

ROASTED RED PEPPERS

INGREDIENTS:

4 large red peppers
1/4 cup olive oil
2 teaspoons balsamic vinegar
2 cloves garlic, thinly sliced (optional)
5-6 fresh basil leaves (optional)

DIRECTIONS:

Heat oven to 425 deg F. Lightly grease baking sheet and place whole, washed peppers on sheet to roast for about 20 minutes, or until the pepper is soft and the skin begins to blister and burn. Place peppers in a paper bag, close tightly, and allow to cool. Peel skin off peppers, remove stem and seeds, and cut into strips. Combine olive oil and vinegar, and add peppers. Can add garlic or basil and other herbs to flavor. Store in refrigerator. May be frozen.

Cut along dotted line for 3x5 recipe card



Farm Manager:

Michael Snow
msnow@accokeek.org

Apprentice Farmer:

Angela Nelson

Farm Crew:

Natesha Tabor

Design, Editing and Production:

Julie Brunton
Laura Ford

Accokeek Foundation

3400 Bryan Point Road,
Accokeek, MD 20607

Phone: 301.283.2113

Fax: 301.283.2049

www.accokeek.org

Upcoming Events

(complete details at www.accokeek.org)

TREE IDENTIFICATION WALK

Saturday, September 20, 2008

10:00 a.m. to 11:30 a.m.

**Meet at Education Ctr, Light Rain or Shine
\$2.00 Non-Member, Free to Members**

This walk pays tribute to trees in all of their spectacular fall colors. Join Joe Clements, owner of Heaven's Garden in Port Tobacco, Maryland, for a walk down Bluebird Trail into the arboretum and back along the Paw Paw trail. Wear tough, comfortable shoes.

COLONIAL FOODWAYS

Saturday, September 20, 2008

10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.

**3rd Saturdays Monthly from Mar-Dec
National Colonial Farm, Rain or Shine**

Admission Fee Required, Members Free

Love food? Ever wonder how people cooked before microwaves or what people ate before fast food? Join us as interpreters demonstrate preparation of foods, representative of "middling" sort tobacco growing families in the late 1700s. Demonstrations vary monthly and involve seasonally available foods, colonial implements and methods.

For more information about these, or other events, please contact Julie Brunton at 301.283.2113 or at outreach@accokeek.org.

FIELD NOTES

Volume 13, Number 20 September 15, 2008

Love that Radish!

Mike has talked about the benefits of cover crops in past issues of Field Notes, as well as our many experiments on the farm. I thought now would be a good time to bring up a cover crop experiment that we are taking part in. We are working with Charlie White, a student of Dr. Ray Weil, at the University of Maryland to plant some radishes in different areas of the farm. These aren't your run-of-the-mill salad radishes, but they are, in fact, "eating" radishes – similar to Japanese Daikon radish. Don't worry, we don't plan on filling your SHARE boxes, pockets, and trunks with fall radishes, as these are better called "tillage-radishes." Dr. Weil has been working with a team of researchers and farmers since 2001 to study the benefits of the tillage radish. The objective of the project was to study weed suppression during and after tillage radish cover crops to better understand how they may be used in grain or vegetable farms of the Mid-Atlantic region (Weil, 2007).

However, the results of their study proved more beneficial. Here's how it works: tillage radishes, planted in the fall as a cover crop, have been shown to benefit the soil's fertility, reduce soil compaction, and limit weed growth. The radish can grow a very

THIS WEEK'S HARVEST

Acorn Squash

Beans

Chard (or Reds and Greens)

Garlic

Leeks

Onions

Peppers

Potatoes

Summer Squash

Tomatoes

large taproot, up to 2" diameter and 18" long! (Weil, 2007) The idea is that the radish taproot drills holes in the soil. This action is called "bio-drilling" and opens up spaces for plant roots, oxygen, and earthworms to move freely. The radish, fully mature by winter, dies off from the

cold temperatures leaving its leafy green matter as a residue on the soil surface. This decomposed organic matter not only adds nutrients to the soil, but also suppresses the growth of early spring weeds. The large roots decay under the soil leaving behind the organic matter for spring and



Forage radish seedlings, September 2008

summer crops. Studies show that the radish cover crop can capture 150-200 lbs of nitrogen per acre (Weil, 2006). This nitrogen will be available in early spring, which can be a huge benefit to an early crop planted over the tillage radishes. This nitrogen uptake and storage is great for the environment. Farmers typically apply a lot of nitrogen to their soil. Plants are not able to absorb it all, and the excess tends to wash away, eventually draining into the Chesapeake Bay. Since radishes can absorb large amounts of nitrogen from the soil, they prevent the pollution of nearby waterways.

We are especially excited about this research for our site. When we might otherwise be frustrated by a wet spring and unable to work the soil for the first planting, next year we hope to be able to plant right into the beds with the radish cover crop with no tilling needed.

Preparing a Seedbed with Plants Instead of Steel

Our experiment began a few weeks ago, when Charlie visited the farm with some pink flags and some radish seed. First, we choose several

different places on the farm for the experiment and determined many variables we wanted to include in the experiment. We're looking at how the radish cover will do compared to no cover crop and using a mixture of radish and oats. We needed to randomize these treatments within each bed, so we applied the very technical approach of drawing pieces of paper from a hat. Once we had the experiment mapped out on paper, it was time to head out into the fields. We dedicated one plot (three beds) each in the main field and the new field. We placed pink flags in the different sections of the beds indicating where a new variable would take place. We then seeded the different sections with the tillage radish seed. It's just starting to come up now, and I encourage you to take a walk in the fields and look for the pink flags. We'd be happy to explore this experiment site with you over the next few months.

Enjoy your SHARES,
Angela

APPLE FILLED ACORN SQUASH

Recipe from Recipes4u.com

INGREDIENTS:

3 acorn squash
2 apples, chopped
1/2 cup walnuts, chopped
1 tablespoon orange rind, grated
1/2 cup brown sugar
2 tablespoons margarine, melted

DIRECTIONS:

Combine all ingredients except for squash. Preheat oven to 350 deg F. Cut squash in half lengthwise and scrape out seeds. Place cut side down in baking dish and bake for 25 minutes. Mix the other ingredients. Turn squash cut side up, fill with apple mix and continue baking for 20 minutes, or until squash is tender.