



Shareholder Newsletter June 2, 2020 Vol. 21, No. 1

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## News from the Farm

- 2020 has been extra-busy so far here on the farm. The Pandemic has spurred a lot more interest in the local, healthy produce that we grow. Our on-farm self serve stand has been busy since February. Our CSA is quite a bit larger than before, and we are grateful to have that stable customer base as our Farmer's Markets are somewhat limited in foot traffic with safety measures to prevent virus spreading. We are grateful that we have felt safe at market even as we have needed to adapt. We also started a whole online store which has been a success; we are not sure how much produce we'll sell on it, but plants were a runaway hit
- The weather is usually the main thing that affects us as we head into a new CSA season. This year has been a rather upside-down one, with a very warm and almost snowless winter followed by progressively cooler months of April and May, and freezing nights here just a few weeks ago. Now, our greens are all looking good. The many hundreds of early tomatoes, squash, and cucumbers fared OK under double covers, but were somewhat set back—maybe squash will come in 2 weeks. Our early-flowering blueberries were damaged, unfortunately. Broccoli is developing early.
- Our crew of interns has been great, and our kids, being home from school and activities, have been helping out, too. We keep having conversations about how lucky we feel to be here on the farm at a time of great national strain. We hope that by providing a source of healthy food to the most people we can, we are doing a part to help people and the Earth, and be part of a positive way forward.

## Welcome to the 2020 CSA season!

Thank you for being a part of our farm! We hope you enjoy your share. Here are a few tips on how to use it.

Produce is fresh, pesticide-free, and all grown on our farm. Shares start lighter and leafier until the warm season foods come on—the shares will vary more early in the season and then should have a relatively constant supply of summer staples like squash, cucumbers, and tomatoes. We will have an herb and an allium in most shares, and hopefully some opportunities for shareholders to buy extras in bulk to preserve for the winter.

**All greens and herbs have been rinsed to maintain freshness. Still, you should wash all produce again before using it. If an item in your share is missing or damaged beyond normal field variation, please let us know and we will do our best to replace it.**

**Recipes** from previous years are available on the "Recipes" section of our website [www.waterpennyfarm.com/recipes](http://www.waterpennyfarm.com/recipes). There are lots with Chinese cabbage (for next week), garlic tops (these make wonderful cilantro pesto that can be frozen!), and all the greens. Try the Crustless Quiche or Fried Rice throughout the season—these recipes are delicious and adaptable. Please share your favorite vegetable recipes for the newsletter!

Newsletters will be posted on our website, and follow us at [@Waterpennyfarm](https://www.facebook.com/waterpennyfarm) on **Facebook** and **Instagram**. We will email a list of what is in the share each week, and we also will label new or unusual vegetables the first time you receive them in your share.



Above: Eric takes a moment with our interns (Hannah, Joey, Paige, Ciara, Lucy, and Katie) to talk about equipment used on the farm. The blue spader is a wonderful tillage machine that preserves soil structure while creating a good seed bed for planting. You will meet the whole group in this newsletter!



We are growing 4 kinds of Kale. You will get them one at a time in the spring/early summer and again in the Fall. They all can be sautéed with garlic or garlic tops, but each has its own character. Siberian Kale (top right) has the thinnest and mildest leaves. It is good for salad, too. Red Russian Kale (top right) is a bit sweet and can be used raw or cooked. Toscano (also dinosaur or lacinato) kale (bottom left) is hearty and is good to use for kale chips. Curly Kale (bottom right) is the most common and has stronger flavor. Its thick leaves are also a good choice for chips or soup. To keep our kale protected from insects and shady going into the warmer months, we cover it with netting (below). You can also see our crew mulching the second tomato planting in the background, We use a tractor to unroll the hay bales between the beds. It is a busy time on the farm!



## Hopping John with Red Russian Kale

From our neighbors and customers Kit Johnston and Dave Shiff *Kit, a retired personal chef and freelance writer (including for the Washington Post Food section), and Dave, a retired fire fighter and co-owner of Hinson Ford Cider and Mead, spend a lot of time testing and tasting healthy recipes based on fresh local produce.*

### Serves 4-6

A great main or side course for showcasing fresh vegetables from Waterpenny Farm, including the farm's very tasty Red Russian Kale. *(Rachel's comments are in italics)*

2 T extra virgin olive oil

1 medium onion, chopped

2 cloves garlic minced *(I used 3-4 chopped Garlic tops)*

1 small to medium red bell pepper, chopped *(I used frozen chopped peppers from last year.)*

1 hot green pepper (jalapeno works, Serrano is hotter), seeded and minced

4 c fresh Red Russian Kale rinsed, de stemmed, and roughly chopped *(other kales will work for this, too.)*

½ to 1 c broth (chicken or vegetable)

Two generous handfuls of ripe cherry tomatoes cut into quarters

1 or 2 (your choice) 14 1/2 oz cans Margaret Holmes Seasoned Field Peas (or black-eyed peas) (some folks like more peas, some less)

3 cups freshly cooked rice (any type you prefer; we love jasmine)

Freshly ground sea salt and black pepper to taste

Hot sauce for serving if desired

1. Make the rice and set aside.

2. Heat the oil in a large frying pan over medium-high heat and add the onions first, stirring for about 3 minutes, then the garlic. When you smell the garlic cooking, add the red and green peppers to the pan and stir to cook for about 4 minutes or until the peppers have become somewhat soft. Turn down the heat as needed. Keep stirring.

3. Now add the kale and stir to wilt. If anything begins to stick to the bottom, add broth as needed to keep the mixture cooking but not soupy.

4. After the kale wilts, add the tomatoes, gently stir all, then add the canned peas and cook through. Taste for seasonings, add the rice to the pan and cook through. Serve your Hopping John hot.