



ON THE TABLE

July 26, 2007

The Official Newsletter of the Astoria CSA

Astoriacs.com

ASTORIA CSA PICNIC SATURDAY AUGUST 4, 10:30-3:30 ASTORIA PARK. BRING THE KIDS!!

"Today, because so few realize that we citizens have a dog in this fight," writes Michael Pollan in his excellent foreword to Food Fight, "our legislators feel free to leave the debate over the Farm Bill to the farm states, very often trading their votes on agricultural policy for votes on issues that matter more to their constituents. But nothing could do more to reform America's food system, and by doing so, improve the condition of America's environment and public health, than if the rest of us were to weigh in." – (emphasis added) from Dan Imhoff's website:

http://www.ecoliteracy.org/publications/rsi/dan_imhoff_farm_bill.html

ACT TODAY, THE HOUSE WILL BE VOTING THURSDAY JULY 26TH

FARM BILL 2007

What single piece of legislation affects food stamps, the environment, nutrition, the price of milk (and everything else,) what your kids eat in their school lunches, international trade agreements, and everyone's health? The Farm Bill a long unexamined relic of the Great Depression, the Dust Bowl and the New Deal is under more scrutiny this year than it has been in decades. As more and more people start to question the status quo in their grocery stores and farmers markets (if they're lucky enough to have one) the Farm Bill is emerging as an issue that urbanites, environmentalists, chefs and other unlikely bedfellows are speaking up about. And it's having an effect.

In the 2002 Farm Bill Congress passed mandatory **Country of Origin Labelling**, which Big Agriculture and Big Retail have been fighting for the past 5 years. They succeeded in having the date of implementation postponed several times, while they sought to pull it's mandatory teeth or eviscerate it into meaninglessness, despite the clear preference of consumers to know where their food (especially meat) comes from. However in spite of the billions of dollars spent on lobbying and contributions to the campaign funds of sympathetic politicians they have failed to do away with it and the current Bill contains the provision for the implementation of mandatory **COOL**.

It has also removed the tie to **NAIS**, the **National Animal Identification System** which would track every food animal in the country. This would favor large industrial farms over small organic/sustainable grass operations by imposing costly requirements and forcing anyone who owns an animal to register their premises and the animal. This remains an issue but is no longer tied to **COOL**.

THIS WEEKS SHARE

Red Potatoes	Carrots
Qty: 4 lb.	Qty: 1 bunch
Cucumbers	Zucchini
Qty: 2	Qty: 2
Green Kale	Walla Walla Onions
Qty: 1 bunch	Qty: 1 bunch
Red Batavian Lettuce	
Qty: 1 head	

FRUIT SHARE

Blueberries	Peaches
Qty: 1 pint	Qty: 1 bag

Important Note! Peaches should be removed from the plastic bag and allowed to ripen in a paper bag, or out in the open air. If you leave them in the plastic, they will rot before they ripen.

The Bill before congress has kept the **Community Food Project**, but changed it's funding from mandatory to discretionary. "Over the past ten years, **CFP** has played a major role in forging a national network of innovators who are eager to learn from each other, know how to put good ideas into action, and empower their communities to solve their own problems. In addition, **CFP** often creates vital linkages between rural and urban communities, ensuring that both are able to develop economic opportunities for food producers and consumers. **As a result of these linkages, local planners now work with food program advocates, public health officials engage community development groups, and farmers see their futures increasingly tied to local markets.** Building on this success, Community Food Security Coalition is proposing to significantly expand the size and scope of the Community Food Projects Competitive Grants Program.

◆ *The 2007 Farm Bill mark for the House Committee on Agriculture funds Community Food Projects at \$30 million annually. We request that this level of funding be maintained in the House and Senate.*

◆ *We request that through the Farm Bill negotiations this funding remain mandatory as it has been for the last 10 years.”*

See the links for Congresswoman Maloney and Speaker Pelosi to register your support for this funding, or just cut and paste the third page of this newsletter into their “comment” boxes. Thanks!

The Agriculture Committee sent a Bill to the House that maintains the subsidy level to commodity farmers of the 2002 bill, even though there had been an attempt to increase this amount. This is being portrayed as reform when it is in fact, business as usual. **Speaker Pelosi** is supporting the Bill with these subsidy levels intact. As taxpayers we pay the price for the environmental and nutritional degradation caused by these subsidies, they need to be redirected toward the small family farmers they were designed to protect against market fluctuations in the first place.

Action Links:

Restore \$3 billion in funds to the Conservation Security Program in the Farm Bill. The Conservation Security Program rewards farmers who implement farming systems with strong environmental and conservation benefits, and helps to protect soil, water, and other natural resources

https://ofrf.org/action/ofan/070723_alert.html

American Farmland Trust advocates for conservation of farmland: *“The House Ag Committee's draft farm bill contains funding for many of AFT's priorities including conservation, farm and ranch land preservation, and farmers' market promotion programs. But our progress could be undermined by proposals to extend outdated and broken Title I commodity subsidies—moving policy in the wrong direction and making bad policy worse. Yet the committee continues to ignore calls for significant reform for many national priorities including ending hunger in America, healthy diets programs and rural development.”* New York State loses 10 times more farmland to development than it protects annually. Visit their website to see what they are doing and how you can support the preservation of farmland in New York. <http://www.farmland.org/programs/states/ny/NewYork2.asp>

The Sustainable Agriculture Coalition has a good page with information and action you can take here: <http://www.sustainableagriculturecoalition.org/>

Healthy Farm Bill: <http://healthyfarmbill.org/>.

Page 3 of this newsletter is text I wrote that you can use to cut and past into “contact” forms for Speaker Pelosi here:

<http://www.cfra.org/frame/nofakereforms.html>

and Congresswoman Maloney here:

http://maloney.house.gov/index.php?option=com_email_form&Itemid=73 If you right click on the PDF you should be able to “use hand tool to select text”. If you have any problems with that email me at, newsletter@astoriacs.com and I'll send the text in an email for you to use.—Gretchen Wiggins

Baked Cucumbers in Basil Cream

1 c. **red wine vinegar**

¼ tsp. **sugar**

1 tsp. **salt**

4-5 **cucumbers**, halved lengthwise and cut into 1 inch slices

2 tbsp. **unsalted butter**, melted

1 c. **heavy cream**

3 tbsp. **fresh basil**, chopped

1. Preheat oven to 375.
2. Put cucumbers in glass bowl or pan (9x13 inch pyrex pan is good). Mix sugar and salt together and sprinkle over cucumbers. Pour vinegar over and let marinate 30 minutes (add more vinegar if needed).
3. Drain cucumbers and pat dry.
4. Return cucumbers to pyrex pan. Pour melted butter over them. Bake 45 minutes or until tender, stirring occasionally.
5. Meanwhile, heat cream in small pot until it comes to light boil. Cook about 20 minutes, stirring often, until it is thickened and reduced by about half. Stir in basil and let steep at least 2 minutes.
6. Pour cream over cooked cucumbers and season with salt and pepper.

Kale and Walnut Pesto

¼ c. chopped **walnuts**

1 tbsp. + ½ tsp. **salt**

½ lb. **kale**, chopped

2 cloves **garlic**, minced

½ c. **olive oil**

½ c. **parmesan cheese**, grated

1. Toast walnuts in dry heavy skillet, stirring occasionally, until they start to brown and become fragrant. They can burn easily so watch them closely. Once done, transfer them to another dish to cool.
2. Bring 2 quarts water to boil. Add 1 tbsp. salt and kale. Cook until tender, about 10 minutes, then drain.
3. Put garlic, kale and walnuts in blender/processor and pulse until combined. Add olive oil in steady stream while still processing. Stop once thoroughly combined.
4. Transfer to another bowl and stir in cheese. Season with remaining ½ tsp. salt and pepper.
5. Serve immediately over roasted or boiled potatoes or pasta. Can also be frozen for later use, in which case do not add cheese until ready to use.

From *Farmer John's Cookbook: The Real Dirt on Vegetables*, available for sale at:

http://www.angelicorganics.com/ao/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=76&Itemid=92

**DO YOU WANT TO WRITE FOR THE NEWSLETTER?
CONTACT US AT: newsletter@astoriacs.com.**

ASTORIA CSA CORE GROUP

STACEY, *Top Tomato*

AARON, *Tech Turnip LIISA, Event Escarole*

KARA & KRISTY, *Financial Fennel* SANDY & LIZ, *Distribution Corianders*

WENDY, *Outreach Oregano* GRETCHEN, *Newsnettle*

As a member of the Astoria CSA, I support a Farm Bill that preserves farmland, provides funding for Community Food Projects, healthy food in schools and low-income communities and supports small fruit and vegetable farmers. I support Mandatory Country of Origin Labeling and oppose the National Animal Identification System and do not want to see them linked together. I would like to see COOL implemented as soon as possible and not postponed until September 2008 as currently scheduled.

I would like to see the subsidies that favor large agribusiness operations significantly reduced. To that end, real payment limits should be applied to commodity programs, including a \$40,000 direct payment cap and the closing of all loopholes. These payments as they are currently distributed undermine international trade agreements; support a food system that promotes obesity and unhealthy, processed food; skew rural land values in favor of developers and against small farmers; and concentrates Federal Food Bill monies in a mere 20 Congressional districts rather than distributing it more equitably throughout the country in support of local, sustainable farming practices and the healthy food they grow.

Restore the 3 billion in funding for the Conservation Security Program and make the 30 million annual funding for Community Food Projects mandatory as it has been for the past 10 years.