

TUV
HA'ARETZ
WINTER
CSA
2014 -2015



TUV HASHAVUA BEST OF THE WEEK

**SPRING/SUMMER CSA
SHARE REGISTRATION
INFORMATION
COMING IN
FEBRUARY!
Watch your email!**

MANY THANKS TO OUR VOLUNTEERS

1/15/2015

5-8pm Pick-up
Judy Hu
Anny Sun
Jesse Shapiro
Natalie Zych

Noon Truck Unload
Matthew Weitzman
Valeria Vavassori-Chen
Brian Gardner Hoashi

8pm Unclaimed Shares
Emilee Wyner

2/12/2015

5-8pm Pick-up
Jeffrey Piekarsky
Ed Reznik
Iris Litwin
Shiri Bernstein

Noon Truck Unload
Marta Blyth
Nora Kujo
Brian Gardner Hoashi

8pm Unclaimed Shares
Adrian Hayes

TUV HA'ARETZ CSA at the
Forest Hills Jewish Center

106-06 Queens Blvd.
Forest Hills, NY 11375
718-264-7000, ext 250 |
tuv@fhjc.org

- **Tuv Ha'Aretz CSA:**
foresthillstuvcsa.com
- **Facebook:**
www.facebook.com/tuvFHJC
- **Twitter:** @tuvFHJC
- **Mountain View Farm:**
mountainviewfarmcsa.com
- **FHJC:** www.fhjc.org
- **Hazon:** www.hazon.org

Mountain View CSA Farm – Getting to Know the Farmers Behind Our Winter Share

Valeria Vavassori-Chen, Member Tuv Ha'Aretz CSA

After emailing Mountain View Farm to set up a phone appointment, I picked up my phone last Wednesday morning and called Liz Adler, not sure what to expect and unsure if my list of questions was any good.

It's 9:20am and I am a little early (our agreed appointment was 9:30am) so I apologized if I had caught her in the middle of something else. A young, calm voice on the other side of the phone tells me it is absolutely not a problem and then she apologizes if I hear any noise behind her as she is homeschooling her kids.

Farmer, mom, and homeschool teacher – this conversation is going to be interesting.

Ben Perrault and Liz Adler started Mountain View Farm in 2005 so I was very curious as to what they used to do before that time. Liz was working as a clinical social worker, with a master's degree in education (hence the homeschooling) while Ben had always had a strong interest in farming and had been working for different farmers around the area. Ben's interest in sustainability and farming goes way back – Liz shared a story that when he was around 7 years old he had asked his mom if he could have seeds to plant as presents for Christmas!



The Mountain View Farm team currently numbers 18 members, six of whom include the farm's bookkeeper and the people who staff the farm's CSA distribution site; in-season, this includes the pick-your-own crops on the farm and a small farm store that sells local products such as bread, honey, cheese etc.

Twelve of the farm's employees work in the fields, tending to a total 120 acres. Seventeen acres are on the farm property in Easthampton, MA, and the rest of the acreage is leased in Easthampton, Hadley and Northampton, MA. When they started the farm, Liz said she thought they would farm only one piece of land. They quickly realized this was not possible, so they had to adapt and lease wherever possible. It's a good thing that the soil in this area is made of flood soil from the Connecticut River and is renowned as great for farming – so much so that it is well known among farmers across the nation. Liz remembered one time she was talking to other farmers in California, and when she told them where her farm was, they immediately recognized, "Ah, Hadley Loam."

She added that farming among many parcels may be a logistic nightmare but is also very practical, because you can pick and choose the best field for a certain crop. Plus, when a storm hits, it may only affect one area and not the others. This is exactly what happened during Hurricane Irene, when luckily just one location was flooded badly but the others were left relatively unharmed so the farm was still able to provide vegetables to its customers.

On the farm website (mountainviewfarmcsa.com) I had read that there is no use of synthetic chemicals in their farming and their methods are in compliance with organic standards and practice. I asked how they choose their crops, and Liz

said they grow everything they can suited to the area. They try to grow some favorite staples (carrots, potatoes, sweet potatoes, etc.) and then something interesting, yet still practical (all the different radishes we have been receiving in our winter share).

Mountain View Farm focuses on prioritizing soil health and vitality. Liz talked about giving soil the opportunity to regain its fertility by rotating crops, selecting particular types of crops and giving it time to rest. This approach just goes along with how they plan ahead at Mountain View Farm. "You always need to think of next year," says Liz.

This was also their mindset as they approached the idea of working with local groups. Liz was saying how, for example, every season there was always a natural surplus that the farm donated to the local Food Bank. So instead of leaving this surplus to determine what the Food Bank received, Mountain View decided to farm some land strictly for the Food Bank to provide a stable provision of healthy, fresh food to the local community (100,000 lbs a year!) while benefiting from knowing how much to farm and to account for in their financial planning. Mountain View Farm CSA currently partners with a number of organizations, including Farm2Work Baystate Health and The Food Bank of Western Massachusetts.

I personally love how they have translate their CSA mission into words (from the website): *Building community and engaging citizens in taking responsibility for the land on which their food is grown.*

Liz confirmed what I had been suspecting all along – farming is never boring!



Valeria Vavassori-Chen is a trained bioethicist who is currently a stay-at-home mom. Originally from Italy, she lives in Forest Hills with husband Andy and daughter Isabella.

NOTES FROM MOUNTAIN VIEW FARM

We'd like to remind you of a few storage tips to help you make your share items last!

Potatoes: Cold and dry – in your fridge

Sweet Potatoes: Warm! Keep in your house at room temperature

Onions and Garlic: Cold and dry

Everything else is best kept cold with high humidity – perforated plastic bags in the fridge are perfect!

1/15: WHAT'S IN THE BOX??
Carrots, Sweet Potatoes, Potatoes, Turnips, Watermelon Radishes, Beets, Cabbage, Garlic, Onions, Canned Tomatoes ...

Vegetarian Borscht with Mulligatawny Seasonings

VegRecipesofIndia.com | Serves 8

- 3 beets
- 2 - 3 potatoes, diced
- 3 tbsp vegetable oil
- ½ tsp turmeric / haldi powder
- 1 tsp coriander / dhania powder
- 1 tsp cumin / jeera seeds
- 1 tsp fennel /saunf seeds
- 2 large onions, sliced
- 2 - 3 garlic cloves, chopped (opt)
- 2 cups cabbage, thinly sliced
- 3 carrots, diced or grated
- 29 oz canned tomatoes (keep liquid) OR 4 fresh tomatoes, peeled, chopped
- 2 cups chopped dill, from 1 large bunch
- salt, pepper, water to taste
- Greek yogurt or sour cream, to serve

Boil beets in a large lidded pot, in enough water to submerge the beets. Once they are cooked through, remove beets from the hot cooking liquid – save this liquid in the pot. When beets are cool, grate coarsely and set aside.

Add potatoes to beet stock, simmer.

In a large skillet, heat oil and add turmeric, coriander, cumin, and fennel. Fry the spices for 1 minute. Add onion and garlic, and sauté till softened.

Add cabbage to the beet stock.

Into the skillet, add carrots and cook till softened, 5 minutes. Add grated beets and tomatoes and continue to cook another 5-10 minutes.

Add vegetables from skillet into the pot, along with juice from the canned tomatoes. Add more water to the soup to adjust thickness to taste, then add chopped dill and simmer for 15 minutes. Season to taste with salt and pepper.

Serve with a dollop of Greek yogurt or sour cream, if desired.

*From thekitchn.com: **Bubble and Squeak** is traditionally made from cold leftover vegetables, such as those that accompanied a Sunday roast. The key ingredients are cabbage and potatoes (boiled or mashed) but other leftovers may be thrown in, as well: Brussels sprouts, kale, onions, leeks, carrots, peas, and meat. The ingredients are coarsely chopped, combined, seasoned with salt and pepper (and maybe a little freshly grated nutmeg), and pan fried until crisp and golden. The mixture can be packed down into the pan – causing the cooking sound that gives bubble and squeak its vivid name – or shaped into smaller patties.*

Bubble and Squeak

*Serves 4
PinkCherryBlossom | food.com*

- 4 tbsp / half stick butter (or vegetable oil)
- 2 onions, chopped
- 2 cups cooked cabbage, chopped
- 2 cups cooked potatoes, roughly mashed

Melt butter and fry onions until soft but not brown. Add the cabbage and potatoes and mix well. Pat the mix down into a cake. Cook for 10 min over a medium heat. Then turn / flip and cook again for 10 min.

Nice served with poached or fried eggs.

SIGN UP FOR TUV HA'ARETZ CSA EMAILS

Are you getting the TUV emails? You'll get advance notice of vegetables to expect in the share, recipes, tips about storage and cooking, changes to schedules and pick-up locations, etc.

If you haven't yet signed up to get on our email list, send your request to tuv@fhjc.org