USU Student Organic Farm Newsletter

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What’s New On The Farm
The semester has started! PSC 4900 is the Student Organic Farm practicum class, and this year’s students and some of the farm team met for our first class on Monday. Dr. Jennifer Reeve teaches the class and will be back at the end of September after maternity leave. This month Dr. Melanie Stock will lead the class in sampling the soil for next year’s farm field, calculating required nutrient amendments, spreading compost and testing the irrigation system for the fall cover crop.

Meanwhile, the team is maintaining the fall crops, harvesting and preparing for the grand finale Harvest Festival coming up on September 22!

Fall Calendar
Just to reiterate: This is our last week of the summer schedule! Moving forward, we’ll be running the farm while taking full course loads. The volunteer activities in September will be fun projects like planting garlic and covering the hoop houses with plastic again. It’s a much less demanding place these days, since everything that’s going to is growing, and we’re just maintaining and harvesting what we’ve got for as long as we can before the first frost hits, probably sometime in late September.

Wednesday Campus Pickups will be at the Farmer’s Market!
Wednesday
Campus: 11 am to 3 pm - The SOF booth at the Farmer’s Market on Campus
Farm Stand: 5 pm to 7 pm
Saturday
Farm Stand: 9 am to 11 am

U-Pick Tomatoes!!
We have so many tomatoes we literally don’t know what to do. So here’s what we’re going to do: offer them to u!

During CSA pickup hours on Wednesday and Saturday, the hoop house and field tomatoes will be open for you to bring a basket and friends or the kiddos, and take a pound home.

You can still let us know a few days in advance if you’d like us to set aside a bulk amount for you, and we’ll prep it for pickup.
The elemental desire to master the knowledge and skills necessary to sustain ourselves was introduced to Dr. Jennifer Reeve as a child by parents swept up in the “back-to-the-land” movement of the 70s.

Today a research professor of soil science in the USU Plant, Soils and Climate department, and faculty advisor for the Student Organic Farm, Dr. Reeve didn’t begin her university studies expecting to return to agriculture.

When she was just six years old, Dr. Reeve’s parents bought acreage in the English countryside and left their teaching jobs to work the land and sustain their family on their own diversified homestead. They made sure the whole family participated, and she spent hours creating planting plans for her little garden plot.

“For some reason, when I was little that was really fun to me,” she says laughing, holding up an example of planting diagrams in a book like the one her father once used. “I must have been born a nerd for these things.”

She and her three siblings helped with the chores that came along with vegetable growing and tending livestock, including sheep and dairy cows. They also learned to make their own cheese and yogurt, and worked alongside young farm interns.

When the kids hit school age, her parents started up a k-12 school that eventually became their primary focus, and when she was 14 they sold the farm. By that time, her focus had moved elsewhere, too.

“As a teen I didn’t want to have anything to do with the farm,” Dr. Reeve says. “Initially, I wanted to be an English major. I took the bare minimum of science courses until the 11th grade.”

On a class field trip her 10th grade year, however, she watched out the train window and saw algae on the ponds. Upon learning that it was the result of environmental degradation, her sense of purpose in life started coming together.

“I decided I needed to save the world, and needed science to do it,” she says.

Fresh out of college with a degree in Ecology, she struggled to find meaningful work in her field. A relative in California put her in contact with the Josephine Porter Institute, which manufactures biodynamic soil amendments, and over the ensuing few years she cultivated an interest in soil science and growing organic food to take to the farmer’s market.

“That really propelled me into grad school,” she says. “I was questioning the viability of the small farm model.”

When Dr. Reeve came to teach and conduct research at USU in 2007, Dr. Dan Drost turned over his organic arming curriculum to her, and she helped stand up the Student Organic Farm as a new professor. Today she manages multiple million dollar grants, mentors graduate students in the PSC department and cares for her growing family while keeping an eye on the efforts of students running the Student Organic Farm.
What’s In The Basket

Orach - It tastes like kale, but we promise it isn’t
Butternut Squash - How does nature know it’s soup time?
Potatoes - Storable purple and red potatoes
Long Dragon-Tongue Beans - Gorgeous, sweet and fresh. Best sauteed or steamed
Spaghetti Squash - These have been ripening all summer and are finally ready!
Shungiku - This is quite prolific and bug resistant, it turns out!
Cucurbits - More bennings, crookneck and zucchini, as well as lemon cucumbers and dill cucumbers
Tomatoes - A variety ripening daily
Bell peppers - We have organic and conventional courtesy of Greenville Research farm for those looking for extra
Jalapeno peppers - These have such a kick!
Chard - You know it!
Tomatillos - Available for all the salsa lovers
Kale - Sorry about that
Parsley, basil, arugula - Flavors for sautees, salads and sandwiches!

Coming up: Broccoli, kholrabi, murdoc and rutabaga

Un-RECIPE FOR

Butternut Squash Soup with Parsley

An Un-Recipe offers guidelines to create delicious dishes based on the way ingredients, kitchen tools and cooks interact in the kitchen. Email us with questions!

INGREDIENTS:

- 4lb wedges of butternut squash
- 3 tbsp olive oil
- 6 cloves garlic, 4 whole, unpeeled and 2 finely chopped
- 2 sprigs of thyme
- 2 onions, finely chopped
- 2 carrots, finely sliced
- 2 sticks celery, finely sliced
- 1 tbsp freshly chopped sage
- 3½ pints hot vegetable stock

Parsley Puree:
- 1 bunch parsley, chopped
- 1 clove garlic, crushed
- 1oz parmesan, finely grated
- 3½fl oz extra virgin olive oil
- Lemon juice, to taste

DIRECTIONS:

- Preheat the oven to 475F
- Cut the butternut squash (including skin) into 3in wedges and scoop out the seeds using a large spoon. Brush the wedges with olive oil, place in a roasting tray and season with salt and pepper. Roast for 45 minutes or until soft and caramelised.
- After 25 minutes, add the unpeeled garlic and thyme.
- Heat the remaining olive oil in a large pan. Add onions, carrots, celery, sage and remaining garlic and cook gently for 10-15 minutes until soft but not brown.
- Pour the stock into the vegetables, bring to the boil and simmer for 20 minutes or until the vegetables are tender.
- Allow the squash to cool for 5 minutes. Remove the flesh from the skin and add to the stock. Squeeze the roasted garlic from its skin into the stock and discard the thyme.
- Simmer the stock and vegetables for a further 5 minutes or until the squash is beginning to break up.
- Place the soup in a blender and blend until smooth. Return the soup to the pan and gently reheat. Check seasoning.
- For the parsley purée, place the chopped parsley into a food processor with the garlic and parmesan. Process until smooth. With the motor still running, slowly add the olive oil. Season with salt and pepper.
- Ladle the soup into bowls and top each with a spoonful of the parsley.