

# GRINNELL HERITAGE FARM

## CSA NEWSLETTER

May 6th, 2009  
Volume 2, Issue 1



Address: Grinnell Heritage Farm Inc., 1933 Penrose St, Grinnell, Iowa 50112

Email: GrinnellHeritageFarm@gmail.com Phone: 641-236-4374

## Spring CSA!

By Andrew Dunham

It's hard to believe that it is May already. The spring weather has taken awhile to arrive, most of the trees and perennials are a week or two behind.

You may wonder how it is that we have any lettuce, spinach, or radishes at all with all of the cooler weather three weeks ago. We saw the opportunity to seed a few rows in the greenhouse about a month ago and took it and the dividends are in this week's share. This is the first week of asparagus harvest for us on the farm this season and it has been wonderful. We should have asparagus in each of the spring shares this season. Next year we will be harvesting an additional acre of asparagus, so we should really have it in abundance in 2010. The rhubarb makes an excellent crisp or pie and freezes well if you have some of your own at home. We planted an additional 250 rhubarb roots this April and anticipate quite a harvest in another year or two.

The spring share runs for four weeks. I'll talk more about the logistics of how the full and half shares work in the first June newsletter. We do have shares available, so pass the word along if you know of anyone who may be interested. Email is the easiest way to reach us as we spend most of our waking moments outside this time of the year.

In closing, two years ago we dug an irrigation pond and it is amazing to see all of the amphibian life around the pond. We have spring peepers, toads, leopard frogs, and our dog loves to chase the bullfrogs through the shallows. Here's to a delightful spring.

### THIS WEEK'S SHARE

Asparagus	1 bunch
Rhubarb	1 bunch
Radishes	1 bunch
Baby Spinach	1 Bag
Red Butter Lettuce	1 Head
Chives	1 Bunch

## News from the Farm

By Andrew Dunham

### SEEDING:

The greenhouse is full of seedlings; in fact it is so full we've run out of space. Yesterday we transplanted 18 beds of transplants, totaling over 11,000 seedlings, a single-day record for the farm.

### SPECIAL PROJECTS:

Field tile was put in early this spring. The cows were put out to pasture this week - So far this spring we've had 11 calves. 600 trees were planted on the north side of the farm and we started constructing our second greenhouse.

### WEATHER:

The weather has been great, we are more confident that we can handle heavy amounts of rain with our field tile.



*New Greenhouse  
in Progress*



## Asparagus

Asparagus can be steamed, boiled in salt water, grilled with olive oil, eaten raw, or made into soup. It's one of my favorite vegetables and I think simple is best with high-quality, fresh spears.

### INGREDIENT LIST:

1 bunch asparagus  
Salt and pepper to taste  
4 to 5 Tbs. butter or extra virgin olive oil

### RECIPE DIRECTIONS:

Wash asparagus and place in a large skillet with cold water. Bring to a boil, salt to taste, and simmer until just tender. Do not overcook as asparagus will become limp, 3 to 5 minutes usually does it. Remove asparagus stalks and pad with a cloth towel to remove excess water. Drizzle with butter or olive oil and add salt and pepper to taste.

## Rhubarb Crunch

From the Unity of the Cross Cookbook, Jody Meyen

### INGREDIENT LIST:

3 C. rhubarb, cut into 1/2" pieces  
1 C. sugar  
3 Tbsp. flour  
1 C. brown sugar  
1 C. oatmeal  
1 ½ sticks of margarine  
1 ½ C. flour

### RECIPE DIRECTIONS:

Grease 9x9" glass baking dish. Mix first three ingredients and place in baking dish. Mix next four ingredients and pour over rhubarb mixture. Will be crumbly. Sprinkle with cinnamon and bake at 350 degrees for 35-45 minutes or until bubbly around the edges.



*Scattergood Friends School helping us transplant onions*

## STORAGE TIPS FOR THIS WEEK'S SHARE

**Head lettuce & Spinach:** store in a plastic bag in the crisper drawer; to rejuvenate, plunge in cold water, let drip dry, then store in a plastic bag in the crisper drawer

**Chives:** store in a plastic bag in the crisper drawer; use in place of onions in omelets, on salads, and added to soups before serving

**Asparagus:** best eaten fresh, but can be stored in a plastic bag in the crisper drawer

**Radishes:** store in a plastic bag in the crisper drawer

**Rhubarb:** Store in wrapped damp towel or in plastic bag in the refrigerator. Best eaten fresh in dessert dishes, but can be frozen and used later.

# GRINNELL HERITAGE FARM

## CSA NEWSLETTER

May 13th, 2009  
Volume 2, Issue 2



Address: Grinnell Heritage Farm Inc., 1933 Penrose St, Grinnell, Iowa 50112

Email: GrinnellHeritageFarm@gmail.com Phone: 641-236-4374

## A Description of Seeding

By Andrew Dunham

I'm beginning to learn that I should write more down. We seed over thirty different crops directly in the ground outdoors and use four different mechanical seeders to do so. I can nearly always remember which seeder I prefer, but I'm not always so certain which seed plate I like to use. The variations of seed plate settings are so numerous and the outcomes can be so different that I am finally keeping better records which will hopefully lead to more uniform stands of produce.

I am forced into better record keeping because we are doing a beet trial this season and each type of beet seed is a different size. I use our European push seeder to seed all of our beets. The seed hopper has a rotating brush on the inside that sweeps seed up the back plate of the hopper and out an adjustable hole that then falls down a chute and into a groove in the soil that has been made by a wedge-shaped shoe. This brush is driven by a chain that is run off of the front wheel, so seed only falls through the hole as I walk forward. So to figure out which setting to use I filled the hopper with a variety of beet seed and rotated the wheel one revolution, then counted all of the seed that came out. If I had too many seeds per revolution I would adjust the seed plate to a smaller hole and count again. By calibrating the seeder this way I hope to have a good stand of each beet variety. Had I just used the regular setting for red beets, I would have ended up thinning most varieties and had very sparse stands of a few others. We will include some of the trial beet varieties in the full and half shares in late June.

### THIS WEEK'S SHARE

Asparagus	1 bunch
Overwintered Celeriac	2
Radishes	1 bunch
Bunched Arugula	1 bunch
Red Butter Lettuce	1 Head
Garlic Chives	1 bunch

## News from the Farm

By Andrew Dunham

### SEEDING:

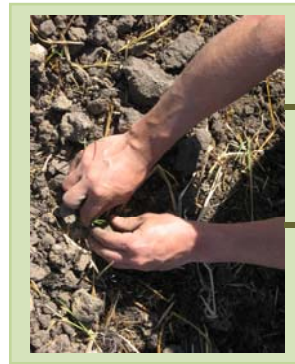
More peas, greens, radishes, and the brussel sprouts all went in this week. I was starting to seed the first green beans when the rain started and caused me to wait a few days.

### SPECIAL PROJECTS:

The new greenhouse is nearly ready for plastic and the packing shed was cleaned late last week.

### WEATHER:

Needed rain fell Tuesday night and Wednesday. We could use some more sunshine to push the plants along.



*Transplanting one of 80,000 onion plants*



## Celeriac Carrot Slaw

Celeriac is a bulbous celery root that stores well into spring. Just peel and use as you would celery in cooking. This recipe is modified from a Madison Area CSA Coalition cookbook.

### INGREDIENT LIST:

2 small celeriac bulbs, grated  
2 carrots, grated  
2 cloves garlic, minced  
2 Tbsp. sherry or red wine vinegar or lemon juice  
Salt and black pepper to taste  
2 tsp. Dijon mustard  
1/3 cup olive oil  
1 Tbsp. sour cream

### RECIPE DIRECTIONS:

Mix garlic, vinegar, salt, and mustard in a bowl. Whisk in olive oil until smooth. Stir in sour cream and pepper. Pour over grated vegetables and toss gently. Allow to marinate for 30 minutes. Makes four servings.

## Garlic Chive Mashed Potatoes

I like to use garlic chives anywhere you may use chives, onion, and/or garlic. They make a wonderful addition to rice or mashed potatoes. Everyone has their own way to enjoy mashed potatoes. I really like to add a good dose of butter, especially when on my summer high-calorie diet.

### INGREDIENT LIST:

1 bunch garlic chives, chopped  
Potatoes, boiled  
Salt and pepper to taste  
A splash of milk  
Butter, 1 or more Tbsp.

### RECIPE DIRECTIONS:

Boil the potatoes. When done, mash with the butter, milk, and chopped garlic chives. Salt and pepper to taste.



*The cows are back on pasture! They, like us, are very occupied by the fresh spring greens*

## STORAGE TIPS FOR THIS WEEK'S SHARE

**Head lettuce & Spinach:** store in a plastic bag in the crisper drawer; to rejuvenate, plunge in cold water, let drip dry, then store in a plastic bag in the crisper drawer

**Garlic chives:** store in a plastic bag in the crisper drawer; use in place of onions in omelets, on salads, and added to soups before serving

**Asparagus:** best eaten fresh, but can be stored in a plastic bag in the crisper drawer

**Radishes:** store in a plastic bag in the crisper drawer

**Celeriac:** Store in a plastic bag in the crisper drawer

# GRINNELL HERITAGE FARM

## CSA NEWSLETTER

May 19th, 2009  
Volume 2, Issue 3



Address: Grinnell Heritage Farm Inc., 1933 Penrose St, Grinnell, Iowa 50112

Email: GrinnellHeritageFarm@gmail.com Phone: 641-236-4374

## Head Lettuce Galore

By Andrew Dunham

I get asked quite frequently during the season about our head lettuce production. We are able to grow some of the nicest, high-quality head lettuce in central Iowa due to many factors. One of the factors working in our favor is that I love to grow lettuce to maturity. Salad mixes have their place, but I prefer the full flavor of a lettuce that is 50 -60 days old. I also really like the fact that we are able to set out lettuce transplants and get a jump on the ever-present weeds. By setting out a plant instead of direct seeding, as we do with the salad mixes, we are able to often get a good crop without weeding at all. The lettuce is already established and is able to out-compete the weeds and shade them out. With salad seedlings we have to hoe and the grass and other weeds grow at about the same rate as the small lettuce plants so it is difficult to harvest and ensure that they are weed free. Our soils here in Grinnell are also very suitable for lettuce production. This season we are growing head lettuce for New Pioneer Co-op in Iowa City. We want a mix of romaine, greenleaf, and red leaf heads. We are also growing a red butter lettuce that you have gotten the past two weeks, this week has a wonderful red romaine, and we will grow a number of heirloom heads as well, including Grandpa Admire's, Forellenschuss, and Sanguine Ameliore. The only downside to head lettuce production is the amount of space it takes up in the cooler. A dozen good sized heads easily fills a bushel, so when we harvest over 1000 heads at a time it fills a lot of crates. Today we set out another 3000 heads. There is something to be said about a bed of freshly set out lettuce plants, it is beautiful.

### THIS WEEK'S SHARE

Asparagus	1 bunch
Overwintered Beets	2 lbs
Spinach	1 bunch
Sorrel	1 bunch
Red Romaine Lettuce	1 Head
Chives	1 bunch

## News from the Farm

By Andrew Dunham

### SEEDING:

I just seeded the parsnips, the third salad seeding, and the first green beans that were rained out last week.

### SPECIAL PROJECTS:

This week we will be trying to catch the groundhog that has been eating all of our melon plants at night. We will keep replanting.

### WEATHER:

What a change a few days brings. We had frost on Saturday night that nipped the asparagus; we had to cull quite a bit in the field. Today it was in the mid-80s.



*Red Romaine  
Lettuce - Yum!*



## Sorrell Puree

The sorrell will look a bit like pointy spinach but have a lemony kick. It is distantly related to rhubarb but the leaves are edible. Use in salads or try this excellent puree as a condiment over eggs or vegetables. Adapted from *Vegetarian Cooking for Everyone* by Deborah Madison.

### INGREDIENT LIST:

3 Tbsp. butter  
3 Tbsp. finely diced green onion  
3 cups packed sorrell leaves  
2 cups vegetable stock  
1 ½ Tbsp. flour  
1 cup half-and-half  
Salt and pepper

### RECIPE DIRECTIONS:

Melt half the butter in a saucepan and brown the diced onion. Add the sorrell and let it wilt, the leaves will turn dark green. Add the stock and bring to a boil, then simmer, cool, and puree. Melt the other half of the butter in the same pan, stir in the flour and cook for 2 minutes. Wisk the pureed sorrell into the flour then whisk in the half-and-half. Season with salt and pepper and then cook over very low heat, stirring frequently, for 20 minutes.

## Sweet and Sour Beets

This is a repeat recipe from last season, but it is my favorite easy way to prepare beets, especially those that have been in cold storage all winter. If you want lower-calorie beets use less of the butter mixture. I find myself using around two tablespoons butter.

### INGREDIENT LIST:

Beets, 1–2 lbs.  
Equal parts:  
Honey  
Rice Vinegar or other suitable vinegar  
Butter  
Salt to taste

### RECIPE DIRECTIONS:

Roast the beets in a 350 degree oven until you can pierce them easily with a fork. (The beets can also be boiled.) I drizzle olive oil over the whole beets and bake them uncovered, but they can be wrapped in foil. Peel the beets when cooled and pour the melted butter, vinegar, and honey blend over the beets. Serve hot or cold.



*Young Chard Seedling*

## STORAGE TIPS FOR THIS WEEK'S SHARE

**Head lettuce & Spinach:** store in a plastic bag in the crisper drawer; to rejuvenate, plunge in cold water, let drip dry, then store in a plastic bag in the crisper drawer

**Chives:** store in a plastic bag in the crisper drawer; they go well with eggs, in salads, and the purple flowers are edible

**Asparagus:** best eaten fresh, but can be stored in a plastic bag in the crisper drawer

**Sorrel:** store in a plastic bag in the crisper drawer

**Beets:** Store in a plastic bag in the crisper drawer

# GRINNELL HERITAGE FARM

## CSA NEWSLETTER

May 26th, 2009  
Volume 2, Issue 4



Address: Grinnell Heritage Farm Inc., 1933 Penrose St, Grinnell, Iowa 50112

Email: GrinnellHeritageFarm@gmail.com Phone: 641-236-4374

## A Typical Week in Grinnell

By Andrew Dunham

It seems as though everyone knows that this is a busy time of year for farmers. Everywhere I go people will say, "You must be busy," and, "If you have the time..." I'm not sure if I actually appear to be that frazzled or if most people are just able to pick up on that sort of thing. Indeed, spring is a very busy time of year for us on the farm but it is a somewhat controlled sort of chaos, especially as the years go by. This past week seems to be fairly typical of weeks this time of the year. Last Wednesday we picked produce in the morning and packed CSA shares before lunch. Melissa, Emma, and I did the delivery run to Iowa City and Cedar Rapids, attended a wake in NE Iowa, and then returned to Cedar Rapids for a birthday party. On Thursday we had a whirlwind of a day. The organic inspector visited so Melissa and I shored up our paperwork while Thomas, Allie, and Janet worked outside. I gave the inspector an hour farm tour before rushing off to the Grinnell farmers market. Melissa stayed home and went through all the bookwork with the inspector while I was at market. On Friday I did tillage in the morning, marked beds, we laid out all the header lines for the irrigation system, and set out all the celery and celeriac in the afternoon. In the evening I tilled the college community garden in exchange for their help planting onions. Saturday I awoke at 4 to go to Iowa City for market which runs from 7:30 to 12. On the way home I made three stops looking for irrigation pipe fittings but had to get them online because they weren't available. By the time the van was unloaded it was 3:30 and I still had chores to do. Sunday was a day of rest; only the regular chores to do. Monday we picked produce, cleaned out the old greenhouse, planted it to cucumbers and tomatoes, and started assembly on the water wheel transplanter. In the evening I sourced a number of supplies and Melissa updated all of our CSA lists and our QuickBooks forms. Today I gave Collin a ride to school because he missed the bus. Then we picked 180 lbs of spinach, I took Emma in for immunizations, and did all the maintenance on the tractor. Tonight it's newsletter writing. A typical week.

### THIS WEEK'S SHARE

Asparagus	1 bunch
Rhubarb	1 bunch
Spinach	1 bag
Radishes	1 bunch
Red Leaf Lettuce	1 head

## News from the Farm

By Andrew Dunham

### SEEDING:

We've seeded more squash crops as transplants in the greenhouse and all of the fall brassicas like the brussel sprouts, lacinato kale, and cauliflower.

### SPECIAL PROJECTS:

Thomas is working on putting the water wheel transplanter together. We will also be putting the mulch layer together and getting it ready for action when we transplant squashes.

### WEATHER:

We've had a good week for harvest, though it's been a bit cool to push the crops along. We are getting rain tonight as I write this.



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*Greenhouse*

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## Roasted Asparagus with Parmesan

Thanks to Sayde Brooker for this recipe!

### INGREDIENT LIST:

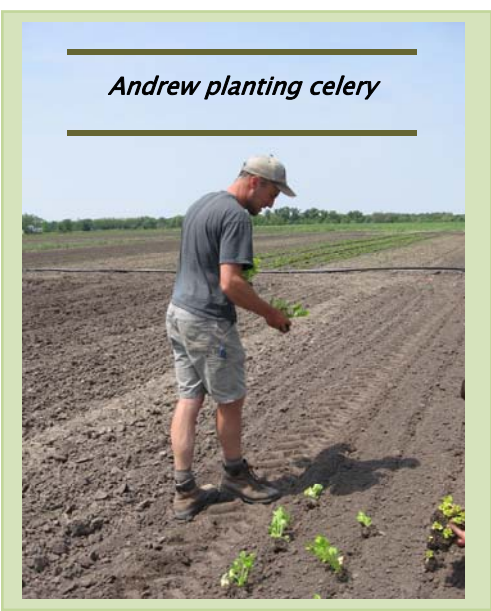
- 1 bunch of asparagus
- 3 or more tablespoons olive oil
- pinch of salt, pepper to taste
- 3 or more tablespoons parmesan

### RECIPE DIRECTIONS:

Preheat oven to 450 degrees.  
Lay asparagus on a cookie sheet (they fit better the short way). If there is a great variety in the sizes of your shoots, you can separate them onto two trays. Drizzle heavily with olive oil, pepper and only a pinch of salt (remember, parmesan is quite salty). You can use a spatula to scoop and roll the asparagus to cover more evenly with oil, but they cook well without the attention.

Roast in the oven--9-11 minutes for thin shoots, 10-12 minutes for thick shoots. Halfway through cooking, use spatula to roll shoots around to cook (to cook other side and cover in oil).

After time, sprinkle parmesan on top and put back in the oven for 2-4 minutes (until parm starts to brown). Serve hot, room temperature, or cold. It's delicious.



## Spinach Quiche

I like my spinach raw, but there have been some calls for a quiche recipe. This one is easy, you can improve on it with higher quality ingredients and homemade pastry.

### INGREDIENT LIST:

- One deep nine-inch pastry shell.
- 1 packet of frozen spinach, chopped.
- 2 medium eggs.
- ½ stick of butter.
- 1 cup of milk.
- 1 cup of Swiss or other suitable cheese, grated
- ½ cup of onions, chopped.
- ½ cup of celery, chopped.
- ½ cup of cottage cheese.
- 1 teaspoon of salt.
- ½ teaspoon of pepper.
- ¼ teaspoon of nutmeg.

### RECIPE DIRECTIONS:

Blanch chopped spinach in salted water for a brief time, then drain. Sauté the onion and celery in butter until the onion is soft. Spread cottage cheese over the bottom of the pastry shell. Mix the spinach with the onion/celery mixture and spread over top of the cottage cheese. Sprinkle cheese over top. Combine the eggs, milk, salt, pepper and nutmeg, and pour over all. Bake at 350°F for 45 minutes.

## STORAGE TIPS FOR THIS WEEK'S SHARE

**Head lettuce & Spinach:** store in a plastic bag in the crisper drawer; to rejuvenate, plunge in cold water, let drip dry, then store in a plastic bag in the crisper drawer

**Rhubarb:** store in a plastic bag in the crisper drawer

**Asparagus:** best eaten fresh, but can be stored in a plastic bag in the crisper drawer

**Radishes:** store in a plastic bag in the crisper drawer