IN THE SPOTLIGHT

Early Spring Update
I must confess that the oddly warm weather through most of March did make me at least think about getting an early start on planting this season. On balance I’m glad we did not go that way, as weather has turned rather more seasonable this week. Many people have asked us whether the unusually warm weather has affected the farm. While I don’t think we’ll really know how the mild winter plays out for quite some time (I have heard many people “in the industry” speculate that the mild winter will have killed off fewer pests than usual) we haven’t seen any harm done yet. The garlic is up and growing much earlier than usual. I was a little worried about the particularly cold morning of March 27th, but it doesn’t seem to have bothered the garlic. I would be much more worried if I ran an orchard. I think many fruit trees were blooming weeks
ahead of schedule this year. Generally speaking the further advanced the flower buds the more susceptible to cold temperatures they are. I really hope we have the more frost sensitive cherries, plums and peaches in the Hudson Valley this year, but I wouldn’t be surprised if we don’t.

Right on schedule, we did put the first seeds of the season in the ground today—two varieties of sugar snap peas are now nestled in their earthy bed, waiting for a couple of inches of snow to moisten the soil enough to germinate. The first round of transplanted crops is not far behind, also on schedule. The greenhouse went from over-crowded to spacious in short order as we opened up the cold-frame extension of the greenhouse and filled it full of onion seedlings. It will still be awhile before the onions are ready to plant, but we do hope to plant a number of other things next week. Chard, beets, fennel, radicchio, escarole, lettuce, kale, collards and cabbage seedlings have all been set outside to “harden off”—make the transition between the sheltered greenhouse and the exposed field. Kasey and Lisa cut new pieces of row cover to fit over the hardening off tables to take the chill off on some of the cold nights still ahead.

Trevis has been hard at work with the frustrating task of calibrating our new drop spreader, so we apply just the right amount of soil amendments to our planting beds. The next big thing to figure out is our new transplanter. Any new piece of equipment involves a learning curve, very few of them have three comfortable looking seats hanging improbably off the back. Hopefully this one helps us get our transplants in the ground faster and more comfortably very soon, rather than leaving us frustrated and jumping up and down on our hats (and then on hands and knees putting in plants the old-fashioned way).

Yours in the field,

Asher

**Roots & Reach Conference**

**Cultivating a Sustainable Vision for the PFP**

Nearly 60 PFP stakeholders dedicated 3 days toward the end of March to attend a conference dedicated to drawing out insights to set a course to create the PFP we envision for 2027. Stakeholders included alumni/ae, Board members, education
partners, farming partners, food justice partners, shareholders, staff, Vassar College, volunteers and young people.

The title *Roots and Reach* described the conference’s work, using Future Search methodology, of looking at our past, present and future. In 1999, the Poughkeepsie Farm Project took root when one inspired farmer and a handful of members with a dream gathered at the Vassar Farm to break ground for the first season. The reach of the PFP has been growing ever since, from farm to community and back. The conference kicked off a strategic planning effort that is exploring the PFP’s roles in supporting local, sustainable agriculture and ensuring that all people have access to nutritious food.

This extended community that gathered at the conference helped us examine how we balance and sustain commitments to our farm, to our education and food justice programs, and to our staff, members and community. The bold statements that emerged will guide decisions about goals, resources, staffing and partnerships now and in the years to come.

Stay tuned as we work in the coming months to translate our vision to a plan for the future!

### GROWING OUR COMMUNITY

**Community Food Forums**

Unpublished

*What if Poughkeepsie were known as a food city?*

*What changes can be made to ensure all residents can secure nutritious food?*

*We need YOUR input at an upcoming forum!*

*Your participation in a Poughkeepsie Plenty* Community Food Forum** can make a difference in our local food system.*

At forums, we share inspiring example and invite you to help envision possibilities for Poughkeepsie. Forums are positive, engaging, fun and free ~ and food is provided!

The dates, times and locations (in Poughkeepsie, unless otherwise noted) are:

- May 25, 1:00 pm - Family Partnership Center, Room L24 - 29 N. Hamilton St. (NOTA: Foro EN ESPANOL)
- May 30, 8:30 am - Family Partnership Center, Room L24 - 29 N. Hamilton St.
If these dates won't work for your schedule stay tuned, as additional forums may be scheduled in May. If you want to be sure to receive an invitation to upcoming forums, send an email to: PoughkeepsiePlenty@farmproject.org.

**A Community Food Forum is a facilitated group process designed to identify community assets, generate ideas and prioritize opportunities for using our resources to ensure plenty of nourishing food for all residents. We plan to include the perspectives of as many different organizations, residents and stakeholders as possible. Community Food Forums will culminate in a large, City-wide action planning forum on June 23, 2012 that will invite people from every forum and other stakeholders (~100 in total) to draft a plan for how food is sourced and made easily available to all Poughkeepsie residents.

*Poughkeepsie Plenty is a community collaboration led by the Poughkeepsie Farm Project and working to ensure that all residents of the City of Poughkeepsie can secure nutritious food. The project is surveying residents, facilitating community food forums, creating a plan for a hunger-free city and forming a Community Food Coalition to oversee its implementation. Read more about Poughkeepsie Plenty.*

**Dutchess County Science Fair**

By Sean Dague

Every year since 2006, the Poughkeepsie Farm Project given out a special prize at the Dutchess County Science Fair around farming, food, and/or plant growth. As my first year judging this event, I was truly blown away by the number of amazing students and exhibits at the Fair. The Fair has categories by grade for 5th through 9th graders, and then a senior competition where 10th - 12th graders compete collectively. There were a vast range of projects covering plants and plant growth, from looking at which kinds of plants grew better in hydroponics vs. soil, what the effect of gravity is on plant growth, to how different types of water (bottled, vitamin water, carbonated) or
contaminants affect plant growth. With so many really great projects, and really inspiring young people, it was really tough narrowing it down to only one, but eventually I did.

This year's Poughkeepsie Farm Project special prize as given to Charlie Sziklas of Van Wyck Junior High School for his project entitled "The Effects of Contaminants on Plants".

Charlie's experiment looked at the growth rate of Basil plants when subjected to contaminants in their water. This included chemical fertilizer (at 16 times recommended dosage to simulate runoff conditions), salt (to simulate road salt runoff), dish soap, and camping soap (which is biodegradable), as well as a control. The control plant grew during the observed period. The excess fertilizer and salt plants completely died off, and the plants with soap in their water mixture showed neither die back nor growth. He was inspired to look into this because of the runoff effects he was seeing, and wanted to understand them more. Charlie will receive a $20 coupon to the Poughkeepsie Farmer's Market and a certificate from the Poughkeepsie Farm Project for his hard work.

GET INVOLVED
It’s Time To Make The Bowls

By Karl Kruszynski

I love this time of year as we anticipate the coming bounty of a new season at the farm project. And even now we are preparing a bounty of bowls for our late summer Soup-a-Bowl celebration—an important fundraiser for PFP activities.

As always, we need help preparing 300 beautiful ceramic bowls for distribution at the event. There are many ways you can participate: Take a Bowl-a-Thon class and learn how to make bowls at the Barrett Clay Works in Poughkeepsie at 435 Main Street. A 5-week pottery class will begin on Thursday, April 19 from 6:00 to 8:30. Another class begins June 7.

During the class you will be introduced to several techniques including a chance to use the wheel. Classes cost $125 plus a $15 fee for materials—a discount off regular prices. Classes are fun, and each bowl you make gets us closer to our goal! You can register by calling the Clay Works at 845-471-0407 or the Barrett Art Center at 845-471-2550.

If you already know how to work with clay, come to an open studio! Again this year, Barrett Art Center is donating open studio time at the Barrett Clay Works to allow past Bowl-a-Thon participants or other experienced potters to make bowls for the Soup-A-Bowl. Clay and firing fees will be paid by PFP for all donated bowls. The current open studio schedule:

- Mondays 5 pm to 8 pm
- Tuesdays 2 pm to 5 pm
- Thursdays 1 pm to 4 pm
- Fridays 1 pm to 4 pm
- Sundays 1 pm to 4 pm

Always call ahead to 471-0407 to be sure the schedule has not changed. When you arrive, please check-in with the studio monitor and sign-in as a PFP volunteer. Come join us on Sundays from 1:00 to 4:00 PM when you’re sure to see a PFP member.

Finally, we invite everyone to come to a “bowling party” (the date of the next bowling party is yet to be determined but will probably take place in late May). Bowling parties are open to everyone regardless of experience. In addition to enjoying a fun atmosphere, you can also get tips or instruction from some of the finest potters in the area. Please check the PFP website for details as they become available. Or email soupabowl@farmproject.org to receive an update.
Community Garden Needs Help Installing Fence

Fall Kill Partnership Gardens is looking for volunteers to help install a welded wire fence on 4x4 wooden posts. Tasks will include helping operate the auger, setting posts, hanging fence, etc. Pending the receipt of our building permit, we are planning to complete work on April 28 & 29 and May 5 & 6. Please contact Heather at 845-476-6529 or hwernimont@gmail.com if you would like to help out. Funding for the fence was awarded to the PFP as part of the Growing City Seeds, a project supported by a NY State Department of Environmental Conservation Environmental Justice grant.

Seeking an Office Manager

Are you a responsible and proactive multi-tasker? Do you like creating and implementing efficient office systems? Do you like using your organizational skills and are you detail-oriented? Do you like working with a variety of people, and do you want to be part of a passionate and friendly team of people? Consider joining the PFP staff!

The PFP is hiring a part-time Office Manager that will play a critical role in ensuring the PFP’s operations are well-run, organized and efficient. In addition to executing and improving the PFP’s administrative systems and routines, the part-time Office Manager coordinates the Food Share program. Preferred skills: proficient in Microsoft Office and web-based software, database management, Spanish-speaking and experience with QuickBooks and CiviCRM a plus. The Office Manager must be able to communicate effectively with colleagues, Board members, visitors, vendors and donors. Position is 15 hours a week. Click here to download a full job description and application questions. Interested candidates are requested to apply by April 27, 2012. Applications will be considered as they are received. Please submit your resume and response to our application questions to Nicole Baker (nicole at farmproject.org).

Seeking a Food Share Assistant

The Poughkeepsie Farm Project believes that all individuals and families, regardless of their income level, have a right to access fresh, healthy food. Through the Food Share program, the PFP makes at least 25% of the 60 tons of produce we harvest each year available to low-income members of our community. The PFP is seeking a Food Share Assistant to help implement this program.

This Food Share Assistant is a volunteer position that receives a CSA share in appreciation for the commitment made to weekly work. The Food Share Assistant will maintain direct and regular contact with sponsored share participants and organizational partners, as well as key staff members involved in the program. Applicant must be comfortable working with people from diverse socio-economic backgrounds, organized, preferably Spanish-speaking and available for 3 hours of work per week. If you are interested in applying, please submit your resume and response to our application questions (download here) to Nicole Baker (nicole at
Seeking a Tuesday CSA Distribution Coordinator

Click here for a job description and application or contact Wendy at wendy@farmproject.org or 240-3734 for more information.

SAVE THE DATE

Soup-A-Bowl 5-Week Pottery Class

Repeats every week until Fri May 18 2012.

Thursday, April 19, 2012 - 6:00pm - 8:30pm

A 5-week pottery class will begin on Thursday, April 19 from 6:00 to 8:30. Read more about this program.

Plant Sale

Unpublished

Saturday, May 12, 2012 - 9:00am - 2:00pm

Join us for our popular annual Plant Sale, where you can enjoy the opportunity to:

- Purchase Certified Naturally Grown seedlings and plants--raised on the farm! Choose from 100 varieties of vegetables, annual and perennial flowers, herbs, and hanging baskets. Download our 2012 Plant List
- Tour the farm fields and gardens: guided tours at 9:30, 10:30, 11:30, 12:30, and 1:30
- Meet members of the staff and board of directors and learn about the various programs and activities the PFP offers and supports
- Support our education and food access programs by purchasing beautiful PFP merchandise
- CSA members can sign up for shareholder work hours
- CSA New Member Orientation at 12 noon

Don’t forget to stop by the Membership booth to pick up your membership card— you may be eligible to receive free plants! (Based on the level of your membership donation.)

A great chance to pick up a little something for Mother’s Day! Sorry, we can’t accept credit cards--cash or local checks only.
The Plant Sale will continue on the following Saturday, May 19, in conjunction with our annual [Open Farm Day](#).

The Plant Sale is located at the [Poughkeepsie Farm Project](#) on the Vassar Farm and Ecological Preserve at the intersection of Hooker and Raymond Avenues in Poughkeepsie, New York. Follow the driveway down past the red barn to the parking lot.

*Proceeds from the Plant Sale support upgrades to farm operations and equipment; proceeds from merchandise sales and membership donations support our education and food access programs.*

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**Open Farm Day and Plant Sale**

Unpublished

**Saturday, May 19, 2012 - 9:00am - 2:00pm**

*Open Farm Day is open to the public, takes place rain or shine, and is FREE!*
The annual season kick-off event for the PFP, we invite you to join us and celebrate spring! Activities include a local foods farm market, cooking demonstrations, farm and garden tours, and several activities for children. Be sure to visit the information booth to purchase PFP merchandise and learn more about the PFP’s food access and education programs.

Local vendors will include Gray Horse Farm (eggs and chicken), Meadow View Farm (grass-fed beef, eggs), Meredith's Bread, and Cascade Winery. Local honey, PFP herbal products, fair trade organic coffee, and Green Teen salsa will also be available for sale. You will be able to learn about Winter Sun Farms and Bounty of the Valley, the new CSA at the Jewish Community Center.

At the Plant Sale tent you can purchase 100 varieties of Certified Naturally Grown seedlings and plants, including vegetables, annual and perennial flowers, herbs, and seeds. Download our 2012 Plant List

PFP CSA members will have the opportunity to sign up for shareholder work hours as well. Don't forget to stop by the Membership booth to pick up your membership card and check your eligibility to receive free plants! (Based on the level of your membership donation.)

Schedule of Events:

9am – 2pm

Children’s tent (face painting, seed art, games, etc)
Local Food Vendors - Including Gray Horse Farm, Meadow View Farm, Meredith's Bread, Cascade Winery, and Winter Sun Farm

Plant Sale

Merchandise Sales including 2012 T-shirts

CSA Shareholder Hours Sign-ups

PFP Info

9:30am

Farm Tour with Trevis

Qigong with Mame

10am

Herb Walk with Beatrix

Cooking Demo by Sarah

10:30am

Farm Tour with Wendy

Children’s Songs with Pat

11am

Cooking Demo by Sarah

Storybook Reading in the Children’s Tent with Rebecca
11:30am
Farm Tour with Wendy

12pm
New Member Orientation
Cooking Demo by Scott

12:30pm
Farm Tour with Wendy
Qigong with Mame

1:30pm
Farm Tour with Asher
Storytelling with Muriel

Interested in volunteering? We always need extra hands as activity leaders, cashiers, set-up/clean-up crew, etc. Email us if you’d like more information on how you can help.

Proceeds from the Plant Sale support upgrades to farm operations and equipment; proceeds from merchandise sales and membership donations support our education and food access programs.

GIVING BACK

Invitation for Your Business
The PFP offers sponsorship opportunities that:

- promote your business
- enhance your image
support your Community
are available at different levels
are recognized at PFP events

We invite you to partner with us while drawing positive attention to your business. Your company will receive season-long exposure at our farmers’ market and/or benefits at our two largest fundraising events supporting the PFP. Our aim is that your company will enjoy an enhanced profile when our members, event participants, partners and the general public associate your business with the significant, positive difference in the lives of many people who participate in and are aware of our food access and educational programs.

Read more

FEATURED VEGETABLE AND RECIPES

Collard Greens

The toughness of collard greens or kale, while it means more cooking time, is the result of these greens’ high levels of protein and dietary fiber. Collards are also a great source of riboflavin, folate, iron, manganese, and vitamins A, C, K, and B6. Collards have strong anti-cancer properties through its detoxifying effects, antioxidant properties, and by promoting our immune systems. Furthermore, these properties translate to lowering cholesterol and promoting a healthy cardiovascular system. Choose collards that have
hardy, vibrant leaves with as few blemishes or discolorations as possible.

**Image Attribution**

**Skillet Greens with Crispy Shallots and Cider**

**Summary**

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**Source**


**Prep time**

1 hour

**Description**

Refreshing Greens Recipe

**Ingredients**

1/4 c sugar
1/2 c apple cider vinegar
1 t red pepper (Crushed)
2 c vegetable oil (Plus 1 T. or as needed)
2 c shallots (Thinly sliced)
2 T bacon drippings (Optional)
2 lb collard greens (Stems removed, cut into 1/2 inch wide strips)
salt (To taste)

**Instructions**

Dissolve sugar in 1 tablespoon water in small saucepan over medium heat. Increase heat; boil without stirring until amber. Add vinegar and crushed pepper (mixture will bubble vigorously). The mixture will thicken. Stir until caramel bits dissolve. Cool. Pour 2 cups oil into heavy medium saucepan. Attach deep-fry thermometer to side of pan and heat oil to 350°F. Working in batches, fry shallots until golden brown, stirring occasionally, 1 1/2 to 2 minutes per batch. Using slotted spoon, transfer shallots to paper towels. Sprinkle with coarse salt. Heat drippings with 1 tablespoon oil in large pot over medium-high heat. Add half of greens and sprinkle with coarse salt and pepper; toss until wilted. Add remaining greens; toss to wilt, about 5 minutes. Reduce heat to medium-low, cover, and cook until greens are tender, adding water by 1/4 cupfuls if dry, about 45 minutes. Season with coarse salt and pepper. Rewarm cider mixture. Transfer
greens to large shallow bowl. Drizzle cider mixture over and sprinkle shallots on top.

**Collard Greens Miniera**

**Summary**

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**Description**

A Crunchy Take on Greens

**Ingredients**

1 1/4 lb collard greens  
3 slices bacon (Cooked, finely chopped)

**Instructions**

Stack collard-leaf halves and roll crosswise into a cigar shape. Cut crosswise into very thin slices (no thicker than 3/4 inch) with a sharp knife. Cook bacon in a 12-inch nonstick skillet over moderate heat, stirring, until crisp. Add collards, tossing to coat, and cook until just bright green, about 1 minute. Season with salt and serve immediately.

**MISCELLANEOUS**

**PFP in the Media**

- Did you hear the interview with Poughkeepsie Farm Project's Executive Director Susan Grove's on the radio program "Finding Out With Peter And Ellen," on Sunday, April 8, 2012 on 92.1 Lite FM?
- Poughkeepsie Plenty puts Poughkeepsie and the PFP on the (USDA) map.
- Poughkeepsie City School District publicizes City Seeds internships.
- The PFP was referenced and quoted in a Millbrook Independent article about food author Frances Moore Lappé's talk at the Cary Institute for Ecosystems Studies. You can watch the excellent EcoMind lecture here, in its entirety.
Quoting from the printed copy of the Millbrook Independent article, "The entire first row of the Cary lecture audience was reserved for members, mostly young, of the Poughkeepsie Farm Project...Susan Grove, Executive Director of Poughkeepsie Farm Project, said that she was inspired by Lappé’s writing about efforts in Belo Horizonte, Brazil to initiate a city-wide collaboration to create a hunger-free community called Poughkeepsie Plenty. A year into the effort, the program received a $100,000 USDA grant to create a research-based assessment of food in Poughkeepsie, mobilize community input into an action plan for addressing food insecurity and develop an ongoing Community Food Coalition to facilitate and oversee the implementation of the action plan. The ultimate aim of the project is to ensure the right for all to access sufficient and nutritious food and transform Poughkeepsie into a city where everyone can secure, prepare, enjoy and benefit from healthy food. The people in this group embrace what Lappé calls ‘hope in action.’ "

**Local Food Pioneers**

*Cultivating the Future of Farming in the Hudson Valley*

Join Glynwood as they celebrate their 2012 Harvest Award winners and learn how these pioneers are leading the way to a sustainable farming future in our region. The evening will include a panel discussion and a casual reception where you can meet the winners:

- Farm to Table Co-Packers
- Hudson Valley Fresh
- Northeast Livestock Processing Service
- Wild Hive Farm

Sunday, April 22
4:30 p.m.
The Aula of Ely Hall
Vassar College
Poughkeepsie, New York

**The Farm at Night**

*By Sean Dague*

Many of us are familiar with the farm during the day, when we come for our pickups and pick-your-own in the fields. But the farm at night is an equally amazing place. The lack of street lights, and the large and open horizon make it one of the best places in Poughkeepsie to really appreciate the night sky, another natural resource we tend to take for granted.

On Friday, April 27th, starting at 8pm, I'll be leading our 4th Astronomy event on the
Vassar Farm Preserve as the Mid-Hudson Astronomical Association presents Global Astronomy Night. With a cadre of volunteers and their telescopes we'll be showing the public the Moon up close, Mars, and Saturn, as well as any other astronomical finds out that night.

It's a great event, very social, and good for all ages. If you are interested in learning more, please check out the event webpage for more details.

**Community Garden Plots Available**

Fall Kill Partnership Gardens, located at 29 N. Hamilton St. in Poughkeepsie, has plots available for the 2012 season - 10'x10' for $15 and 10'x20' for $25. The garden is organic, no chemical fertilizers or pesticides allowed. Gardeners must be City of Poughkeepsie residents, commit to using the plot the entire season and contribute to spring and fall clean-up and two monthly workdays throughout the season. If interested please contact Peg at 518-727-0385 or fkpgardens@gmail.com. Plots will be filled on a first come, first served basis.