



# The Pod

## Community Supported Agriculture Newsletter

*World PEAS is a program of the New Entry Sustainable Farming Project*

Tuesday August 4, 2015

### Meet Your Farmer, Renee Toll-Dubois

At New Entry's Smith Incubator Farm site, Renee Rita Toll-Dubois is reaping the benefits of the wide assortment of vegetables she is producing. She is a recent graduate of New Entry's Farm Business Planning Course and is in her first growing season on the White Rabbit Farm plot at New Entry's Smith Farm incubator site. White Rabbit Farm yields enough vegetables for Renee to harvest and sell produce to New Entry's World PEAS Food Hub in addition to distributing her own CSA shares.



In her personal shares, she offers sampling of new or unfamiliar vegetables and then customers may order accordingly to minimize waste and ensure her hard work is enjoyed. She maintains a self-serve cooler pickup as distribution, along with a weekly newsletter featuring the vegetables and their uses. Her colorful array includes amaranth, collard greens, cilantro, kale, parsley, Swiss chard, and zucchini, to name a few.

Renee's journey to New Entry has been a long and remarkable one. Throughout her life she has been involved with 4-H and environmental education, specifically with connecting urban youth of color with nature and advocating to save farm land for productive agriculture. She had heard about New Entry during its humble beginnings in the late 90's and appreciated our "commitment and success reaching out and serving everyone". We remained in the back of her mind.

Recently, Renee was looking to expand on her overflowing home garden in Lynn, MA when she remembered New Entry. Our services and support allow "people to come in with almost nothing and launch a farm". We proved to be a good fit for her needs, wants, and existing work responsibilities.

Like many of New Entry's new famers, Renee appreciates her close proximity to other active farmers and our technical assistance staff on the incubator site because it creates a community and opportunities for greater learning. "I learn more about practices and get a broader view being with farmers from different cultures and countries".

After Renee's third year on our incubator farm, she hopes to take advantage of our Farmland Matching Program and become an independent farmer. Join us at the New Entry Open Farms Tour this Wednesday to hear from Renee directly! Learn more about our event at [nesfp.org](http://nesfp.org)!

### Produce this week:

Water Spinach • Summer Squash  
Beets • Spring Onions • Fennel Bell  
Pepper • Parsley • Nectarines

### Also in Large Shares

Cabbage • Sweet Corn • Plums  
Lemongrass

### Crop Information:

#### Water Spinach



Water spinach is not a relative of traditional spinach, but rather a swamp-thriving native of tropical India (it can also be cultivated on dry land). Water spinach, also known as water morning glory, swamp cabbage, or water convolvulus, is a versatile vegetable used in almost every Asian cuisine. Water spinach is an herbaceous aquatic or semi-aquatic perennial plant of the tropics and subtropics. Almost all parts of the young plant tissue are edible, but the tender shoot tips and younger leaves are preferred. In Asia, water spinach is stir-fried, most often with fermented white bean curd, shrimp paste, or garlic. Use all of the leaves and the top half of the stems. Water spinach is in the same genus as sweet potato, and a member of the morning glory family. Water spinach grows wild in aquatic environments, but can also be grown in well irrigated fields. Water spinach is considered a noxious weed in the U.S. where it has invaded aquatic ecosystems in warmer latitudes. Cold Massachusetts winters prevent water spinach from spreading and therefore the USDA Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service allows its cultivation by licensed growers.

**Handling:** Wash water spinach well, shake dry and break into bite-sized lengths, discarding any tough lower stems.

**Storing:** Store water spinach in a bag in the refrigerator. It can go bad quickly, so use within 2-3 days. Stems may last up to a week.

## Beet Salad with Goat Cheese

*Adapted from nytimes.com cooking section*

### Ingredients:

3 large or 6 medium beets  
¾ cup walnuts  
6 cups torn salad greens, one type or an assortment  
⅓ cup olive oil  
2 tablespoons red-wine vinegar  
1 tablespoon minced shallot  
2 teaspoons Dijon mustard  
Salt and freshly ground black pepper  
4 ounces goat cheese



### Preparation:

Heat the oven to 400. Wash the beets, and while they are still wet, wrap them individually in foil. Put them on a rimmed baking sheet and cook, undisturbed, until you can pierce them easily with a thin-bladed knife, 60 to 90 minutes. Once the beets have cooled, peel them (I like to rub the skin off under running water), and cut them into chunks. Put the walnuts in a dry skillet over medium heat and cook, shaking the pan frequently, until fragrant and beginning to darken, 3 to 5 minutes. Rinse and dry the greens and put them in a large bowl; add the walnuts. Combine the oil, vinegar, shallot and Dijon in a jar with a sprinkle of salt and pepper. Screw the lid on tightly and shake vigorously until the dressing becomes thick and creamy. Taste and adjust the seasoning.

Pour some of the dressing onto the greens and toss to coat; pile the greens on 4 plates. Put the beets in the bowl, toss with some of the dressing and arrange them on top of or around the greens. Crumble the goat cheese on top, and serve. Try adding some nectarine slices on top of an extra sweetness and zest!

## Stir-Fried Water Spinach

*Adapted from Connie Trang for Cooking Live*

### Ingredients:

1 1/2 cups vegetable oil  
1 large clove garlic, peeled and minced  
1 pound water spinach, stems trimmed, washed, drained, and halved crosswise  
Freshly ground, black pepper  
1 tablespoon preserved bean curd or fish sauce

### Directions

Heat the oil in a wok over high heat and stir-fry the garlic until fragrant and lightly golden, about 1 minute. Add the water spinach, season with pepper, and stir-fry until wilted, about 3 minutes. Add the bean curd, stir-fry until it is evenly distributed, then cover and cook until done, 2 to 3 minutes more.

## Braised Spring Onions, Fennel, and Greens

*Adapted from foodnetwork.com*

### Ingredients:

Extra-virgin olive oil  
2 garlic cloves, smashed  
Pinch crushed red pepper flakes  
3 small spring onions, julienned  
2 small fennel bulbs, thinly sliced  
1 bunch Swiss chard or any other cooking green (try using the water spinach!)  
Kosher salt  
1/2 cup dry white wine  
1 Meyer lemon, zested on a hand-held grater and juiced, zest and juice reserved separately

### Preparation:

Coat a large sauté pan with olive oil. Toss in the smashed garlic and crushed red pepper and bring the pan to a medium heat. When the garlic becomes golden brown and very aromatic, remove it from the pan and discard it. It has fulfilled its garlic destiny. Add the onions, fennel and Swiss chard stems, stir to coat with the oil and season with salt, to taste. Stir in the white wine and the lemon zest and juice. Cover and cook over medium heat until the veggies have become soft and wilted but still maintain some texture, about 5 to 6 minutes. Remove the lid and cook until most of the liquid has reduced, another 3 to 4 minutes. Toss in the Swiss chard or water spinach leaves, stir to combine and season with salt, to taste. When the leaves have wilted but still look vibrantly green, taste for seasoning. Re-season if needed (it probably will!). Transfer to a serving bowl and serve immediately.