



Harmony Valley Farm

Producers of Fine Organic Produce & Beef

An Update for Our Community Supported Agriculture Members - Since 1993

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Madison and Local Edition

Immigration—Do We Need Them?

By Richard de Wilde

Once again, our U.S. Congress is tackling the very controversial issues of immigration. Some of the issues being debated presently include the need for foreign labor, "amnesty," and guest workers. Is foreign labor needed or are jobs being taken from unemployed citizens? Should immigrants already here illegally be given a visa to allow them to stay and work legally or are they criminals who should be sent home? Should guest worker policies be based on family ties or skills? This is complicated by a 22 year back log of family visa applications and varying skill needs from agriculture to computer technology. Can issues surrounding these workers be dealt with collectively? Each time immigration comes up in Congress we get our hopes up that this time comprehensive immigration reform will happen, but once again it looks a long way off.

If it were not for the 10 million illegal immigrants working in this country, our food production, food processing, and service industries would grind to a halt. Many of these people are currently working in restaurant kitchens, food and meat processing plants, hotel stewarding departments, on landscaping and construction sites, or on farms including Wisconsin dairy and produce farms. The effect of labor shortages is already impacting U.S. agriculture, evident by the increase in food imports while domestic crops go without being harvested due to a shortage of harvest workers.

Harmony Valley Farm increasingly relies on Mexican immigrants to do the majority of the work here.



Delivery Driver Jose Rodriguez

Despite continuous postings of employment opportunities at our farm, these positions go unfilled by local workers. It is not just that there are no locals available. We can't use students on summer break because our "season" is 8 to 12 months. We could hire some workers from the Huber Program at the Vernon County jail, but as soon as they are out on probation, they stop coming to work!

Our Hispanic employees are here and ready to work every day on time. They are pleasant and very willing workers who work despite rainy, hot or cold conditions. They are here, year after year, learning to do all of the many harvest/planting/washing/packing/tractor driving/label printing/record keeping jobs around the farm. When we could not find a truck driver for Madison deliveries, Jose Rodriguez came through for us. We can depend on Jose to be here at 2:15 am every Saturday morning to ensure Madison CSA members receive their boxes.

There are an estimated 10-12 million "undocumented" workers in this country, but in fact most do have "documents." You would not believe the number of high-end restaurant owners who have personally told me they have helped workers obtain false documents so they could keep their kitchen staffed. I'm told it costs less than \$200 to get very professionally done documents. Documents are necessary to get a job, a driver's license, and insurance. Very few

This Week's Box

Brown Week

- ♥ **ARUGULA OR SALAD MIX:** Combine with roasted asparagus and a lemon vinaigrette
- ♥ **ASPARAGUS:** Last taste of the season!
- ♥ **GARLIC SCAPES:** Use anywhere you would use garlic cloves, especially tasty in egg dishes and vinaigrettes
- ♥ **KOHLRABI:** See feature on back.
- ♥ **GREEN ONIONS:** Slice thinly and toss into pasta, grain or veggie salads
- ♥ **RADISHES:** Slice and put on a sandwich spread with fresh herbed goat cheese--Delicious!
- ♥ **LETTUCE:** Perfect on top of a grilled burger.
- ♥ **RHUBARB:** Make a rhubarb sauce to top off shortcake or ice cream
- ♥ **SAUTE MIX or SPINACH:** Saute with garlic scapes or onions and finish with a squeeze of lemon juice
- ♥ **STRAWBERRIES:** Who can hold back long enough to make anything out of these---eat them straight out of the container!

CHOICE:

- ♥ **PARSNIPS:** Last chance to enjoy these sweet roots until spring. My final parsnip hoorah is going to be roasted parsnips.

businesses can operate on a "cash only" basis; for most jobs it is necessary to provide two forms of identification, such as a driver's license and a social security number.

How many false documents

are out there? There are probably 8 million workers or more and their employers who are currently paying into government funds. There are possibly \$50 billion paid to the government, never to be collected. These workers pay Social Security, but will never collect; pay taxes, but never file for a refund check; pay unemployment, but never collect. The list goes on. Where does this money go? Maybe there are forces at work here who do not want a change.

Stay tuned for further discussions of this topic in upcoming newsletters.

Part II: Immigration—Build a Wall?

So, if we need workers from Mexico, why do we build a wall?

Part III: Immigration—Guest Worker Program?

How about an improved guest worker program? Harmony Valley Farm currently uses the H2A Visa program, the only legal way for Mexican workers to freely work and return to their families.

Strawberry Festival!

**Father's Day, Sunday June 17th
12:00-6:00PM**

If you are enjoying the strawberries in your box, just think how good they taste plucked straight off the vine and into your mouth as you stand in a sea of strawberry plants. Strawberry Day at Harmony Valley Farm is quickly approaching and we hope you will all join us for our first celebration event of the year. This year Strawberry Day will be held on Sunday, June 17 from noon to 6 pm. There will be plenty of fun and food for everyone. We ask that you bring a dish to share for our potluck meal as well as tableservice for your family. We will provide beverages and a strawberry dessert. This is your chance to experience HVF up close with a field tour and a chance to feed the animals. It is looking like there is going to be an abundance of strawberries this year! You are welcome to pitch a tent in our camping area and spend the night. Please RSVP for camping. We look forward to spending the afternoon with you!

KOHLRABI

The name for this vegetable is derived from the German words "kohl" meaning stem or cabbage and "rabi" meaning turnip. While it is in the cabbage family and resembles a turnip, it grows differently than both. I always assumed kohlrabi was a root vegetable, so I was surprised to see the bulb *above* the ground in the field. It actually is an enlarged stem that is anchored into the ground by a thinner root. Its stems and leaves shoot up from the bulbous part to give it a rather galactic appearance.

We grow both green and purple kohlrabi, which are no different from each other once they are peeled. The bulb and the leaves are both edible. The fibrous peel should be removed from the bulb prior to eating. The flesh is crisp yet tender and sweet with a hint of a mild cabbage flavor. It can be prepared in many different ways both raw and cooked. The simplest way to eat it is to simply peel it and munch on slices plain or with a veggie dip. It can also be shredded and used in slaws with a variety of dressings or sliced and added to sandwiches or salads. It also has a very pleasant flavor in its cooked form and can be prepared in a myriad of ways including sautéed, braised, steamed, or stir-fried. In eastern Europe, it is often hollowed out and stuffed with a rice, meat, bread or veggie filling. The leaves are prepared similarly to collard greens and require a bit of liquid and a longer cooking time (15-20 minutes) than more tender greens such as spinach or Arugula. Kohlrabi is more prevalent in eastern Europe, Chinese, and Indian cuisine, so look to cookbooks on those cultures for more recipe ideas. To store kohlrabi, cut the stems and leaves off. Store both leaves and the bulbs in perforated plastic in the refrigerator. The leaves will keep for about 1 week, and the bulbs will last up to several weeks if stored properly.

Sautéed Kohlrabi with Caraway

Serves 3-4

2 medium kohlrabi
2-3 tsp butter
1/2 tsp caraway seed
1/4 tsp celery seed
1/2 tsp salt
1/8 tsp ground black pepper

-Peel kohlrabi and slice ¼" thick.
-Heat a medium sauté pan over moderate heat and melt butter. Add kohlrabi, caraway seeds, celery seeds, salt and pepper. Cover and cook until tender, stirring occasionally (approx. 10-12 minutes).

Vietnamese Kohlrabi Salad

Serves 3-4

2 medium kohlrabi, julienne ½ tsp red pepper flakes
1 1/2 tsp salt 2 Tbsp mint, chiffonade
1 Tbsp white vinegar 2 Tbsp cilantro, chopped
1 Tbsp honey ¼ cup roasted peanuts, coarsely chopped
1/8 tsp paprika

-Combine kohlrabi and salt. Toss to combine and set aside for 15 minutes in a colander. Squeeze off any excess moisture and pat dry.
-Toss with remaining ingredients except for peanuts. Refrigerate for 1 hour before serving.
-Right before serving, add peanuts

Adapted from Madhur Jaffery's recipe as recorded in Elizabeth Schneider's book, [Vegetables from Amaranth to Zucchini](#)