



The Tuv Ha'Aretz CSA at the Forest Hills Jewish Center

July 10, 2012 | 20 Tammuz, 5772

See this newsletter online: groups.yahoo.com/group/TuvForAllFHJC – in "Files > 2012 Season"

TUV HASHAVUA — BEST OF THE WEEK

THANK YOU TO OUR VOLUNTEERS!

THIS WEEK:

Carrie Liefer
Judy Beizer
Hilda Chusid

FOOD BANK DELIVERY:
Lenny Fuchs

NEXT WEEK:

Jennifer Powsner
Illyse Sisolak
Stephanie Scorziello

ADAMAH:
Noemi Altman

FOOD BANK DELIVERY:
David Snyder



CHICO BAG

fundraiser:

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Small Farmers, New Business Model, Local Agriculture, by Kirk Johnson

Beyond the familiar mantras about nutrition or reduced fossil fuel use, the movement toward local food is creating a vibrant new economic laboratory for American agriculture. The result, with its growing army of small-scale local farmers, is as much about dollars as dinner: a reworking of old models about how food gets sold and farms get financed, and who gets dirt under their fingernails doing the work.

More predictable revenue streams, especially at a time when so many investments feel risky, are creating a firmer economic argument for local farming that, in years past, was more of a political or lifestyle choice. "How you make it pay is to get closer to the customer," said Michael Duffy, a professor of economics at Iowa State University.

Labor, as it has been for generations in the United States, is still the big wrinkle for local growers. But in many cases, experts like Professor Duffy say, the local food system is increasingly going its own way, differentiated from the traditional labor pool of migrant workers that the United States' mainstream produce system depends upon.

"A byproduct of local food is that local hands are more likely to be producing, harvesting, packing and marketing it, especially for new farmers on small-scale farms," said Dawn Thilmany McFadden, an agricultural economist at Colorado State University who is part of a leadership team for a training program for beginning farmers.

In other instances, migrant workers who had worked as low-wage laborers are now becoming entrepreneurs. A nonprofit group near Seattle, Viva Farms, helps Hispanic farmers get started, with assistance in language training and in understanding the vagaries of the marketplace.

"We work harder now," said Misael Morales, 35, describing the main difference between life as a farm laborer and as an entrepreneur. Mr. Morales came to the United States from Oaxaca, Mexico, as a teenager, and last year he and his brother, Salvador, 32, began farming a one-acre plot at Viva Farms. They mainly grow lettuce for Seattle markets and restaurants.

Viva Farms' director of business and organizational development, Ethan Schaffer, said former wage workers like the Morales brothers are often surprised when they realize the prices and profit margins that local organic produce can fetch — something, he said, that rarely penetrates down to the daily life of a migrant picker. "They get the ag part, and once they realize how the market works, they're off and running," Mr. Schaffer said.

Other new farmers, like Christopher Brown, 26, a former Marine infantryman who worked his first day last month at Grow Washington, an organic farm north of Seattle, have more complex motives. Taking a break from the carrot-cleaning table, he says he dreams of building an organization to help bring other veterans into local farming.

But the economic path for local food is still in many ways difficult. The federal farm bill, passed by the Senate last month, has provisions to support farmers' markets. But in Washington State, a program aimed at helping growers build direct marketing relationships with grocers or restaurants died last year in a round of budget cuts.

For Jenny and Alex Smith, both 25 — first-year farmers on a tiny plot about an hour north of Seattle — the economic equation comes down to lowering costs and needs. They live in a recreational vehicle with no television or Internet service, and they hope to break even this year, earning perhaps \$1,600 a month through farmers' markets and subscriptions for weekly produce packages. But they say a farming life still feels, to them, full of promise. They had boring office jobs in Seattle, they said, and now they have a farm dog named Banjo.

Excerpted and adapted from *nytimes.com*, "Small Farmers Creating a New Business Model as Agriculture Goes Local" by Kirk Johnson.

THIS WEEK IN THE BOX:

Zucchini
Scallions
Beets
Toscano Kale
Green Swiss Chard
Carrots
Parsley
Batavian Lettuce
FRUIT SHARE:
Rhubarb
Blackberries
HERB SHARE:
Thyme
Peppermint

FEATURED RECIPES:

Crunchy Zucchini Rounds with Sun-Dried Tomatoes and Goat Cheese

Gale Gand, health.com

2 zucchini
1/4 tsp salt
1/4 tsp freshly ground black pepper
2 oz sun-dried tomatoes, packed in oil (about 24)
3 oz goat cheese
2 tblsp chopped fresh chives
2 tblsp extra-virgin olive oil

Slice zucchini into 1/4-inch-thick rounds. You should have about 24 slices. Lay out on large platter; season with salt and pepper.

Place a sun-dried tomato on each slice, then top each tomato with a pinch of goat cheese. Sprinkle tops with chopped chives, and drizzle with extra-virgin olive oil. Serves 8, three rounds per person.

Nutritional Information: Per serving: 86 calories, 7g total fat, 3g protein, 4g carbohydrates, 1g fiber, 5mg cholesterol, 1mg iron, 103mg sodium, 27mg calcium.



Swiss Chard with Garbanzo Beans (Chick Peas) and Tomatoes

Syd, allrecipes.com

2 tblsp olive oil
1 shallot, chopped
2 green onions (scallions), chopped
1/2 cup garbanzo beans, cooked and drained
salt and pepper, to taste
1 bunch Swiss chard, rinsed and chopped
1 tomato, sliced
1/2 lemon, juiced

Heat olive oil in a large skillet. Stir in shallot and green onions; cook and stir for 3 to 5 minutes, or until soft and fragrant. Stir in garbanzo beans, and season with salt and pepper; heat through. Place chard in pan, and cook until wilted. Add tomato slices, squeeze lemon juice over greens, and heat through. Season with salt and pepper to taste.

Nutritional information: Per serving: 122 calories, 7.3g total fat, 0mg cholesterol



Tuv Ha'Aretz at the Forest Hills Jewish Center

106-06 Queens Blvd
Forest Hills, NY 11375
718.264.7000, ext 250
tuv@fhjc.org

Our Websites:

FHJC: www.fhjc.org

Hazon: www.hazon.org

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