After this last week of CSA we will still make our remaining vegetables available to you if you want to pick up from our farm. We will email you a price list and what is available each week and you can pick up your veggies on Mondays between 4 and 6. We will have a \$5.00 minimum order and we are about 2-3 miles west outside of town on the corner of M46 and Ennis road.

If you already know you are planning on signing up for next year, you can let us know by December 15<sup>th</sup> and get the same season price as this year. Our CSA memberships are going to cost \$5 more next year, but anyone who signs up and sends a check by December 15<sup>th</sup> will get next year's membership for this year's price.



*These low tunnels protect lettuce and spinach from wind damage, which is essential when the temperatures get cold.*

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

*517-896-6884.*

## ○ The End of the Season ○

We are starting to come to the end of the season. The weather is now uncomfortably cold and there will be harder and harder frosts. What happens now in the life of the farm? Now we concentrate on cleanup and getting old crop residue turned under to prepare the land for next season's crops. The plastic mulch that has kept the soil warm and the weeds down all season will be pulled out. The coldframes will be worked on to keep the remaining crops as warm and protected as possible. Irrigation lines and equipment will be moved out of the fields. Pigs will be well fed until they are finally butchered around the first of December. Then comes the planning process; first the financial planning, and then the tweaking of our farm systems so we can find the best way to make things work together in the field. For our family it will be a chance to have more time together since family time is not very plentiful during the season. Michele will also likely substitute teach some during the winter and Fred will look for some part-time work. We are tired now after a good season that produced a plentiful harvest. However, we look forward to next season and the possibilities it has for us to improve what we do on the farm. It was definitely a risk for us to move back from stable jobs out of state to start our small farming operation here back in my hometown. The response to our farm from the community has been outstanding this first year and we are very grateful for all of you who have been a part of it. Thanks again, and we'll see you at the drop-off.



*This spinach (above) and fennel (below) will both be a part of this week's shares.*





*This head lettuce is ready to harvest and will be in the shares this week.*

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

- ❖ Broccoli, Brussels sprouts, cooking spinach, or fennel
- ❖ Cherry tomatoes, tomatoes, cooking greens mix, or a bagged option
- ❖ Carrots or turnips
- ❖ Beets
- ❖ Head lettuce, salad mix, or baby spinach
- ❖ Cabbage, winter radishes, or hot peppers
- ❖ Green onions
- ❖ Dill, parsley, arugula, cilantro, or Swiss chard

### **Recipe- Beet Bundt Cake**

This recipe came from [www.allrecipes.com](http://www.allrecipes.com).

I know some people are running out of things to do with beets (indeed, even I am getting a little tired of them), so I wanted something new and different, and this recipe looks really fun!

#### **Ingredients**

- 1 cup butter or margarine, softened, divided
- 1 1/2 cups packed dark brown sugar

- 3 eggs
- 4 (1 ounce) squares semisweet chocolate
- 2 cups pureed cooked beets
- 1 teaspoon vanilla extract
- 2 cups all-purpose flour
- 2 teaspoons baking soda
- 1/4 teaspoon salt
- confectioners' sugar

#### **Directions**

In a mixing bowl, cream 3/4 cup butter and brown sugar. Add eggs; mix well. Melt chocolate with remaining butter; stir until smooth. Cool slightly. Blend chocolate mixture, beets and vanilla into the creamed mixture (mixture will appear separated). Combine flour, baking soda and salt; add to the creamed mixture and mix well. Pour into a greased and floured 10-in. fluted tube pan. Bake at 375 degrees F for 45-55 minutes or until a toothpick inserted near the center comes out clean. Cool in pan 10 minutes before removing to a wire rack. Cool completely. Before serving, dust with confectioners' sugar.



*Beet Bundt Cake*

*(Picture from [www.allrecipes.com](http://www.allrecipes.com))*

*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.*