

# The Pod

## Community Supported Agriculture Newsletter

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

Tuesday September 21, 2015

### Meet Your Farmer: JoAnn Robichaud

Like many others who attend our Explore Farming workshop, JoAnn Robichaud came to New Entry in 2010 as a gardener who wanted to farm. With many years of community gardening under her belt, JoAnn knew how to grow vegetables; but when she graduated from the Farm Business Planning Course in 2011 and began her first season on a quarter-acre plot at one of New Entry's incubator training farms in Dracut, Mass., JoAnn quickly discovered how different farming can be from gardening. Her plot was immaculate and her yields were good, but she was working very, very long hours to keep it that way.



That sounds like a description of the type of new farmer who might have easily burned out after year one. As you might've guessed, JoAnn didn't. Gaining new skills and figuring out labor efficiencies, and with the help of her partner Kamal Jain, JoAnn kept scaling up throughout her three years on New Entry's incubator farms and continued the trend as she moved Bobbin Farm to its current location, two acres leased from the Brooks School in North Andover. She might finally be ready to slow down – if you could call it that.

Working with Ashley Davies, New Entry's Farmland Matching Coordinator at the time, JoAnn worked out a lease agreement last year with the private school, which was a farm in the past. JoAnn pays for her land by devoting a percentage of what she grows to the school cafeteria.

JoAnn gushes about her arrangement with the Brooks School. After starting the year strong, JoAnn was hit hard when late blight wiped out all of her heirloom tomatoes, most of her cherry tomatoes, and close to half of her fingerling potatoes – some of the crops she grows best, and which she has often sold through New Entry's World PEAS CSA. But the school stood by JoAnn during her tough first season on the property.

The transition from New Entry's incubator training sites to this new land has presented plenty of challenges. JoAnn expected big things from the new site because of its favorable sandy loam soil type, but found the pH to be much lower than most vegetables would like. Mostly, though, JoAnn says she is learning just how much an independent farmer has to do to stay ahead throughout the whole growing season from start to finish.

### Produce this week:

Kale • Garlic Chives • Sugar Pumpkin • Carrot • Storage Onions • Cilantro • Ground Cherry Sweet Chocolate Pepper

### Also in Large Shares

Cherry Tomato • Slicing Tomato

### Crop Information:

#### Sugar Pumpkin



The round orange squash usually carved at Halloween, pumpkins also make wonderful soups, breads, and pie. In our CSA shares, we provide sugar pumpkins, which are much better for cooking and baking than their carving counterparts. Try baking it filled halfway with milk and a few spoonfuls of sugar for an instant pudding. Native Americans dried strips of pumpkin and wove them into mats. They also roasted long strips of pumpkin on the open fire and ate them. The origin of pumpkin pie occurred when the colonists sliced off the pumpkin top, removed the seeds, and filled the insides with milk, spices and honey. The pumpkin was then baked in hot ashes.

**Handling:** Use a cleaver or a very large knife to split the pumpkin in half or wedges. Scoop out the seeds and strings and discard.

**Storing:** Pumpkins should be stored in a cool, dry place. It will last at room temp for weeks and at 40-50 degrees for several months. If cut open, put in fridge.

# Cathy's Pumpkin Ginger Bread

*Adapted from "The New American Cooking" by Joan Nathan, 2005*

## Ingredients:

2 1/2 cups sugar  
1 cup vegetable oil  
4 large eggs  
grated zest of 1 lemon  
2 1/2 cups fresh-cooked pureed pumpkin  
3 1/2 cups all-purpose flour  
1/2 teaspoon salt  
2 teaspoons baking soda  
1 teaspoon nutmeg  
1 teaspoon cinnamon  
1 teaspoon ginger  
1 teaspoon cloves  
1/2 cup chopped candied ginger  
1 1/2 cup walnut, dried cranberries, or raisins [optional]

## Preparation:

Preheat the oven to 350 degrees and grease two 8 1/2-inch loaf pans.

Mix the sugar and oil in the bowl of a standing mixer, using the paddle. Beat in the eggs one at a time, then add the lemon zest and pumpkin. Stir to combine thoroughly.

Add the flour, salt, baking soda, nutmeg, cinnamon, ground ginger, and cloves and beat on low speed until well mixed. Add the candied ginger and the walnuts, cranberries, and or/raisins.

Gradually add the dry ingredients to the pumpkin mixture, blending thoroughly. Pour the batter into the loaf pans and bake for about 70 minutes. Allow the breads to cool on a rack before removing them from their pans.

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# Roasted Carrots and Onions

*Adapted from food.com*

## Ingredients:

1 bunch carrots  
2 medium onions  
Olive oil  
Salt and freshly ground pepper  
Thyme, rosemary or other seasoning of choice [optional]

## Directions

Preheat oven to 425.

Peel carrots and onions. Cut onions in quarters, leaving root ends in tact, so that they hold the quarters together. Cut carrots into 2 - 3" pieces, and if the carrots are really fat, cut them lengthwise into halves or quarters. [You can adjust the quantities of everything -- it's just that the program here wants specifics.].

Put them onto a cookie sheet or jelly roll pan and drizzle with olive oil and salt and mix them with your hands so that they are lightly coated. The pan does really matter here -- if you use something with sides, they steam rather than roast.

Roast for 15 minutes, turn and roast for 15 - 30 minutes more. At this point, they should be cooked, but they can go longer if they're not done. they should be crisp/tender [if they go longer, they get soft, which I'm starting to like, too] and have browned spots on them.

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# Garlic Chive Chutney

*Adapted from vegrecipesofindia.com*

## Ingredients:

1 cup chopped chives with the garlic buds  
1/2 cup chopped coriander leaves/cilantro  
1 or 2 green chilies, chopped  
1 tsp lemon juice  
1 tsp chaat masala powder  
1/2 tsp roasted cumin powder  
Salt, to taste

## Preparation:

Blend all the above ingredients till smooth in a blender or chutney grinder. Add very little water while blending. Serve the garlic chives chutney with any grilled or tandoori snack or fried snacks. The garlic chives chutney stays best for 4-5 days in the refrigerator