



Harmony Valley Farm

An update for our Community Supported Agriculture Members - Since 1993

www.harmonyvalleyfarm.com

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Looking to the future, the multigenerational impact of agrochemicals

By: Andrea Yoder

Honesty is the best policy, and honestly—I wish I weren't writing this article. As I've thought about this week's topic and how this article might come together, I've had a whole mess of feelings ranging from mad to sad with a little bit of anxiety and overwhelm mixed in between. The topic of this article spawns from last week's newsletter where we reported some recent news highlights in the world of agriculture as featured in *The Organic & Non-GMO Report*. One of the articles we mentioned from their most recent publication was one entitled "*Toxic legacy: new science reveals generational harm of pesticides.*" The article reports on the work and observations of Dr. Paul Winchester, a pediatrician currently practicing in Indiana. The introductory paragraph starts as follows:

"When Paul Winchester, a pediatrician, moved to Indiana from Colorado in 2002, he noticed something disturbing—a high number of birth defects. 'I was used to the number of birth defects I should see in a community hospital, and I saw many more in Indiana,' says Winchester, who is medical director of the Neonatal and Intensive Care Unit at St. Francis Hospital in Indianapolis."

Winchester started digging in to figure out the cause for his observations, and his research pointed him to the herbicide atrazine.

Atrazine has been widely used as a herbicide in agriculture for many years, especially in Midwestern states where corn and soy are major row crops. If you take a look at the *U.S. Geological Survey's map of estimated atrazine use in the U.S. in 2015*, you'll see some of the Midwestern states including Indiana, Illinois and Ohio are amongst the states with the greatest annual atrazine use. Unfortunately, atrazine has a relatively long half-life and is not strongly absorbed by the soil, thus

What's In The Box?

ZUCCHINI OR YELLOW SUMMER SQUASH: Zucchini and summer squash are easy to freeze and can be put to later use in baked goods, soups and casseroles. Simply shred it, put it in freezer bags and pop it in the freezer. No need to cook it before freezing.

GREEN AND/OR SILVER SLICER CUCUMBERS: Looking for something different to do with your cucumbers? Use them in a smoothie combined with pineapple, strawberries, or orange juice!

WHITE SPANISH ONIONS: Remember, this onion is not meant for long term storage, so put them to use now! Dice them up and add them to a batch of fresh salsa.

MISSOURI GARLIC: We're in the process of topping our garlic and sorting out the seed for next year's crop. Once we finish doing so, we'll have a better idea as to how much garlic we have available for your boxes!

SUN ORANGE OR CHOCOLATE SPRINKLES OR RED GRAPE TOMATOES: With the cool weather we've had over the past week or so, the tomatoes have been ripening pretty slowly. We are just starting to pick some of our larger tomato varieties, so watch for more to come very soon!

ORANGE CARROTS: Wash and cut into carrot sticks and store them in a wide-mouth canning jar with a little water to keep them moist. Keep them in the front of your refrigerator so you can see them when you open the refrigerator looking for a snack!

BROCCOLI: If you have more vegetables than you can eat this week, consider freezing the broccoli. Simply blanch the broccoli (peeled stems and florets) in salted boiling water, just until bright green. Shock the barely cooked broccoli in ice water to stop the cooking process. Drain, pat dry and freeze in freezer bags.

CAULIFLOWER: White vegetables, such as this, contain a phytochemical called anthoxanthin which is beneficial for cardiovascular health. Enjoy cauliflower steamed, roasted, stir-fried or raw.

GREEN BELL PEPPERS: Dice them and use them as a topping for pizza or in an omelet for breakfast.

JALAPEÑO PEPPERS: Just in time for fresh salsa! Make a spicy corn salsa with fresh sweet corn, onions, tomatoes, fresh herbs and a little jalapeño for spice.

SUN JEWEL MELONS: This is the bright yellow fruit with white stripes and an oblong shape in this week's box. It has crisp, white, sweet flesh. While it looks like a squash, it is not. It may be eaten raw.

SWEET CORN: If corn is stored at a warmer temperature, the sugars will convert to starch and it will be less sweet corn. Keep it cold to keep it sweet!

GREEN TOP GOLD BEETS: This is the beet those who don't like beets usually enjoy. See this week's **vegetable feature** for more information.

CHOICE: EGGPLANT & BASIL—Please be courteous of other members and only take one portion of the choice items. We hope to have enough of both for most or all vegetable shares. We will have more opportunities over the next few weeks to enjoy this item as a choice offering.

runoff from areas of use carries atrazine into groundwater, rivers and streams. In Andre Leu's book, *The Myths of Safe Pesticides*, he cites that "In lakes and groundwater, atrazine and its breakdown products are persistent, and can persist for decades." Why is this a problem? Because atrazine is a known endocrine disrupter and can negatively impact human hormonal systems.

See our **blog** for the rest of this article!

Featured Vegetable: Green Top Beets

Beets are a crop we have available starting in mid to late June with availability extending through December and sometimes even into January and February. There are some beets better suited to harvest for storage and others that are intended for harvest with the green tops. We grow three different colors of beets including the traditional red beet as well as chioggia beets (candy striped inside) and golden beets. At our market stand, we're often asked to explain the difference between the different colors of beets. In general, all of our beets, regardless of color, taste like beets. Red beets have more of that traditional earthy beet flavor. The chioggia and golden beets are generally more mild in flavor, but typically are as sweet or sweeter than the red beets. Individuals who don't care for beets generally like and will eat golden beets. One of our market crew members calls golden beets "the gateway beet" that is a good starter beet for those who are still learning to like them and may not care for the earthiness of red beets.

(See our [blog](#) for the rest of this vegetable feature article!)

Cooking With This Week's Box!

Happy August! We've got a beautiful box for you this week including a bit more sweet corn and tomatoes. We've just started picking our larger varieties, so we're hoping to have more to send your way next week. Let's start this week's cooking with the featured vegetable, beautiful green top golden beets. Golden beets are the beet variety most likely to be embraced by all—both those who love beets and those who are still learning to like them. This week we'll use the beets and their tops to make **Golden Beet Risotto with Crumbled Ricotta Salata and Sautéed Beet Greens** (See Below). Risotto takes a little time to make, but it's really pretty simple and the end result is elegant. Serve it with a glass of white wine and you're set.

(See our [blog](#) for the rest of Chef Andrea's suggestions for utilizing every item in your box including recipe links!)

Golden Beet Risotto with Crumbled Ricotta Salata and Sautéed Beet Greens

Yield: 4 servings as a main course

2 medium golden beets, trimmed, peeled, and cut into ¼-inch dice	⅔ cup diced white onion	¼ cup freshly grated Parmesan cheese
6 cups chicken stock or broth	1 ½ cups Arborio rice	3 oz ricotta salata cheese, crumbled
4 Tbsp unsalted butter	Kosher or fine sea salt, to taste	2 Tbsp fresh flat-leaf parsley, chopped
1 Tbsp olive oil	1 cup dry white wine	Freshly ground black pepper, to taste
	Sautéed Beet Greens (see below)	

1. In a 2-qt saucepan, combine the beets and stock and bring to a simmer over medium heat. Cook the beets until tender yet still quite firm when pierced with a fork, about 15 minutes (They should be slightly underdone, as they will finish cooking in the risotto.) Using a slotted spoon, transfer the beets to a bowl and set aside. Adjust the heat so the stock barely simmers.
2. In a heavy 4-qt saucepan over medium heat, melt 2 Tbsp of the butter and then add the oil. Add the onion and sauté until translucent but not brown, about 3 minutes. Add the rice and 1 tsp salt and stir until the grains are well coated with the butter and oil, about 1 minute. Add the wine and let it come to a boil. Cook, stirring constantly, until most of the wine is absorbed.
3. Add the beets and 2 cups of the stock to the rice and cook, stirring frequently, until the rice has almost completely absorbed the liquid. Adjust the heat so the risotto is kept at a slow simmer. Repeat, adding 1 cup of the liquid at a time, stirring until it is almost fully absorbed before adding more. Reserve ¼ cup of the liquid for adding at the end.
4. Meanwhile, prepare the sautéed greens as directed and keep warm.
5. After about 18 minutes, the rice will be plump, creamy, and cooked through but still slightly chewy and the beets will be tender when pierced with a fork. Stir in the remaining ¼ cup stock. Remove the risotto from the heat and stir in the remaining 2 Tbsp butter, the Parmesan cheese, and about half of the ricotta salata, and the parsley. Season with salt and pepper.
6. Spoon the risotto into warmed shallow bowls. Mound a portion of the beet greens on top. Garnish with the remaining ricotta salata and serve immediately.

Sautéed Beet Greens

Yield: 2 servings on its own

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| 1 bunch beets, with green tops attached | 1. Trim off the greens, leaving 1 inch of the stem attached to each root. Reserve the roots for another use. Stack the leaves, then cut the stack in half lengthwise through the center vein. Chop the greens crosswise into large pieces, about 2 inches wide. Rinse the greens in several changes of cold water until they are clean and the water is clear. Dry them in a salad spinner or blot dry with paper towels. |
| 1 Tbsp olive oil | 2. In a large sauté pan, heat the oil over medium heat and swirl to coat the pan bottom. Add the garlic and sauté until soft but not brown, about 1 minute. Add the greens and toss with tongs until wilted but still crisp-tender and bright green, about 3 minutes. Add the lemon juice, season lightly with salt and pepper, and then give the greens a final toss in the pan. Serve immediately. |
| 1 large clove garlic, thinly sliced | |
| 1 tsp fresh lemon juice | |
| Kosher or fine sea salt, to taste | |
| Freshly ground black pepper, to taste. | |

This recipe comes from Diane Morgan's cookbook entitled *Roots*.