

Celebrating  
25 years of  
CSA growing!

# BROOKFIELD FARM SHOPTALK

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Amherst, MA 01004

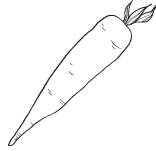
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September 22, 2011  
Distribution Week #16

## WHAT'S NEW THIS WEEK

### Flavor Roots

*Daikon Radish:* This white cylindrical root is a staple of Asian cooking. It is excellent pickled or prepared with vinegar and can be eaten raw or cooked.



*"German Extra Hardy" Garlic:* This is seed that we got from our past apprentice Chris Babis in 2008. Big white bulbs with excellent flavor. This garlic is fully dried, so if you don't eat it this week, it will store well in a cool dry spot.

### WHAT'S ON THE WAY

CARROTS  
GREEN CABBAGE

### BULK PRODUCE

RED POTATOES: \$1/LB  
GREEN & TOSCANO  
KALE: \$2/LB

## WHAT'S HAPPENING ON THE FARM

### No Drama. Time To Clean Up.

How sweet it is to have been burned enough times to know not to put my finger on the stove again! This was victory tinged only with the bitter taste of past defeats. But when that forecast rolled in on Friday afternoon to finally let us know the bad news ("frost advisory for tonight!") we were secure in the knowledge that we had spent our entire week knowing this would happen.

In years past, at that point, I made early Sunday morning call to my neighbors, I begged my wife and kids to work until dark, I even cajoled entire pig roasts to go lend a hand and cover the squash before being ruined by frost. Not this time. When the forecast finally came around to reality, we finished our morning harvest, ate lunch, and went to the field to seal the deal. We made quick work of the last 3500 lbs of pie pumpkins and buttercup squash and then went to the potato field to dig a row of spuds so we'd have enough for the Saturday distribution. Then, Tobin set up the irrigation in peppers, while Kerry and (visitor) Sophie grabbed some row covers, and Pete worked the forklift to place the last bins in to the greenhouse. We all met in the lower field to cover up the edamame and green beans. By 5pm, we convened on the porch, put our feet up, and readied ourselves for the cold.

By 3am, the temps dipped into the low 30s. Tobin woke up at 4am to start the irrigation in the peppers (water keeps the frost off), and when the rest of us got to the farm shop to set it up at 6am, there was ice on the truck windshields, but none in the fields. 33F. Still, and all, the squash was tucked in at 50F in the greenhouse. Stored for the winter.

## Winter Shares Now Available

*Eat local vegetables all winter long!*

Pick up the signup sheet at the Farm Shop or go to our website, to get information and purchase a winter share.

## When Does Regular Distribution End?

We'll should have beautiful crops and continue the same schedule thru Thanksgiving

## When Can I Renew My Regular Share?

*Next Week!*

We'll be giving you a renewal form at the farm or sending it in the mail (if we miss you!).

## Hmong-Style Daikon and Beef

1 tbsp veg oil  
1/2 c chopped leek  
2 cloves garlic  
1/2 lb round steak  
1 c sliced daikon  
3 tbsp chopped cilantro or basil or mint  
soy sauce  
pepper  
hot cooked rice  
Hmong Hot Dipping Sauce

Heat a wok or skillet over high heat for several minutes. Add oil and leeks, stir-fry for 2 min. Add steak and garlic and stir-fry until mostly brown - 2-3 min. Add 1/2 c water. When it comes to a boil, stir in the daikon. Simmer until tender - 3-5 min. Stir in herbs. Season to taste with soy sauce and pepper. Serve with rice and dipping sauce. 2 servings.

*From 'Asparagus to Zucchini' a great reference for seasonal eating available at the Farm Shop.*

And now? Well, there's a lot of food, but there's no more "danger" out there. It's just harvest and clean up from here until Thanksgiving. So we've been moving at a somewhat less frenetic pace and just cleaning up everything - weedy lettuce beds, spent melon & onion fields, and damp root cellars. Turning old fields over and planting winter cover crops (see reverse). And every once in a while, just for fun, we walk into the greenhouse and pat our curing squash and drying onions. A good week.

We hope you enjoy the harvest,

Farmer Dan  
(for Karen, Abbe, Kerry, Erin, Pete, and Tobin)

## HOW WE FARM

### Cover Cropping

One of the ways we fertilize is through the use of fall sown "cover crops" which feed the soil through biological means. These plants will build up nitrogen, minerals, and organic matter in the soil. This is one way that we can continue to grow vegetables without using chemical fertilizers. In addition these crops hold the soil in place, keeping erosion due to wind and water to a minimum.

We spin on the seed (oats, peas, vetch, rye, red clover) with a broadcast spreader and then lightly harrow the seeds, which incorporates the seed into the first few inches of soil.

Oats help to bring up minerals from the sub-soil and convert them into a useable form for plants. Oats do not over-winter but begin to decompose in early winter, releasing nutrients into the soil which are in a form that crops can use as food in the spring. Vetch (a legume in the bean/pea family) and red clover host a bacteria on their roots (azotobacter) which takes nitrogen from the air and makes it into a form that plants can use. These legumes over-winter nicely, growing back again in the spring when it is disked into the soil releasing all of their usable nitrogen (and other minerals) to feed our crops.

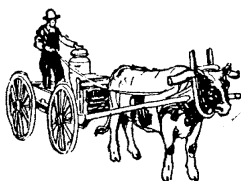
Some areas will be planted to vegetables again next year and some cover crops will be left to grow through the Spring and Summer. When a cover crop is left in the ground to grow the following year it is called a fallow crop. By leaving our land fallow (not planting a crop for human consumption) we give the soil a chance to build nutrients and soil life. By rotating our crops around the fields we ensure that all of our land will be fallow every five years or so. This is one way our soil is replenished and can continue to allow us to harvest 250,000 lbs. of produce from our farm each year.

There's still tons (literally!) of food in the fields - leeks, carrots, potatoes, squash, celery, lettuce, broccoli, cabbage, kale, and collards - but September marks the beginning of winter preparation and the last chance for us to plant our leguminous cover crops to prepare our land for next year.

## KEEPING UP WITH THE TIMES

### Brookfield Farm Facebook Page Launched!

Yes, if you like Facebook, you can now find Brookfield Farm's very own page. Why would we do this? We have almost no idea! But a few of our shareholders suggested it, and one (Erica Carlson) even volunteered to set it up for us. So, considering we have very open minds and hearts, and that it might be useful we thought, why not?! We will be posting pictures and our weekly newsletter there. And if you want to "Like" us there (and everywhere else) then you'll get our updates. You can also post recipes, thoughts, impressions, and who knows what else there. here's the link - <http://www.facebook.com/pages/Brookfield-Farm/157335394341934?sk=wall> - See you there!



## WHAT'S NEW

### Solar Photovoltaic Project Update

When I last reported on this project in late June, we had just installed our new 4.1 kwh system on our roof and were nearing completion of the fundraising to make this project happen. Since then, not only did we meet our fundraising goal, but we also receiving an additional USDA grant for this project. This has left us in the incredible position of actually having *too much money!* As a result, we asked some of our donors if they would be willing to re-allocate their donations to allow us to pursue other alternative energy projects around the farm. They gave us a resounding "yes!" So, we are now not only generating electricity from our new PV system, but we are also looking into solar hot water and other projects that we might pursue in the near future. We will keep you all posted on these projects as they develop.

Many thanks again go to our great grant writer (and board member) Jen Veshia and her (and our) able assistant Kerry Manire, Also to our installer Chris Kilfoyle who designed and installed a fully-functional and now totally operational system for our barn. And, to all of the donors to this project who have contributed large and small to continue to make Brookfield Farm a place of inspiration for now and into the future!



**3rd Annual**  
**5K for Farmland**  
**& Farmer's Market Festival**  
**Sunday, October 23, 10 am**  
**Walk, Run or Shop to Save Local Farmland!**  
Proceeds Benefit Kestrel Land Trust

Special Visit From  
The WoW Express!  
"Watershed On Wheels"  
Silvio O. Conte National  
Fish & Wildlife Refuge's  
Traveling Exhibit

Fast, Flat 5K Route Past Scenic Farmland  
Hadley's West Street Common

Register at [kestreltrust.org](http://kestreltrust.org) or [sugarloafmac.org](http://sugarloafmac.org)  
Advance Registration Fee: \$20 • Day Of Fee: \$22 • Family (2 parents plus 2 kids): \$40