

Directions

1. Bring a large pot of water to a boil. Place a large bowl of ice water next to the stove. Using a sharp paring knife, core the tomatoes and score a small X into the flesh on the bottom.
2. Place the tomatoes in the boiling water, in batches, until the skins are slightly loosened, 30 seconds to 2 minutes.
3. Using a slotted spoon, transfer the tomatoes to the ice water and let sit in the water for 1 minute before removing.
4. Place a sieve over a bowl; working over it, peel the tomatoes using a paring knife, and let the skins fall into the sieve.
5. Halve the tomatoes crosswise and scoop out the seeds with a hooked finger, letting the sieve catch the seeds. Press on the seeds and skins to extract any extra juice. Coarsely chop the peeled tomatoes and set aside.
6. Heat oil in a Dutch oven over medium heat. Add garlic and cook, stirring constantly, until fragrant and just beginning to color, 2 to 3 minutes. Add onions and salt, stir to coat, cover and cook, stirring often and adjusting heat as necessary to prevent burning, until soft and turning golden, 10-15 minutes. Stir in tomato paste and oregano and cook, stirring often, until the tomato paste is beginning to brown on the bottom of the pan, 2-4 minutes.
7. Pour in wine and vinegar; bring to a simmer, scraping up any browned bits with a spoon. Cook until reduced slightly, about 2 minutes. Add the tomatoes and any juice; return to a simmer, stirring often. Reduce heat to maintain a gentle simmer and cook, stirring occasionally, until the tomatoes are mostly broken down, about 25 minutes.
8. Remove from the heat; stir in basil and pepper. Transfer the sauce, in batches, to a blender or food processor. (Use caution when pureeing hot liquids.) Process until desired consistency. For a smooth sauce, puree it all; for a chunky sauce, puree just half and mix it back into the rest of the sauce.

******From EatingWell.com******

Bacon Chard Quesadillas for Two

Ingredients

- 2 slices center-cut bacon, chopped
- 1/2 small red onion, halved and thinly sliced (generous 1/3 cup)
- 2 cups chopped chard leaves
- 1/4 teaspoon freshly ground pepper
- 3/4 cup canned black beans, rinsed
- 4 6-inch whole-wheat tortillas
- 1/2 cup shredded Pepper Jack cheese

Directions

1. Cook bacon in a large nonstick skillet over medium-high heat, stirring often, until crisp, 2 to 3 minutes. Reduce heat to medium, add onion and cook, stirring, until softened, about 2 minutes. Add chard and pepper; cook, stirring, until wilted, 1 to 2 minutes. Add beans and coarsely mash; stir to combine. Remove from heat.
2. Place tortillas on a work surface. Spread a generous 1/4 cup filling and 2 tablespoons cheese on half of each tortilla. Fold tortillas in half, pressing gently to flatten.
3. Wipe out the pan and return to medium heat. Add quesadillas and cook, turning once, until golden on both sides, 2 to 4 minutes total.



Sisters Hill Farm

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<https://sistershillfarm.org>
845-868-7048

Edited by: Bob & Joan Cohen
cohenrd98@comcast.net
845-724-3518

Huge thanks to all our volunteers who came out last Wednesday for our winter squash harvest! So far we're at over 7,000 pounds...and counting! Great job, everybody!

Field notes from our apprentice Katherine

Hearing how some of our CSA members tell stories of past apprentices, I've realized that we have joined a very special community: one that continues to grow from year to year as more apprentices come through Sisters Hill. I know I will miss being around this community when I move on from Sisters Hill, and in some measure, it must be hard for our members to get to know the new apprentices each year and then have to say goodbye when the season ends. So I thought it'd be fun to do a short "Where are they now?" with at least one former Sisters Hill apprentice! I met Rose Karabush (2013 season) back in June, when Dave and the three of us current apprentices went over to Rose's farm in Amenia to help her skin her greenhouse. The greenhouse structure was already set up, and its plastic sheeting needed to be tightly stretched and secured over it. Sounds simple, but it's a task that can get away from you if you don't tackle it with a plan. Luckily, Dave and Rose had one, and we spent an awesome early morning putting the finishing touch on her new greenhouse. I had never skinned a greenhouse before, and it was exciting to look around the new farm where Rose was working and see the possibilities for the season ahead of her. I gave her a call this week, and she was happy to do a little Q&A for all of us to catch up on what she's been up to.

(Also, fun fact: Rose and her crew harvested winter squash on their farm the same day as us!)

So Rose, what have you been up to since your apprenticeship at Sisters Hill?

After Sisters Hill, I ended up working at Merck Forest and Farmland Center in Vermont for the 2014 season. It's a four-season farm and I was there from January through December. It's an educational farm and forest center, so they did a lot of livestock and haying and actually not much vegetable farming. I got to learn a lot more about machinery and construction and land maintenance--all the things you touch on at Sisters Hill, but I got to delve deeper into tractors and tractor maintenance. I got really lucky with two really good apprenticeships in Merck Forest and Sisters Hill.

Tell us about where you're working now!

I've been managing the vegetable operation at Maitri Farm since January of this

year. The property is 106 acres, with one acre in vegetables. We're a 45-member CSA, with pick-ups in Fairfield County, Connecticut and on the farm. We do a little bit of wholesale too.

How has the season been going for you?

Great! We just got our organic certification in August, and this summer I actually hired another former Sisters Hill apprentice, Alison Smith (2014 season), to join the farm crew. Next year we're expanding to 2 acres in vegetables and hoping to build up to 5 in the future. As the farm grows, I'll move from focusing on the vegetable operation to being the farm manager coordinating our various enterprises. We also have 130 layer hens and are currently hiring a livestock manager, if anyone has any leads!

What are some of the lessons from Sisters Hill that you carry with you throughout your workday?

Well, my entire experience with commercial vegetable farming is through Dave, and he has been a huge resource to me. I am recreating all his methods and using his crop plan, and of course I hired Alison from Sisters Hill! Part of my reasoning was that it's been a year of no commercial vegetable farming for me before coming to Maitri Farm, and I figured for sure Alison would have veg growing tips and tricks fresh in her mind. Besides that, we definitely grow some of the same varieties of lettuce. Oh, and I preach a lot about using the largest tool first for cultivation, something that Dave always emphasized. When Alison came on, because she came through Sisters Hill too, she was really good about helping me remember the importance of planning and explaining a task to everybody before you start it. At the beginning of the season here at Maitri, because it had just been me and my other crew member, who is also awesome but didn't have that Sisters Hill background, I had gotten used to being like, "Oh, let's just do this, I'll figure it out as we go." But then Alison got here and we were like "Okay! Let's figure out how to do this before we do it."

Take us back! How did you end up at Sisters Hill?

It was my first time full-time farming job. I was really really lucky to get the apprenticeship. I grew up Chicago, didn't grow up farming or gardening, went to liberal arts college in Montreal and I started becoming more interested in food systems. I did some urban ag type stuff there and always liked working outside, and after college I decided that it seemed like a really great idea to graduate early and start farming, so that is what I did. I knew I wanted to farm in the Northeast and I found the C.R.A.F.T. program online, and all the farms on that list looked really great. I found Sisters Hill through that--the only thing I knew was that I wanted to learn from a farmer who actually had a working model. I didn't want to learn from someone who has to rely on free labor.

I completely agree with that! I was looking for a successful model to learn from, too! What do you miss the most about your time at Sisters Hill?

Of course the people, because I got really close with Audrey and Julia who were my co-apprentices, and it's a beautiful community. Dave's family is lovely, the Sisters are lovely, and it was also a very memorable time in my life because it was the first season I spent farming, so it was a particularly wonderful feeling.

This is kind of a tough question, but what do you think your life would be

like if you hadn't apprenticed at Sisters Hill?

No, it's a good question! A lot of times I think about it because it was my first exposure to farming and I didn't know beforehand the degree to which I could have gone to very poorly managed farms. I have heard from a lot of other people who said, "I started farming, farmed for a couple years and ultimately decided that entire weeks of harvesting beans and just doing one thing for days at a time was boring to me, and I just wasn't excited by farming." Sisters Hill shows you how to think about what's possible in the world. Maybe it's some magical fairy dust that Dave sprinkles, but farming manages to be a pleasant job at Sisters Hill. He shows you what's possible in farming and shows you the standards to which you can aspire. It gives you hope!

***** From member *Kathy Longbard* *****

Zucchini BREAD

Ingredients

- 3 eggs
- 1 cup salad oil
- 2 ½ cups sugar
- 2 cups grated raw zucchini, unpeeled
- 2 tsp. cinnamon
- 1 tsp salt
- 1 tsp. soda
- 1/4 tsp. baking powder
- 3 cups unsifted flour
- 1 cup chopped walnuts

Directions

1. In bowl, beat eggs until foamy, gradually beat in oil and sugar.
2. Add grated zucchini, cinnamon, salt, soda and powder, mixing well.
3. Gradually blend in flour, mixing well after each addition
4. Fold in chopped walnuts.
5. Pour into greased bundt pan (3 qt.) and bake in 350° oven for one hour or until cake tests done and starts to leave sides of pan. Cool in pan for ten minutes, loosen edge -shake loose and turn cake out on rack to cool.
6. Store in covered tin or wrapped in foil. Good sliced & spread with cream Cheese.

Note: The only change I made to the recipe is that I always made it in 2 loaf pans instead of a bundt pan. This way I could keep one for myself and share one whenever I made it.

***** From *EatingWell.com* *****

Fresh Tomato Sauce - 2 quarts

Ingredients

- 4 1/2 pounds plum tomatoes
- 1/4 cup extra-virgin olive oil
- 3/4 cup chopped garlic, (about 2 heads)
- 4 cups diced onions, (3-4 medium)
- 1 1/2 teaspoons salt
- 1/4 cup tomato paste
- 1 teaspoon dried oregano
- 1/2 cup red wine
- 2 tablespoons red-wine vinegar
- 1/2 cup chopped fresh basil
- Freshly ground pepper, to taste