



Stewarding the Land for Future Generations
Local, Sustainable, Organic

Community Supported Agriculture Newsletter

August 31st, 2006- Week 13

Featured Vegetable of the Week: Basil

Basil is an annual herb of the mint family, native to central and tropical Asia and Africa (some say it originated in India). It is an important ingredient in Thai, Vietnamese and Laotian cuisine. Today it is cultivated commercially in California, Yugoslavia, Bulgaria, Hungary, Germany, Israel, Egypt, Morocco, Italy, Madagascar, India and Mexico. It has been grown in areas around the Mediterranean since antiquity, but Britain did not begin using basil until the 16th century. The many varieties of this herb have seeds that can germinate after 10 years.

In addition to its culinary uses, basil is also used in perfumes, soaps, shampoos and dental preparations. In Mexico it is supposed to keep a lover's eye off others, and is considered a powerful protector in Haiti. During British colonial days in India, magistrates would have Hindu witnesses swear on this holy herb. It is recommended for the relief of dysentery, gas pains, nausea, and as a cure for worms and warts.

The ancient Greeks and Romans thought basil would only grow if you screamed wild curses and shouted unintelligibly while sowing the seeds. They also believed if you left a basil leaf under a pot, it would turn into a scorpion. In Italy it is considered to be a token of love, in Romania if a girl gives a sprig to her boyfriend, they are engaged, and a good Hindu goes to rest with a leaf on his breast as a passport to Paradise. It is a highly sacred plant in Hindu religion where it is dedicated to the god, Vishnu and has been cultivated in India in courtyards or temples, and in pots in homes, for about 3000 years. Because of its holiness it is not used as a food in the Indian sub-continent.

The history of the plant in South Asia is closely linked with folklore and mythology. It represents Vishnupriya or Beloved of Vishnu, since it is believed to be the embodiment of the goddess Lakshmi, the spouse of Vishnu. It has been valued and cultivated since ancient times in India as an intimate link between the household and the spiritual world. Basil is mentioned in the Rig Veda, written in about 1500 BC, and it is celebrated in the Puranas. It is highly regarded in the Ayurvedic system of medicine and is noted in medical treatises such the Charaka Samhita written between the 2nd century BC to the 2nd century AD.

Basil is easy to grow but highly frost-sensitive. As soon as the temperature dips below freezing, basil leaves turn very dark and are no longer edible. Basil is best known for being the main ingredient in pesto, but is a great addition to many dishes.

Announcements

*Save the date for our third and last Farm Day of the season:

Saturday September 30th from 11 am to 3 pm at Dancing Bear Farm in Williams. Potluck and farm tour.

***THRIVE's Eat Local Challenge 2006 www.rogueflavor.org**

Join your neighbors in celebrating local food by pledging to eat from the greater Rogue Valley during the week of **September 9-17**. Check out the back page for a schedule of all the exciting events happening that week.

Saturday September 9

Rising Sun Farms at the Talent Harvest Festival 10am-4pm downtown Talent
World of Wine Festival sponsored by the Rogue Valley Grapegrowers Association and the Southern Oregon
Winery Association 4-8 pm Del Rio Vineyards \$60 www.worldofwinefestival.com
Pie tastings at Pennington Farms (every day this week), 1115 Williams Hwy. 10am-4pm

Sunday September 10

Think Global, Eat Local: Mediterranean/Middle Eastern Cooking with Susan Powell of Pilaf and Global Pantry
4-7 pm, \$50 includes dinner. Call 488-4433 to register

Monday September 11

The Future of Food sponsored by Thrive. www.futureoffood.com/ 7-9 pm Ashland Public Library, free
“Cooking with the Market’s Bounty” cooking class in the Community Classroom from 6:30-9:00pm followed by
a Grower’s Market Tour Tuesday morning from 10-11am www.ashlandfood.coop/co.html \$30 for the general
public and \$25 for Co-op owners Call 482-2237 to register Gooseberries, 1533 NE “F” Street Grants Pass, will
offer tastings of baked goods and more from 11am-4pm.

Tuesday September 12

Tomato Taste-Off & zucchini derby sponsored by the Rogue Valley Growers & Crafters Market in Ashland, free
Cooking with Seasonal Rogue Flavors presented by Mary Shaw 6:30-9pm www.ashlandfood.coop/co.html \$30
for the general public and \$25 for Co-op owners Call 482-2237 to register
Culinary Demonstration at the Ashland Food Cooperative Culinary Kiosk with Whistling Duck Farm 3-5pm

Wednesday September 13

Sample Local Flavors at the Ashland Food Cooperative Culinary Kiosk 4-6pm
The Power of Community: How Cuba Survived Peak Oil, film screening, 7pm Wilderness Charter School, free
OSU Family Food Education Volunteers will demo fresh foods and answer questions about food preservation
and safety at Seven Oaks Farm, 5504 Rogue Valley Hwy. Central Point 10am-2pm.

Thursday, September 14

Tomato Taste-Off, melon-carving demonstration at the Rogue Valley Growers and Crafters Market in Medford
Tastings of Heidi’s Pie in the Sky at Tark’s Market in Talent 3-6pm
Sample Local Flavors at the Ashland Food Cooperative Culinary Kiosk 4-6pm
Iron Chef Medford pits Certified Culinary Educator Chef Robert Gregson against his grandson Scott in culinary
battle featuring Full Circle Bison. Sponsored by the Medford Culinary Academy, 2330 N. Pacific Hwy Medford

Friday, September 15

The Real Dirt on Farmer John screening sponsored by the Medford Market. 7pm at the Medford Library, \$5
Tastings of Sisterfield’s Gourmet Foods at Tark’s Market in Talent 3-6pm
Gooseberries, 1533 NE “F” Street Grants Pass, will offer tastings of local coffee & baked goods from 11-4pm.
Sample Local Wine and Dagoba Chocolate at the Ashland Food Cooperative Culinary Kiosk 4-6pm
From the Orchard, from the Field: a four course menu of Rogue Valley inspired dishes by Helena Darling 7pm
\$45 Call 488-1124 for reservations

Local Wine Tastings at Allyson’s of Ashland 6-8pm \$10 No reservations required. www.allysonsofashland.com
Local foods reception at the AMBUS Contemporary Art Gallery. Sculptor Janet E. Higgins presents “The Adventures of Eve”. 4-7pm, 21 N. Bartlett St., Medford. 245-3800 www.AmbusArt.com

Saturday, September 16

Rogue Flavor Food & Farm Tour 9-2 to Fry Family Farm, Rogue Creamery, Martin Family Ranch and Eden
Vale Winery, \$20, \$5 children. Preregistration required 488-7272 or email wendy@thriveoregon.org
OSU Family Food Education Volunteers will demo fresh foods and answer questions about food preservation
and safety at Seven Oaks Farm, 5504 Rogue Valley Hwy. Central Point 10am-2pm.

Sunday, September 17

Farm to Table demonstration cooking class with Allyson Holt featuring Blue Fox Farm 2-5pm \$65 sponsored
by Allyson’s of Ashland. Call 482-2884 to register www.allysonsofashland.com/classes/index.html