



Watershed Agricultural Council
Farm To Market Update



May 2006 • Issue 9

Pure Catskills Scholarships Available

Terra Madre 2006

Slow Food's, **Terra Madre**, **The World Meeting of Food Communities**, will be held in Turin, Italy this year from October 26 – October 30. This year's theme is the food community and will focus on the range of people needed to create and sustain a food system that is conscious of environmental resources, global balances, the sensory characteristics of food, the dignity of workers and the health of consumers.

Terra Madre 2006 will emphasize the great diversity of knowledge that contributes to the success of a small-scale quality food product. It will focus attention on three significant areas of knowledge possessed by Food Communities: the ancient traditional knowledge of producers accompanied by the expertise of chefs who combine their knowledge of the product and local areas with empirical skill and creativity in transforming the product. There is also official science and research, which is increasingly involved with traditional knowledge in a reciprocal recognition of values and functions. So Turin will welcome a large number of cooks and farmers together with an international array of researchers and university teachers to meet and talk with the Food Communities.

Pure Catskills, in collaboration with Slow Food, would like to nominate five people from our region that are contributing to the development of our food community. Slow Food will cover all costs of the event including accommodations, food and transportation while in Italy, and WAC will pay for the roundtrip airfare (from NYC) for 5 members of the *Pure Catskills* campaign. We are asking campaign members that would like to attend need to submit a Statement of Interest of no more than 200 words explaining why they would be good ambassadors from our region. Nominees will be chosen based on their ability to represent one of the three components of the food community envisioned by Slow Food for this event. In exchange for this opportunity, WAC is asking attendees to provide a presentation about the event at a Watershed Agricultural Council Board Meeting upon their return.

Please send all Statements of Interest to: Farm to Market Manager, Watershed Agricultural Council, 33195 State Highway 10, Walton, NY 13856, or by email to allisonbennett@nycwatershed.org. For more information, please call (607) 865-7790, ext. 125. **All Statements of Interest must be received by May 15, 2006.**

Real Good for Free

Delicious Dandelion

Spring makes its official presence known when the ground swells with vibrant yellow dandelions. Some people start to think about the working condition of their weed wackers, and others contemplate the joys of a dandelion salad with warm bacon dressing and a crusty loaf of French bread. Whether it is foraged or cultivated, this wonderful weed is both delicious and nutritious.

In French, dandelion is known as *pissenlit*, meaning *wet the bed* because of its diuretic qualities. In addition to its ability to stimulate the urinary tract, dandelion is chock full of vitamins. It has more calcium than milk, more iron than spinach and is filled with generous amounts of vitamins A, B, C, fiber, magnesium and potassium. It is good for the eyes, enhances liver function and purifies the blood. The milky substance that is secreted from the stem of the dandelion is great for removing warts!

For culinary purposes, dandelion can be used in salads, omelets, pastas or in any dish that calls for bitter greens. The root of the dandelion can be roasted and used as a coffee substitute. The Italians embrace a distant cousin of the dandelion that is a kind of chickory called *puntarella*, which means *little pointy thing*. *Puntarella* can often be found in specialty food markets or on the menus of fine restaurants. Mario Battali features *Puntarella* this month on the website, www.babbonyc.com, as the ingredient of the month and suggests that the bitterness of the greens is "beautifully subdued by different strong flavors such as anchovies and capers." His restaurant features a *puntarella* salad with an anchovy vinaigrette and grilled sardines.

If you're thinking about growing dandelion or *puntarella* for the wholesale market, here are a few helpful things to know. Organic dandelion is getting as much as \$27.00/case on the wholesale market and *puntarella* is selling for approximately \$3.00/lb. This crop is easy to grow but difficult to harvest because it wilts quickly and must be chilled immediately for it to maintain its market value. Foraged dandelion will last longer when it is picked close to the root so that the leaves form a healthy crown. The smaller and more tender the leaves, the less bitter they will taste. Whenever foraging for wild greens, be sure that you find an area that is free of pesticides or other toxins.

Events

Dinner Series at Howe Caverns Restaurant Fridays, May 12 through June 23 5:00pm – 7:00pm Howe Caverns Restaurant, Howes Cavern

The Howe Caverns Restaurant in conjunction with Schoharie County's School of Country Wisdom welcomes spring with the return of its popular Friday Night Dinner Series on May 12, serving four courses accompanied by products from Bear Pond Winery in Cooperstown.

"Our Executive Chef JoAnne Cloughly has organized some extraordinary menus in partnership with our local farmers and food producers," General Manager John D. Sagendorf said. These dinners are a dining experience as well as a learning experience providing guests with an opportunity to meet the people who have grown or prepared the key ingredients.

The series continues for seven Fridays through June 23 with each dinner featuring a different farmer. The cost is \$17.95 per person (plus tax and gratuity). Seatings are every half hour from 5 to 7 pm. Reservations are required and may be made by calling Howe Caverns at 518-296-8900.

Living on a Few Acres: Self-Guided Tour of Small Farms May 13 from 10:00am – 3:30pm Walton

Are you wondering if an agricultural enterprise is right for you and your land? Join three area farms on Saturday, May 13 to learn how they survive and thrive on small acreage farms, producing local wool, meat and vegetables for sale on their farms and at regional markets. An additional stop to observe a well-managed woodland rounds out the day. There is no cost for the tour, which is self-guided and requires driving to the designated stops. There will be signs at tour stops; plastic "biosecurity" booties and hand sanitizer will be provided at all livestock stops. Visitors are welcome to one or all stops.

10:00 a.m. The Yarn Shop at Highland Spring, on Peaks Brook Road, Delhi. Aldine Weiss, Owner/Producer. Sheep, Wool and Retail.

11:15 a.m. High Meadows Farm, Webster Brook Road, Jon and Laura Hussey, Owners; Robert and Ann VanArsdale, Farm Managers. Beef, Swine, Draft Horses, Vegetables.

12:15 p.m. Bring Your Own Picnic Lunch. Tables and parking available at 4H Camp Shankitunk across from Lennox Forest.

1:15 p.m. Lennox Model Forest, on Back River Road across from 4H Camp Shankitunk. Woodland Management explained by Kevin Brazill, Watershed Forestry Program Manager.

2:30 p.m. Lucky Dog Farm, Route 10 Hamden. Richard Giles and Holley White. Organic Vegetables, Poultry and Retail Farm Store with Regional Products.

"Living on a Few Acres" is sponsored by the Watershed Agricultural Council and Cornell University Cooperative Extension of Delaware County. Registration is not required, but more information is available from Dan Flaherty, Small Farms Coordinator at the Watershed Agricultural Council 607-865-7017.

First Annual "Down OFF the Farm" Day

May 21 from 1:00pm – 4:00pm Delaware County Fairgrounds Livestock Pavilion, Walton

It's not the Delaware County Fair *yet*, but Sunday, May 21 offers farmers and the public a new opportunity to celebrate the unique contributions that the Catskills farming community has made in watershed protection and land conservation. To name just a few important milestones, there are now over 80,000 farm acres under pollution-preventing Whole Farm Plans; nearly 100,000 acres under forest management; over 1,500 acres in stream buffers; and over 8,000 of agricultural acres under conservation easement – set aside permanently for food production and water quality stewardship.

Watershed Agricultural Council Chair, Fred Huneke, comments "We know it's a busy time for farmers, but we're almost two decades into the Watershed Agricultural Program and we want to kick off this yearly tribute to the fine level of conservation the farmers have achieved and maintained since 1990."

There'll be plenty of entertainment for all ages, from country band *The Mustangs* and bluegrass performers *Aurora North* to an Air Castle for the kids. The Delaware County Dairy Princess will serve milk punch for all. A purebred Holstein calf has been donated by JJ Farber Farm in Jewett to highlight a seasonal raffle for the day, which will also feature a gas-powered power washer, picnic table, chainsaw; and pedal tractor for kids. All proceeds of the day will benefit the WAC Conservation Easement Stewardship Fund.

Advanced reservations are essential to insure that there's enough food for everyone! The \$5 ticket includes a barbeque chicken dinner by Niles Wilson, beverages, a home-grown *Pure Catskills* green salad and homemade pies from local farmers. Children 5 and under enter free, and families can purchase a \$20 ticket. To RSVP, please call Becky O'Dell at 607-865-7017.

Farmers Wanted

New and unique NYC open-air REAL FOOD markets seek FARMERS, FARMER CO-OPS & FOOD ARTISANS for two Saturday morning markets, June 17 to December 23. Foods must come from the ten states of the NE, from Delaware to Maine. No hormones, antibiotics, MSG, corn syrup, trans fats. Grazing animals must have access to pasture. Actively seeking NEW farmers and producers. Spaces going fast. Market manager is experienced and respected. Call Nina Planck @ 212 982 6462 or Nina@NinaPlanck.com.

****All farmers interested in working collaboratively in a *Pure Catskills* market in conjunction with the Real Food market, please contact Allison Bennett at (607) 865-7790 ext. 125 or allisonbennett@nycwatershed.org.**

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