



# News from the Farm



Volume 3, Issue 3  
July 6, 2011

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Monroe, Wisconsin

## About The Small Farmer and Independent Farms

ON the trip home from the farm last weekend, I was stuck in traffic along the stateline. My usual radio station on the trip varies from Chicago Public Radio (WBEZ) to Wisconsin Public Radio (WHAD—Delafield) to Madison’s WERN (NPR). (All mentions a shameless ad for public radio broadcasting.) My favorite program is “Simply Folk” and as I crept around the curve and headed into Spring Grove, IL, on Rte 173, came on “It’s The Farmer Who Feeds Us All.”

An especially catch-y melody and lyric drove me the rest of the way to my destination, repeating itself in my ear.

The message?  
That the American farmer is the basis for the health

and well-being of our entire nation! Without our farmers, can you imagine where our food would come from? At best, our own backyard, the neighborhood garden patch, or your relatives’ overproduction in their own gardens. At worst, our nation would have to turn to food sources in other parts of the world. Not even a possibility.

The small farm was all but extinct just 15 years ago. Between 1930 and 2011, the United States has lost an astonishing 5 million farms. Happily, in the last 13 years, small farms are losing less “ground” statistically despite the fact that today, small farmers are leaving their land at the rate of 330 each week. Of the

approximately 2 million farms of any size remaining, just a little more than 91% are considered small farms (with less than \$250,000 in yearly sales), BUT these sales represent 15% of the total agriculture sales from all types of farms. As small farms are closed, no new small farms are being established to take their place. Instead, big agribusiness is acquiring the land and setting up shop.

Very few young people become farmers today (whether row crop farmers OR diversified family farmers), and half of all U.S. farmers are between the ages of 45 and 65, another 30% are over age 60, while only 6% of all farmers are under the age of 35.



Our little 3 cylinder American made 1980's Ford tractor.

### Special points of interest:

- About The Small Farmer and Independent Farms
- What is in your share box this week?
- Summer Guests
- Clean, Separate, Cook, and Chill
- Questions and Answers
- Featured Produce and Recipes

## What is in your share box this week?

- Salad Mix with Dill
- Hakurei Turnips
- Carrots
- Fresh Garlic Bulb
- Scallions
- Sugar Snap Peas\*
- Collard Greens
- Sage

### Notes and Comments:

**Radishes/Hakurei Turnips:**  
For longer keeping, remove leaves. Radish leaves are not edible, but turnip leaves are delicious steamed or added to soups.

**Fresh Garlic:** For garlic POW, use minced anyplace you want an assertive garlic

flavor.

**Collard Greens:** Store loosely wrapped in plastic bag. Wash collards just before using. See recipe section.

\*Our featured item this week

## DID YOU KNOW?

Between 1974 and 2002, corporate-owned U.S. farms increased by more than 46 percent.



## Summer Guests

OUR participation in a local network of women in sustainable agriculture has led us to a most pleasant connection. Suellen and her family have rented 5 acres of Grassroots Farm pasture to summer 28 Targhee-cross ewes from their sheep farm.

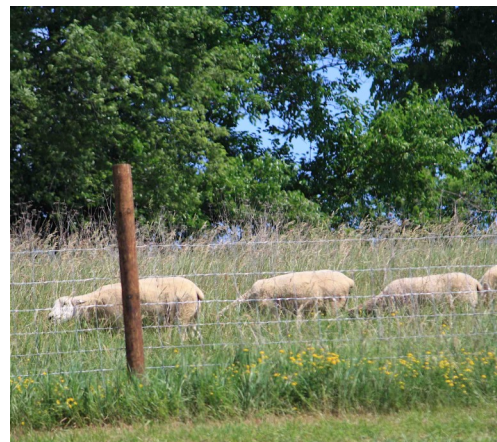
Our southeast pasture paddock is lush with knee-high perennial grasses and birdsfoot trefoil, a pasture legume, these days. Just three years ago it was a thistle patch and, at the recommendation of a grazing specialist from the UW extension, we took all the grazing animals off the property to encourage the pas-

ture to make a come back.

Come back it has! Enough so we can return carefully managed grazing to this area of the farm.

Targhee sheep are bred for high quality lamb and wool production. This breed is one of the youngest in the United States (registry started in 1951) and is a registered breed developed at the University of Montana specifically for northern climates.

In the winter our guests will return to Kinkoona Farm in Brodhead, where they will have shelter for the winter and lamb in the spring.



## Clean, Separate, Cook, and Chill

CLEAN, separate, cook, and chill. Those four words are the main message of the government's new ad campaign to raise consumer awareness of safe food handling and preparation techniques.

Agricultural Secretary Tom Vilsack and Department of Health and Human Services' Secretary Kathleen Sebelius announced on June 28, 2011, just in time for the Fourth of July holiday, the launch of "Food Safe Families," a multimedia initiative that will use videos, print ads

and a website, [www.foodsafety.gov](http://www.foodsafety.gov), to teach people about the risks of food poisoning and how they can reduce those risks by handling food properly at home.

The campaign is a collaborative effort between the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Food Safety Inspection Service (FSIS), the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), in cooperation with the Ad Council.

Dr. Ben Chapman, an assis-

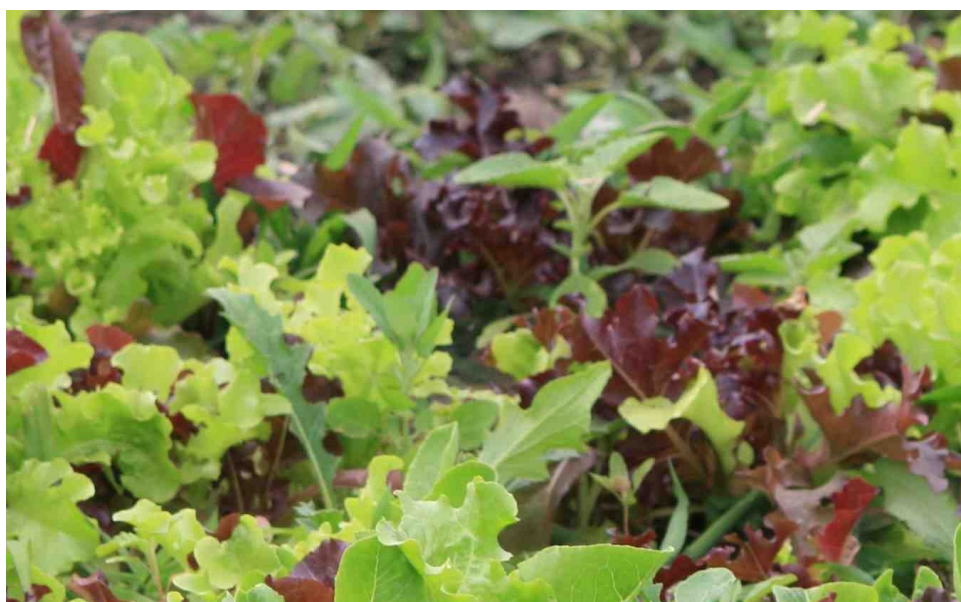
tant professor and food safety specialist at North Carolina State University, recommends that consumers ask farmers at farmers' markets whether they know about and use good agricultural practices in growing their produce, or checking to see whether a restaurant has been cited for sanitation violations before eating there.

We know our food handling guidelines at Grassroots Farm. We'll take care of the "front side" if you'll take care of the "back side."

## Question and Answer

Q. About your salad mix, how do you get the different varieties mixed together so well?

A. We mix our bagged salad mix while it is still a seed. All the varieties for the mix are calculated in proportion and then the seeds are completely mixed together BEFORE they are planted. We plant salad mix in a wide swath so the young leaves can be cut with a shears to harvest. This method results in the fragile leaves being already mix together when they come in from the field.





## Featured Produce— Sugar Snap Peas

Amazingly, the cultivation of edible podded peas goes back 12,000 years to south-east Asia! Peas, whether edible-podded or not, are members of the vast family of legumes, which have 75' tall locust trees and the lowly purple vetch in the family tree.

Sugar Snap peas are loaded with Riboflavin and B6. They are an excellent source of fiber, Vitamin C and A. They are low in fat, cholesterol, and sodium.

Sugar snap peas are picked when the pod fills out and becomes round, like a green bean. Some sugar snaps have a fibrous "string," like string beans. The string may be removed by breaking the top stem toward the side with the string and pulling it down the pod.

The pods are delicious raw or cooked lightly. Try de-stringed sugar snaps in a crudité tray with a creamy dill dip.



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## Sugar Snap Peas Oriental

*A speedy side dish with satisfying flavors. Be creative and add garlic, scallions, or a few slivers of red bell pepper.*

- 1 t. soy sauce
- 1 t. cornstarch
- 1 t. cooking oil
- 1 t. sesame oil
- 8 oz. sugar snap peas

- 1/2 c. carrots
- 1/2 c. chicken broth

Whisk together the soy sauce and cornstarch in a bowl until cornstarch is completely dissolved; set aside. Prepare a skillet with a teaspoon of oil and place over medium heat; drizzle in the sesame oil. Place the peas and carrots in the skillet; cook

and stir for 2 minutes. Pour the broth over the vegetables. Bring to a boil, cover and reduce heat to low; simmer until vegetables are slightly softened, 3- 5 minutes. The vegetables should be tender crisp. Stir in the soy sauce mixture; continue to cook until the sauce has thickened.  
2 servings

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## Lemon Butter Sugar Snap Peas

*Another super simple side dish, this time using the microwave. In general, microwaving vegetables preserves their nutritional value better than a stir fry method.*

- 1/2 lb. fresh sugar snap peas
- 1 T. water
- 1 t. minced garlic
- 1T. butter, melted

- 1 t. lemon juice
- 1/2 t. Italian seasoning

In a microwave-safe dish, combine the peas, water and garlic. Cover and microwave on high for 3-4 minutes or until tender crisp; drain. Combine the butter, lemon juice and Italian seasoning. Drizzle over peas and toss to coat.

### A Word about Blanching and Freezing Vegetables

Preserve vegetables when they are in season for use during the winter. You can't go wrong with blanching and freezing for winter use, if you have the freezer space.

We frequently recommend, if preserving the harvest appeals to you, that you invest in the most current version of the "Ball Blue Book" or access the University of Wisconsin Extension website:

<http://www.foodsafety.wisc.edu/preservation.html>





## Honey-Glazed Edible Podded Peas and Carrots

- 2 c. sliced carrots
- 1/2 lb. edible podded peas, trimmed
- 3 T. butter
- 1/2 t. cornstarch
- 2 T. honey

Bring a large saucepan of salted water to a boil. Add carrots and cook until tender crisp, 10 to 12 minutes. Add peas and cook until tender crisp, about 3-4 minutes; drain and

set aside.

Melt butter in the same pan and stir in cornstarch. Return carrots and peas to pan and stir in honey. Cook over medium heat, stirring occasionally, until heated through.



## AJ's Collard Greens Northern Style

*In the South, collards are cooked for hours with smoked meats. The result is a traditional southern treat. Here in the North, we find collards to be more palatable when cooked quickly and seasoned with bacon and onion.*

- 1 bunch of collards, stems removed (about 8 oz.)
- 2 t. sugar
- 1 T. salt
- 1/4 lb bacon, cut in small pieces
- 1/2 med. yellow onion, diced
- 1/4 c. seasoned, dry bread crumbs

Roll collard leaves together in a cylinder and slice in slivers. Bring 1 qt. of water to a boil, add sugar and salt and then slivered collards. Simmer exactly 4 1/2 minutes. Remove collards from pot and set to drain.

In 10" skillet, sauté bacon and onions until crisp and brown. Remove from pan. Retain drippings. Add bread crumbs to pan and sauté until crisp and brown. Return collards and bacon and onion to pan to mix and re-heat. Serve with cracked black pepper and a splash of vinegar or lemon.



## Radish Confetti Salad

- 4 large radishes or Hakueri turnips, washed and trimmed
- 1 medium carrot, trimmed
- 1 celery stalk, trimmed
- Six to eight chives, cut into one-inch pieces
- salt and freshly ground black pepper
- 1/4 c. sweet rice vinegar
- 1/4 c. olive oil
- 1/2 t. celery seed
- 6 tender large lettuce leaves

Using a mandolin or box grater, shred the radishes (or turnips) and carrots. Cut the celery into matchstick-size pieces. Toss the vegetables together in a medium bowl.

In a small bowl whisk together olive oil, vinegar, celery seed and salt and pepper. Pour over vegetables and toss. Serve on a bed of romaine lettuce.

