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## The Weekly Update

May 2, 2009

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### Dear WCM Shopper

Our absolutely gorgeous weather for the opening market was replaced by the type of day only a duck could love last Saturday. It's amazing, though, that whenever the rain eased up just a little bit shoppers appeared to take advantage of a few moments respite from the rain to fill their shopping bags.

That was last week and the next market is just around the corner. We've had another week of growing since then. So expect to see more fresh greens, tomatoes, and plants for your garden.

Before the rain began last market I had a nice chat with **Kim Reinke** of Pasque Flower Farm, in Pardeeville. She gave me her *2009*

*Growing List*, which is quite extensive. While it's still a little early in the season, it's not so early that planting in earnest can't begin. Holding off on tomatoes for another week or so may not hurt. There's plenty that can go into the ground now.

**Sandy Hunter**, baker of crunchy [biscotti](#), was kind enough to drop me a line to say that this marks the second year for Madison-based DOLCI Italian-American Sweets, LLC as a vendor at the WCM. Sandy uses recipes from grandmother **Antonina Bonanno**, who brought them to the States when she arrived from Sicily in 1905. Sandy concludes, "I offer free samples every week so look for the red-topped tent near the information booth. Come over to taste and get to know my product!"

**Nancy Potter** says scheduling conflicts prevented their attendance for the first two markets of the season. However, starting next Saturday, May 2, [Potter's Crackers](#) of



Madison, will be at each market.

"We are very excited to have [vegan](#) (dairy-free) crackers this year. We had many requests last year for a dairy-free cracker. It took a while to come up with a tasty whole grain cracker that met our standards without butter or milk but we did! We will be sampling our Classic Wheat this weekend "

Look for partner (and son) Peter to be at the booth this Saturday. He vended at the WCM for the Potter's first season at the market, "Then disappeared to grad school," notes Mom. "He's looking forward to seeing all of our Westside Potter's customers again!"

Potter's Crackers was named in April's *Midwest Living Magazine* in an article about food in Madison.

**Kay Jensen** of JenEhr Family Farm in Sun Prairie called to let me know that **Chef Joel Girard** will be conducting a cooking demonstration adjacent to the farm's stand at the WCM this coming Saturday, May 2. Chef Joel will be demonstrating chicken carving techniques and preparing a soup and salad using greens and vegetables from the farm. The demonstrations will be held at 8:30, 10:30, and 11:30 am.

*Photo: Undeterred by a few raindrops last Saturday  
at the stall of Natalie's Garden and Greenhouse.*

*Photo: Bill Lubing*

## Recipe:

### Spanakopita

Essentially a spinach and cheese pie, [spanakopita](#) uses many ingredients from the market that are available now. Try substituting some of the cheeses for alternative varieties that are available at the market. Then let us know you results!

Prep Time: 45 minutes

Cook Time: 45 minutes

Servings: 6

Serving Size: 1 piece

## Ingredients

- 1-1/2 pounds fresh spinach, wash and chop
- 2 tbsp olive oil (or melted butter)
- 1 large onion, chopped
- 3 cloves garlic, minced (Or if you can find them at the market, the white portion of [ramps](#))
- 1/4 cup fresh parsley, chopped
- 3 large eggs, lightly beaten
- 3/4 cup ricotta cheese (or cottage cheese)
- 1 cup feta cheese, crumbled
- salt & pepper to taste
- 8 ounces phyllo dough, thawed
- 1/4 cup melted butter or olive oil

## Directions

1. Preheat oven to 350° F. Lightly oil the inside of the pie dish.
2. Heat 2 tablespoons of olive oil in a large skillet over medium heat. Sauté onion and garlic until soft and golden brown. Stir in chopped spinach and parsley. Continue cooking for 3-5 minutes or until spinach is limp. Remove from heat and cool.
3. In a large bowl, mix eggs, ricotta cheese and feta cheese. Stir in spinach mixture and season as desired.
4. In prepared pie dish, layer 4 sheets of dough, brushing each layer with butter or oil (to prevent drying out, follow directions on phyllo dough package). Pour the spinach mixture on top of the dough. Repeat layers or phyllo dough. Tuck the overhanging dough into pie plate and crimp edges. Brush with melted butter.
5. Bake 40-45 minutes uncovered. Cut while hot and serve immediately.

Adapted from [www.recipetips.com](http://www.recipetips.com)

[The Westside Community Market](#) and vendor [Tomato Mountain](#) both contributed items to the [Wisconsin Partners for SustainAbility's](#) on-line auction. The organization's [Auction for the Grassroots](#) is raising money for area non-profit groups. The items from WCM and Tomato Mountain can be found on the [local food](#) page of the auction. The auction runs until 10:00 pm on May 11. Happy bidding!

Don't forget, we hold a raffle each week and there's a free cup of coffee waiting for you (at least until we run out).

Until next week,

*Bill Lubing*  
*for the Westside Community Market*  
[friends@westsidecommunitymarket.org](mailto:friends@westsidecommunitymarket.org)

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## The Weekly Update

May 9, 2009

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### Dear WCM Shopper

Though we've had some chilly nights we seem to be getting past the chance of much in the way of frost. The warming trend for the next ten days or so indicates nothing lower than about 45 degrees in the Madison area. Of course that assumes a level of belief in our modern weather prognostication that you might not share.

We're going to chance it, though, and buy some tomato and pepper plants to get things rolling this season.

**Mary deBlock**, from Reedsburg noted that she'll be bringing a greater variety of plants this weekend in anticipation of the warmer weather.



**Gerald Platt** from Prairie Farm Produce, in Oregon had some gorgeous lettuce last Saturday, and expects to be bringing plenty more as the season progresses. He also had some beautiful splashes of color from a nice assortment of flowers.

We are so lucky at the WCM to have an excellent assortment of cheesemakers to choose from -- and not all of the milk is that of cows. **Diana Murphy** of Dream Farm, just down the road in the Cross Plains area, brings several varieties of goat cheese to the market. Check out her delicious spreads. Diana also brings wonderful organic farm fresh eggs.

Speaking with **Dan Deneen** of Black Earth Valley Produce, in Mazomanie, the asparagus was introduced last week and should be increasing in quantity for this week's market. We can also expect to find rhubarb and morels at this Saturday's market. It looks like our spring season is shaping up to be a bountiful one, indeed!

*Photo: Spicy pepper plants ready for your garden*

*from Jos and Mary deBlock from Reedsburg.  
Photo: Bill Lubing*

**Recipe:**  
**Beef & Asparagus**

This is a fantastic recipe to bring in the spring harvest season. Add some onion wedges or a red chilli pepper for color if desired. Note that the prep time includes the time spent marinating as well.

Prep Time: 45 minutes  
Cook Time: 55 minutes  
Servings: 4

**Ingredients**

- 1 pound rump steak
- 1/3 cup soy sauce
- 2 tbsp dry sherry
- 2 tsp grated fresh ginger
- 1 tsp sesame oil
- 4 cloves garlic, crushed
- 1 small red chile, seeded and chopped
- 12 spears fresh asparagus, trimmed and cut into 1.5 inch pieces
- 1/3 cup peanut oil

**Directions**

1. Trim the meat and slice across the grain evenly into long, thin strips.
2. Combine the soy, sherry, ginger, sesame oil, garlic, and chilli; add the meat. Stir to coat and leave to marinate for 30 minutes.
3. Drain the meat, reserving the marinade.
4. Heat 1/2 of the oil in a wok or heavy frying pan, add the asparagus and stir-fry for 2 minutes.
5. Remove from the wok.
6. Heat the remaining oil in the wok, then quickly cook the meat over high heat until browned but not cooked through.
7. Remove and drain on absorbent paper.
8. Return asparagus and meat to wok with marinade mixture.
9. Stir-fry over high heat until the meat is cooked through.
10. Serve at once.

The snap of fresh asparagus, the crunch of zippy rhubarb, the mellow, rich odor of sautéed morels--these are the sights, smells, and tastes that we look forward to each spring. These are the reasons we love the WCM and all the goodness it brings to our lives each week. Plus a raffle and free cup of coffee each week? Life is good.

Until next week,

*Bill Lubing  
for the Westside Community Market*

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## The Weekly Update

May 16, 2009

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### Dear WCM Shopper

The folks over at [Tomato Mountain](#), from Brooklyn, WI convinced me last week to wait just a bit longer to plant tomatoes. So I put it off for a week.

To occupy our time we bought a bushel of tomatoes from **Don's Produce** (hailing from the Arena area), which started the canning season off with the clinking of mason jars being hauled from storage accompanying the rattle of sealing rings being inspected, counted, and washed. We now have two neat rows of freshly sealed chili sauce put up in the pantry. (Recipe below).



We also put up 19 pounds of asparagus. That's about as easy as falling off a log and will last us well past the end of the season. With water boiling in our stock pot we dunked the asparagus in for around 30 seconds, removed it to baking sheets to cool for a few minutes, then slipped the stalks into plastic freezer bags and into the freezer. It couldn't have been easier and will taste great come January.

There were several vendors selling asparagus last week, including **Real Foods** from the Athens area. I have got to say those new wooden boxes are neat looking, functional, and sturdy. Like some of the apple crates we see around the farmers' markets that are familiar with the half-century mark, we expect these new boxes will be around for years. The beautiful asparagus, ramps, and other produce we saw *in* the boxes was going quickly, though.

Morels look like they'll be around for another week or so, as will the spinach. Radishes are fresh and crunchy this time of year and so is the rhubarb.

What looked a little like wheat germ turned out to be bee pollen at the stall of **Bonde Bee**, from Randolph. I had no idea the substance was chocked full of so many components that contribute to our health. According to some sources, along with vitamins and minerals, bee pollen is rich in proteins, free amino acids, hormones, and

trace elements. Bonde Bee's honey looked great as well.

**Stella's**, of Madison, now offers two new breads at the Westside Community Market. [Ciabatta](#) and a white [baguette](#) now go along with their old favorites like the spicy cheese bread.

Vendors making their first appearance last week include [Blue Moon Community Farm](#), owned by **Kristen Kordet** of Stoughton. Blue Moon brought heirloom vegetable seedlings. The **Statz/Gassen Family** of Cross Plains brought rhubarb, morels, flowers, and seedlings.

*Photo: Healthy-looking tomatoes from Don's Produce. Photo: Bill Lubing*

## Recipe:

### Canning Recipe: Chili Sauce

#### Ingredients

- 2-cups sweet red peppers, chopped
- 2-cups chopped onions
- 24-large tomatoes (4 quarts peeled, cored, chopped)
- 1-tsp. ground allspice
- 1-tbsp salt
- 1 1/4-cup vinegar
- 1 1/2-cup sugar
- 1-tbsp celery seed
- 1-tsp ground ginger
- 1-tsp ground cinnamon
- 1-tsp ground cloves

#### Instructions

1. Combine and add all ingredients to a heavy saucepan or cast iron skillet.
2. Bring to a boil and simmer 1 to 2 hours or till desired thickness has been reached.
3. Stir often to prevent sticking.
4. Pack hot jars with hot prepared tomato mixture leaving 1/2-inch headspace.
5. Remove air bubbles.
6. Wipe rim and screw threads and adjust lids and screw bands.

#### Processing Method

##### Boiling Water Bath Canner

1/2 Pints 15 minutes

Pints 15 minutes

After processing, remove jars immediately, place on a rack to cool.

Test for Seal.

*Makes about 6 pints*

If you are unfamiliar with the canning process, learn it before proceeding. Contact your County Agent or refer to [freshpreserving.com](http://freshpreserving.com) for procedures, equipment, and

precautions.

Recipe from [lesleycooks.com](http://lesleycooks.com)

If you're feeling a little lazy on a Saturday morning and are debating whether or not to go to market remember, the coffee is free. And by the way, it's the *good* stuff. As long as you're at the info booth, don't forget to sign up for the weekly raffle.

Until next week,

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## The Weekly Update

May 23, 2009

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### Dear WCM Shopper

A little while back I had a nice chat with **Josie Pradella** of [TerraSource Gourmet Chocolates](#). Our conversation moved from the quality of her vegan chocolates to Josie's immersive dedication to operating a green business. Josie is far too modest when revealing how green her business truly is.

Using locally sourced and primarily fair trade ingredients, 100 percent recycled fiber in the packaging, and aiming for carbon neutral energy goals in transportation and production put these delicious chocolates firmly into the enviro-friendly category. Did you know that Josie has available chocolates in boxes made from a specialty paper that contains native prairie seeds that are grown and harvested in the Midwest? I guess you can't be much greener than a box of chocolates that bursts into wildflowers when you plant it!



**Carrie Johnson** from [Jordandal Farm](#) reports that they will be coming to the market on Saturday restocked with beef and spring chickens. Since their chickens are pasture-raised the Johnsons can't do much chicken raising in the winter. Carrie says they've increased production so there will be a good supply of their excellent chicken to go along with the beef, pork, and lamb that they raise.

Word is the morels are starting to wind down. They'll probably be available this week but not much longer. Asparagus is coming on strong. Spring greens, including numerous varieties of lettuce, bok choy, mustard, and kale will be showing up. The hoop house spinach has given way to dirt grown. If you're looking for red, then

rhubarb and radishes should hit the spot.

**Nancy Potter** reports that on Saturday [Potter's Crackers](#) will have rhubarb crackers for the first time this season. "Folks are welcome to stop by for a sample taste!" she notes.

Another comment, "My son Pete did the market last week for Potter's Crackers. He bought our whole lunch at the market and came home and prepared a little piece of heaven -- sautéed morels and asparagus in butter, finished with Blue Marble cream, then served with [Madison Sourdough](#) bread and [Edelweiss](#) Emmenthaler. It all came from WCM except for the splash of white wine in the mushrooms! Delicious!"

*Photo: Ready to go  
from West Star Farm. Photo: Bill Lubing*

### Recipe:

#### Fresh Rhubarb Punch

#### Ingredients

- 3 cups diced rhubarb
- 1/2 cup sugar
- 3 cups water
- 1 cup pineapple juice
- 2 cups champagne or sparkling white wine
- 3 tbsp lemon juice

#### Instructions

1. In a medium saucepan, combine rhubarb, sugar, and water.
2. Cook over medium heat until fruit is very soft.
3. Remove from heat and chill.
4. Liquefy in blender.
5. Combine rhubarb with pineapple, wine and lemon juice.
6. Serve in a tall glass over ice.

Recipe from [www.lesleycooks.com](http://www.lesleycooks.com)

### Recipe:

#### Rhubarb Crumble

#### Ingredients

- 8 cups chopped rhubarb
- 1-1/4 cups sugar, divided
- 2-1/2 cups flour
- 1/4 cup packed brown sugar
- 1/4 cup quick-cooking oats
- 1 cup cold butter

Custard Sauce:

- 6 egg yolks
- 1/2 cup sugar
- 2 cups whipping cream

- 1-1/4 tsps vanilla

### Instructions

1. In a saucepan, combine rhubarb and 3/4-cup sugar.
2. Cover and cook over medium heat, stirring occasionally, until rhubarb is tender, about 10 minutes.
3. Pour into greased 13x9x2" baking pan.
4. In a bowl, combine flour, brown sugar, oats and remaining sugar.
5. Cut in butter until crumbly; sprinkle over rhubarb
6. Bake 400F for 30 minutes.
7. Meanwhile, in a saucepan, whisk the egg yolks and sugar; stir in cream.
8. Cook and stir over low heat until a thermometer reads 160F and mixture thickens, about 15-20 minutes.
9. Remove from the heat; stir in vanilla.
10. Serve warm over rhubarb crumble.

Recipe from [lesleycooks.com](http://lesleycooks.com)

A week from this Saturday, on May 30, the [REAP Buy Fresh Buy Local Burgers and Brew](#) will be held at the Capital Brewery Bier Garten, 7734 Terrace Avenue, in Middleton, WI. This is a great event and will feature some of our [Westside Community Market](#) vendors, including Jordandal Farm, and [Primrose Community Farm](#).

So after you've shopped at the WCM, enjoyed your free coffee, and signed up for the raffle, spend a few hours in the garden, then head out for the 'Garten.'

And for this week? There's plenty of nursery stock, fresh vegetables, bakery, and meats at the WCM. You might want to bring an extra bag.

Until next week,

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## *The Weekly Update*

May 30, 2009

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**Dear WCM Shopper**



Last week's rain may have caused a little inconvenience at the market but was welcome news for many of our farmers. Planting season is always such a delicate dance between the weather, the soil, and enough hours in the day. The hours, of course, are always in short supply.

Somebody who is winding down for the season is **Geoff King of Sunnyhill Acres, Inc.** from Cascade. Geoff writes:

"This Saturday, May 30, will be the last market for Sunnyhill Acres this spring; thus our customers' final opportunity to stock up on our maple syrup and maple caramel corn. The only thing worse than running out of pure Wisconsin maple syrup on a cold February morning is to run out in January!

"We would like to thank WCM and its management for the opportunity to again serve our Madison area customers. And we thank our loyal customers for their continued support of Sunnyhill Acres and its maple products."

Geoff goes on to remind us that the maple corn is available in sealed containers. Any purchased now should stay fresh well into the summer. "Though I have heard it tends to disappear fast once opened," he notes.

Of *serious* consequence for those who sweeten their complimentary coffee at the market, Geoff reveals, "This will also be the last weekend to sweeten complimentary coffee with a sample of our syrup at the information booth." Ouch!

With a better than average maple crop this year, there is a possibility that Sunnyhill Acres will show up in the fall with a bit of remaining syrup for sale.

Geoff concludes by mentioning, "I have attached to this post a couple of photos of our WCM booth from last year and a possible recipe to include; a twist on the traditional oil/vinegar/white sugar dressing to use with all the great salad greens available at our market through the season." Will do, Geoff.

It's a great recipe. There are plenty of salad fixings at the market to prepare a green delight upon which to drizzle the dressing. Happily, we are approaching the height of lettuce season, with numerous varieties available from many WCM vendors.

**Pecatonica Valley Farm**, from Hollandale, offers some beautiful butterhead and other varieties of lettuce along with their chicken, eggs, pork, and beef products. **Primrose Produce** from Middleton and **JenEhr Family Farm** from Sun Prairie are just a few of the WCM vendors whose tables are quickly filling with spring's green bounty.

One green to look for that represents itself beautifully in a salad or a stir-fry is the [pea shoot](#). This tender green offers a subtle pea flavor and is a favorite in Southeast Asian cooking.

**Yang's** from Madison had some excellent green onions at last week's market. There will be plenty more this week. And the word on strawberries? Just two or three more weeks!

There was a [nice article](#) in last Friday's *Wisconsin State Journal* featuring **Nancy Potter**, co-owner of Potter's crackers in Madison.

*Photo: Salad anyone? Primrose Produce of Middleton offers a great selection of fixings. Photo: Bill Lubing*

**Recipe:**  
**Geoff's Maple**  
**Vinaigrette Dressing**

- 1/3 cup your favorite salad oil
- 1/3 cup pure maple syrup
- 1/3 cup herbal vinegar of your choice

**Instructions**

Combine the ingredients in a pint jar. Mix and drip over fresh salad greens. Keep refrigerated and shake well before each use.

From Geoff King (shown at right) at Sunnyhill Acres.

**Recipe:**



## Stir-Fried Pea Shoots

### Ingredients

- 1 tbsp sunflower, olive, or similar oil
- 1 tsp toasted sesame oil
- 1 tsp fresh ginger
- 2 garlic cloves (or 1 to two [Spring Garlic](#) greens)
- 1/2 tsp sugar or maple syrup
- 1-1/2 pounds of pea shoots, loosely packed
- 1/4 tsp soy sauce
- 2 tbsp [oyster sauce](#)



### Instructions

1. Rinse the pea shoots thoroughly in cold water twice. Lightly drain.
2. In a large wok or skillet over high heat, heat oils add ginger, garlic, and sugar. Toss and add shoots, soy, and oyster sauce.
3. Stir-fry for two to three minutes or until the leaves soften and are tender. Remove shoots, leaving the liquid in the pan. Place shoots on serving dish. Reduce the remaining liquid by one-half. Pour over shoots and serve immediately.

Recipe adapted from [www.recipezaar.com](http://www.recipezaar.com)

With the end of May being the usual "safe frost-free" date, there should be no fear in planting those tender vegetables such as tomatoes, peppers, and basil. The choice at the market is incredible and pulling up close to park makes it ever so easy to transport those delicate flats to your truck bed, trunk, or back seat.

I've been putting off a little spring cleaning project which I've vowed to get done this week. Keep your eye on the [WCM web site](#) for an updated vendor page, new photos, and a little "sprucing up." In the meantime, the coffee is still free as is the raffle.

Until next week,

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