



The Market Voice

Spring 2012

Our mission is to provide a convenient and socially enriching place where the community can purchase the freshest locally grown produce and farmstead products available directly from farmers and producers who represent traditions and skills that we value as part of our way of life.

For the Love of Herbs! by Sarah Blue

Here it is the end of March and it is the warmest I can remember. Somehow we have slid right into spring with nary a blizzard. But there's still time - never say never in Minnesota! Yesterday (March 20th) someone asked me when the Red Wing Farmers Market would open. Regardless of the warm temperatures, unless a farmer has a hoop house set up, we won't see vegetables a month early. At best we may end up a week or two ahead of schedule. Mother Nature has a way of evening out things over time. If you've given in to your urge to start gardening, I'm sure you've discovered that garden soils are warming up but are still very moist. You can damage your soil structure if you over-work it or walk on it before frost moisture has worked its way out of the ground. It's already been in the 70's and 80's and it feels like it's time to enjoy fresh meals out on the porch, patio, or picnic table. Fresh herbs are just the thing to brighten spring dishes. Herbs are a vast group of herbaceous plants that humans have used for cooking and medicinally for thousands of years. When we were still nomadic hunter-gathers, humans learned which plants could be collected to ease ailments and those that improved the flavor of food. If you are interested in an in-depth exploration of herbs, the public library has a great collection of herb cooking and gardening books. Looking into them helped me decide that the subject of herbs is so vast that I would just focus on those easily found in our area at market or that you might grow yourself.

Those most easily found year round are mint, basil, dill, sage, rosemary, cilantro, parsley, and thyme. You'll pay a steep price for them at the grocery store for a small amount. Cilantro and parsley are more reasonably priced. For a long time, parsley was considered a 'garnish herb'. A little sprig on your plate at a restaurant. It's much more than that. You can use it generously chopped

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Ah, comfrey
How I have grown
Not to love thee!

As thou hast grown
Everywhere
By some mysterious
Seedless means

Thy promise of
A healing cup of tea
Has turned to
Weedy misery...

A leafy pox
And blight upon
My garden
And my soul...

There is a lesson
Here the gods
Intend I'm sure...

When planting
Medicine:
Beware the cure!

Paul Schaefer,
Master Gardener
and RWAFFMA member

The President's Corner

by John Anderes, RWAFMA President



Mr. Big has plans - really Big plans - but needs your help!

I have to make a confession. I love winter; so what happened to it? As of this writing (3/11) I have seen frogs hopping across the road, kids in T-shirts and shorts, bears roaming around with their cubs, some bugs have already hatched and are perched on my window wanting to enter, and Colvil park all but barren of bald eagles. To me it looks like Mother Earth is at war with Mother Nature! I'm afraid no one is a winner in that scenario. Our vendors could be in for a challenging year; low moisture in the soil, pests are sure to be on the rise and if planting is done early, as one would expect with this weather, an average frost date could not only wipe out what's been planted, but the apple crop could also be in danger. Such is the life of a farmer, scratching out a living on the back of Mother Earth. Please excuse my weather rant but for a native Minnesotan this just isn't normal weather.

We are officially a non-profit organization due in large part to the efforts of Chuck Richardson of Richardson & Richardson. If it hadn't been for him, this daunting task would have never come to pass! By entering into this challenging process it really gave us time to look at what we are here to provide to the community. Because of this reflection, we are now going to focus on childhood education as it relates to nutrition and the origins of the foods we eat.

We plan on offering cooking demos, hands-on veggie gardening, as well as a whole host of other activities to get both the kids and parent(s) involved in healthy foods along with our regular activities.

We are still working on how we can accept Food Stamp cards that we will match dollar for dollar, but it is an expensive and labor intensive task. We are looking at getting funding from other non-profits and individuals but it might be a stretch to close those deals in time for this season. If any of you reading this have any ideas please feel free to contact me. I believe this will not only help the financially stressed members of our community, but according to some of the reports that I have read, it could increase the volume for the food vendors by as much as 41%. I do feel very compassionate about offering this program to the community and if there is anyone out there that thinks they can help support this program, either financially or on a volunteer basis, please contact me.

See you at the market!



Winter Market basket winner was John Litsenberg.

Red Wing Farmers Market continued as a Winter Market at Sargent's Nursery from November through the beginning of March.

Self-Sowing Plants

by Terry L. Yockey, Master Gardener



Every spring I start looking for signs of my favorite self-seeding plants popping up all over the garden. Some make their first appearance early in the season and others wait until the weather is consistently above 68 degrees. Some don't bother to come up one year and then like magic they reappear the next.

That's why I like self-seeders. They seem to have a mind of their own. I tend to be a very structured gardener...each plant in its place. Self-sowing plants force me to be a little more flexible. When a Johnny-jump-up or lady's mantle comes up in the middle of the pathway, so be it. I wouldn't plant it there on purpose, but what kind of a person would I be not to give it a fighting chance after it took all

that trouble to plant itself right there in the pebbles?

I do have a few favorites that I exert some control over. Since self-sowers can be fickle, I always harvest seeds from the annual plants that I like the best and then sow them into the proper place the next season. If you have never saved seeds, it is easy, fun and even economical.

For annuals that bloom all season long, I wait until mid-August and then quit dead-heading and let the seeds mature on the plant. When the seeds turn brown or black it is time to harvest them. I collect the seeds in the afternoon on a sunny, dry day and put them into a brown paper bag. Don't put them into plastic bags, because the seeds might still have some moisture and they will get moldy or rot.

Let your seeds sit in the paper bag for a while in a cool dry place to completely dry out. Once they are done drying, sift through them and take out any big pieces of shaft. It doesn't have to be perfect, but ideally you don't want a lot of extra plant refuse in with your seeds. Once you've sifted through and gotten rid of the excess, place the seeds in a white business envelope that has been labeled with the plant's name. Seal it up and then place that envelope into a plastic zip bag with your other seed envelopes. The plastic bag goes into the veggie drawer in the refrigerator for the fall and winter. That's it...next season, just pull them out when the weather gets consistently warm and sow them into your garden again.

Chances are they will already be coming up anyway, but this is just your little bit of insurance.

A few of my favorite annual self-sowers are:

Verbena
bonariensis



Cleome Spider
Flower



Johnny
Jump-ups



Clary sage
(Salvia Viridis)



Dana's Breads: a Passion for Baking Brings Satisfied Customers.

by Bruce McBeath, RWAFMA Member



How a bakery stimulates our imagination and our appetite: the primordial experience of sense and taste mixes with the memory of the rich aroma of grandma's kitchen and the sweet, slightly tart taste of fresh apple pie or the crunchy flavor-filled bite of a cookie. Dana Blattner brings all these experiences together in the number of specialty baked products she brings to the Red Wing Farmers Market. For the past 7 years, Dana has built a base of satisfied customers with her summer berry breads, pumpkin and zucchini and raisin breads in the fall, and her rich variety of oven fresh pies, cookies and bars.

Dana was introduced to a farmers' market when she helped her father sell vegetables at the market in Hastings. But Dana's passion was baking, and when she noticed that bakery products were also available at her father's market, she decided to bring the products of her passion to her home community of Red Wing.

Baking is in Dana's blood and roots. Both grandmothers baked, and over the years, Dana became the producer of holiday baked goods for family and friends. Today, she and her mother continue a light-hearted rivalry about who will be first to come up with a new possibility that expands the frontiers of their baking.

Having ongoing contact with regular customers is a highlight of Dana's experience at the farmers market. Dana's customer service background shines through the thank you cards and letters received from her many satisfied customers. "Your breads are just SO delicious" writes one. And another from a professional cook: "God bless you, young lady - keep up the dynamite bread baking." This kind of customer appreciation is one of her rewards for the 16 hour baking preparation required prior to each market day. She and her fellow vendors have developed a strong sense of camaraderie and community that is another rewarding market experience.

Because there's a lot to do to get ready, "I've learned to be really well organized." She's also careful to keep the necessary balance between work, baking, and relaxing with her horse or her canine companion, Cocoa.

"I don't want to lose the fun of baking and selling at the market".

Dana appreciates that the Red Wing Market is well organized and operated, and has become a destination for people who don't just show up to shop and leave. It's important to her that her customers enjoy the market, the music, and the conversation with spirited vendors like herself.

Pies are Dana's personal market favorite ("they smell so good"). And new this summer -- keep your eye (and nose) out for the cinnamon rolls!



(For the Love of continued from page 1)



and added to any green salad. It's essential to chicken noodle soup. And mixed into a pasta or grain salad it holds up better than most other greens. Of all the herbs, it is the most nutritious relative to the amount you might use. A cup added to salads adds 100% of the RDA of vitamin A, 133% of daily vitamin C, 8% of calcium and 21% of iron. One of the easiest ways to use parsley in a salad is to make some version of the Middle Eastern *tabbouleh* salad. Bulgur (cracked wheat) is the traditional grain, but couscous or quinoa (a wheat-free option) work as well. Cooked and cooled, the grains are added to a cup or more of chopped parsley, 2 tablespoons of chopped fresh mint, sliced green onions, chopped tomatoes, and diced cucumbers. Mix equal amounts of olive oil and lemon juice (about ¼ cup each) with a little salt for the dressing and you have a filling, nutritious salad that will hold for several days in the refrigerator. For extra flavor and nutrition, I add Greek olives, diced feta cheese or cooked chickpeas.



Cilantro has a 'love it or hate it' reputation. It's intensely green, almost grassy, flavor and aroma seem to repel as many folks as it attracts. It is essential for a finishing touch to many Mexican or Thai dishes, but could be passed separately so only those that like it may use it. Cilantro is very delicate

and the distinctive fresh flavor disappears when heated. It's a tricky herb to grow only because it grows so fast and goes to seed, which makes it difficult to keep a supply on hand. You can either plant a little every week or buy it from the Farmers Market. In season, it's a great value and so fresh. Put the whole bunch in a little water and store in the refrigerator. It will keep much longer than if you just wrap it in a plastic bag. If you like cilantro flavor, this recipe makes a great dip or it could be used over pasta like a pesto sauce.

Cynthia's cilantro dip:

- 1 can of diced garlic tomatoes or fresh tomatoes with a clove of garlic
- 1 bunch cilantro, washed and roughly chopped (you can use the stems as well as leaves if they are green and tender)
- 2 teaspoons lemon juice and ½ to 1 teaspoon curry powder

Whirl all ingredients in a blender (adding a little water or tomato juice if using fresh tomatoes). Taste to see if you want more curry powder and cool before serving. Try to use it up because the fresh cilantro flavor does not hold very long in the refrigerator.

Basil and tomatoes are 'summer' to many people. A friend happily makes herself a 'tomato delight' sandwich when the first homegrown tomatoes appear. Simply a slice of good bread, a smear of cream cheese, one slice of a big, juicy tomato topped with shredded basil leaves is a 'delight'. One of the nicest things about basil is that if you have a surplus — from a deal at the farmers market or your own bumper crop — it is easily preserved. Freeze chopped basil in ice cube trays of water and you have fresh basil for soups or sauces all winter. Pesto is easily made with basil, olive oil, parmesan cheese, garlic, walnuts or pine nuts (can be expensive) and salt. Chopped to a near paste in the food processor and frozen in small portions, pesto makes a simple delicious meal over pasta or on a pizza. Pesto is forgiving. You can leave out the cheese and/or nuts if you like and it's still delicious.

Dill is indispensable for canning pickles and you'll see that market vendors kindly bring in dill when they have canning cucumbers available. It's also easy to grow. If you have dill before cucumbers are ripe you can freeze dill fronds tightly wrapped in a paper bag until you need them for pickling. Dill is tender and gives a little zing of 'pickle' flavor which makes it a good addition to a green salad.

Mint grows easily as a perennial in our zone. Too easily, in some cases, as it will take over your flower garden. It does best in a spot of its own, preferring moisture and a little shade. It can elevate almost any summer drink, iced tea or lemonade, to something more fancy. It makes a great herbal tea, whether you have fresh leaves or dried. It goes well with dill and cucumbers in a yogurt type of 'raita' - a refreshing side to accompany spicy curry dishes. Simply strain yogurt with chopped cucumbers, chopped fresh dill and mint mixed with a clove of garlic and a dash of olive oil, red wine vinegar and salt. It keeps well for a week or more in the refrigerator.

Sage, rosemary and thyme also can be grown as perennials. Rosemary needs to be grown in a pot that can be set in a sunny window for the winter. More of a woody shrub than a herbaceous plant, Rosemary is grown almost as a hedge in its native Mediterranean climate. All three herbs have tougher leaves and should be de-stemmed and chopped to use in most dishes. They also have stronger, almost musty, aromas, which doesn't sound appealing. But in the right amounts they have an affinity for a great many dishes. I love roasted potatoes with rosemary or a whole roasted chicken with sprigs of rosemary tucked under the skin. Thyme and sage are essentials for Thanksgiving turkey stuffing. Two other perennial herbs, oregano and French tarragon round out what would make a lovely herb garden. I like oregano in Mexican recipes like an enchilada sauce or for an Italian tomato sauce. Tarragon goes particularly well with chicken breast that is cooked and shredded in medium size pieces. For the dressing, mix equal parts sour cream and mayonnaise with a couple tablespoons of chopped fresh tarragon, a little sherry vinegar, dijon mustard, salt and pepper. You can keep it simple or added some chopped walnuts or julienned fresh snow peas to make it a bit fancier.

When fresh herbs aren't available, dried herbs are an option. Some of the essential oils (and flavor) dissipate when dried. Also, the volume of herb is reduced. It's good to remember that too much of most herbs is not a good thing. You might use a tablespoon of fresh oregano but only a teaspoon of dried in a tomato sauce. You must be careful not to keep dried herbs in the wrong location and for too long. If you have paid upwards of \$3 for that small packet of fresh herbs from the grocery store, it's a shame to discard what you don't use. A damp paper towel tucked in the plastic container will extend its refrigerator life or you can use the microwave to carefully dry herbs until they are crumbly. Stored in an airtight container, away from light and heat, most dried herbs will keep for 6 months or so. They never go bad. They just become bland. The best approach is to compost all your dried herbs once a year. Try to buy small amounts or dry them yourself to keep them as fresh as possible. Some dried herbs just don't hold well dried. Cilantro is one, it has to be freshly dried to have any flavor at all and dill seems to get harsh over time. This year I gave myself permission to splurge on fresh herbs in winter. For the most part it's worth it, though for some reason, basil seems weakly flavored in those plastic clam shells.

We won't see fresh herbs at the farmers market right away this spring, unless some are grown in hoop houses. But when they are available, they will be a much better value than what is available in grocery stores. The perennial plant vendors will usually have some of the hardier herbs to sell. Thyme, sage and oregano are easy to grow and come in a number of cultivars. French tarragon is harder to find. Often you'll see Russian tarragon, which is not a good substitute. Less common are sorrel, chervil, salad burnet, lovage, and hardy lavender to add variety to an herb garden. Most herbs grow well in pots, making it possible to snip a few sprigs for cooking, and they mix well with flowering annuals.



From Asparagus to Zucchini : A Guide to Cooking Farm -Fresh Seasonal Produce

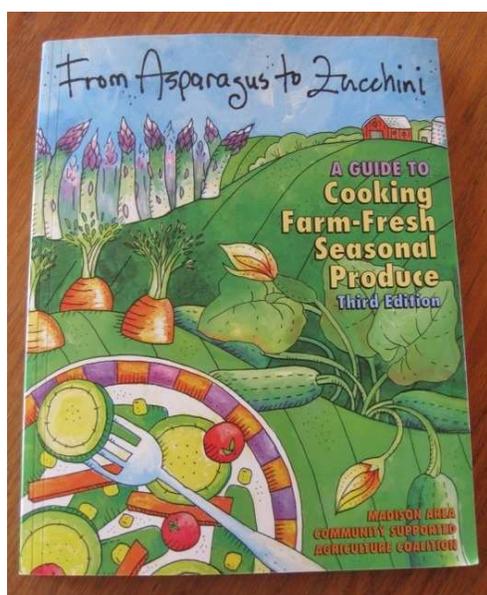
Reviewed by Dianne Aisenbrey , RWAFMA Member

Want to try a new vegetable, but don't quite know what to do with it? *From Asparagus to Zucchini* is kind of like having a mini-vegetable encyclopedia in your kitchen. This cookbook is intended for cooks who buy local, cook seasonal, and eat fresh.

More than fifteen years ago members of the Madison Area Community Supported Agriculture Coalition pooled their knowledge, experience and enthusiasm and came up with this recipe-resource book. It caught on so quickly - obviously there was a need - that a third edition was published in 2004.

The vegetable and herb sections are arranged alphabetically, and each food item begins with historical and nutritional information. It also includes cooking and storage tips along with at least five to ten recipes for each vegetable or herb. The recipes are not complicated and ingredients are readily available.

Have fun buying vegetables at the Farmers Market this summer and cook up a storm!



Summer Greens and Potato Fry-Up

From Asparagus to Zucchini, page 86

- 1 Tbls. butter
- 1 tsp. chili oil (or a little crushed red pepper)
- 1 baking potato, or 3-4 small red potatoes thin sliced
- 1 leek or small onion, finely chopped
- salt and pepper
- 1/2 lb. fresh spinach, chard or other mild-flavored greens, washed and stemmed
- 1/2 tsp. dried ground thyme
- 3/4 cup cooked sweet corn
- 3 sprigs fresh oregano, torn up (or other fresh herbs)
- 1/2 tsp. paprika
- grated Parmesan (optional)

Heat butter and chili oil in large nonstick skillet over medium flame. Add potatoes, leeks or onions, and season well with salt and pepper. (You may also partially cook the potatoes in salted water until nearly tender before frying them.) Let potatoes brown slightly on one side for several minutes. Toss potatoes, and let them brown lightly again.

When potatoes are almost tender, toss in greens and thyme, then add a little less than 1/4 cup water, cover the pan, and raise heat to high. Let steam until greens are nearly done, 1-2 minutes. Uncover, add corn, oregano, paprika, and allow potatoes to finish cooking and browning. Season to taste and top with Parmesan, if desired. Serve with fried eggs if you like. Makes 2-4 servings.

Enlightened Shoppers at the Farmers Market



It's ok to ask questions about the food that you're going to eat. In fact, it's a pretty good idea to do so! That's the beauty of buying your food at the Farmers Market. Don't be shy. You can ask your questions directly to the person who has grown or prepared your food.

Any farmer, who has gone to all the work of carefully preparing for the growing season, tended his crop, harvested it, and brought it to the Market to sell, will be delighted to answer your questions. If a farmer is certified as organic, you can rest assured that the product is organic. Of course, some farmers use organic practices even though they have not gone through the certification process. So it's up to you as a consumer to inform yourself.

Here are some ideas for questions you might like to ask the farmers:

Vegetables and Fruits

- How do you fertilize your crop?
- What do you use as a fertilizer?
- Do you grow organically? Chemical-free?
- Are you certified as an organic grower?
- What do you do to keep pests under control?
- How do you control weeds?



Meats and Poultry

- Are your animals and poultry free-range? Grass fed?
- What supplements do you feed your animals? What is the purpose?
 - Is it organic? Is it genetically modified?
 - Are the animals given growth hormones?
 - How are your animals wormed? *

**Ivomec for worms is not allowed in order to be organics. As a preventative measure for worms, organic growers use apple cider vinegar in the water, and it helps to build a healthy immune system. Diatomaceous earth, a fossilized shell flour which dehydrates parasites so they die, is used in the feed. This also kills pests on vegetables.*

This information provided by Karen Peters of Peterson Produce, Certified Growers

The Summer Market at the Depot *Grand Opening — Saturday June 2*



**Local musicians give us
the gift of their music
every Saturday morning**

Activities for the kids

Games

Demonstrations

Opportunities to meet the farmers

**Animals to pet
Up close and
personal**



**The forgotten crafts
Watch and learn**



4 H Fun

**Learn about home grown food
and how to cook it**

Master Gardeners at your service.



See you at the Market!

Vendors of the Market

Bennetsen, Eske & Audrey	River Road Honey Farm
Blattner, Dana	Dana's Bread
Blue, Maureen & John	Flower Valley Orchard
Brooks, Nancy & Pete	Shady Lane Farm
Bystrom, Dean & Nancy	Bystrom Produce
DeMarce, Dennis	Dennis' Produce
Dondlinger, Lori	J & J Produce
Giesen, Randy	Clara's Comfort Foods
Holden, Blaize & Lufi, L.	Green Gardens
Johnson, Susan	Hawk's Brain Garlic
Kaufer, Steve & Cheryl	Hartland Prairie Farm
Kolberg, Darlene	Hay Creek Raspberries
Kong, Lo, Leng & Mai	Leng Gardens
Loftus, Eric	Erocs BBQ
Lorence, David	Lorence's Berry Farm
Nelson, Carol	Nelson Family Services
Nesbitt-Miller, Leah	Nesbitt's Nursery
Overlander, Donald, Leanne	Bottled Emotions
Overlander, David & Carol	Overlander Organics
Peterson, Chuck & Karen	Heritage Organics
Peterson, Richard & Marie	Petersen Produce
Schurhammer, Kathleen	Schurhammer Farm
Smith, Joe M.	Thurston Hill Farm
Smith, Char - Char's Bars,	Handcrafted Soap, Lotion
Vang, Kue, Bao & Shua	Vang Gardens
Xang, Thao	Xang Gardens
Ziffer, Dave	Grateful Bread

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It is because of the Friends of the Market, who generously volunteer their time and support, that our Farmers Market is extraordinary! You make it possible to have music every Saturday, to demonstrate the crafts of bygone days, to bring animals for children to pet and cuddle, and to welcome new customers and visitors. We couldn't do it without you! Please consider becoming a Friend of the Market in 2012. Thank you and see you at the market!

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