



The Pod

Community Supported Agriculture Newsletter

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

Wednesday August 12, 2015

Staff Profile: Eero Ruuttila

If you ask one of the staff members at World PEAS and New Entry how things are going, we're likely to include the word "busy" somewhere. To prove we're not just saying that, here is a very brief "Week in the Life" article to give you an idea of what each of us does every day.

Eero Ruuttila is New Entry's Technical Assistance Coordinator and manager of our incubator training farm sites. He also spends a couple days a week in Connecticut, working one-on-one with farmers and carrying out projects as part of his "other job" as a sustainable agriculture specialist with UConn Extension. Here's a look at Eero's

work week, by way of excerpts from his notes at a recent staff meeting *[with some additional explanation after each bullet point]:*

- Last week I met with the Arrowhead incubator farmers to discuss field prep, nutrient management, and general crop plans at their individual field plots. Steve and Rob started to seed April 17th and already have many beds of direct seeded greens coming up as well as a bed of transplanted cabbage up. Ed Tivnan seeded his first bed of lettuce while we were at the farm. Aysim's 1/4 acre of garlic appears to be emerging from its thick mulch of marsh hay. *[Arrowhead Farm in Newburyport, Mass., is New Entry's newest incubator training farm site, premiering last year. Steve Fowler and Rob Fortune are beginning their second season at Arrowhead; 2014 Farm Business Planning Course graduate Ed Tivnan is starting his first year there; and 2013 graduate Aysim Dalmau started late last year, planting enough garlic to fill her entire 1/4 acre plot.]*
- I gave my third field talk on Wednesday evening, on field prep and nutrient management. Good attendance including some farmers who had never been to other incubator farm events. *[Eero teaches these Field Workshops throughout the season, building practical skills for our incubator farmers - but also open to the general public.]*
- Last night I went to Phalla's farm in Boxborough to do diagnostics on a few crops she was growing, helped her set up her seed spinner and demonstrated how to sow field peas and oats in an open field. Her lettuce and spinach in her high tunnel looked great! *[Phalla Nol is a longtime New Entry farmer, World PEAS grower, and fixture at the Lowell farmers market. Her high tunnel greens really do look great!]*



Produce this week:

Kale • Green Beans • Squash
Cucumber • Broccoli •
Eggplant • Green Pepper
Slicing Tomato • Watermelon

Also in Large Shares

Dill or Sage

Crop Information:

Slicing Tomato



The tomato genus originated in the South American Andes, with evidence suggesting the tomato was domesticated in Mexico. In the 17th century, the tomato was introduced from Europe to Asia and later to the United States, Africa, and the Middle East. Tomatoes were grown as decorative plants in Europe for several centuries before Europeans tried to eat the round red fruits. The tomato is one of the most important vegetables throughout the world. The edible, fleshy tomato fruit is consumed fresh in salads, cooked in sauces, and flavors soups and meat or fish dishes. Processed forms such as puree, juice, ketchup, and canned tomatoes are widely used as well. Field tomatoes, sometimes also referred to as slicing tomatoes, are most often hybrid varieties. They are great for use in salads and salsas.

Handling: To eat raw, remove stem, wash, and slice.

Storing: Tomatoes will last up to 1 week stored at room temperature and longer if still ripening. Not fully ripe tomatoes will continue to ripen at 60-75 degrees out of the sun. Do not store whole tomatoes in the refrigerator- only use the fridge to store tomatoes once they have been cut.

Watermelon & Rosemary Ice

Adapted from "Your Organic Kitchen," Jessie Ziff Cool, 2000

Ingredients:

1 cup sugar
1 cup water
3 cups watermelon puree
1 tablespoon fresh lemon juice
1 tablespoon finely chopped rosemary

Preparation:

Place a 9x9-inch metal baking pan in the freezer. In a small saucepan over medium-high heat, bring the sugar and water to a boil. Boil for 5 minutes. Place in a large bowl and cool completely. When cooled, add the watermelon puree, lemon juice, and rosemary. Pour into the frozen baking pan, cover with foil, and return to the freezer. Freeze, stirring occasionally, for 3 hours, or until partially frozen. Place the mixture in a food processor with the metal blade attachment. Process until smooth but still frozen. Return the mixture to the baking pan, cover, and freeze for 3 hours longer, or until frozen. Remove from the freezer 15 minutes before serving. Scoop into dessert bowls.



Eggplant, Onion, & Tomatoes over Polenta

Adapted from Foodandwine.com

Ingredients:

2/3 cup olive oil
1 onion, chopped
5 cloves garlic, minced
1 large or 2 medium eggplants (about 1 3/4 pounds), cut into 1/2-inch cubes
2 tomatoes (about 3/4 pound), cut into 1/2-inch pieces
1 cup canned crushed tomatoes in thick puree
3 tablespoons chopped fresh parsley
2 1/4 teaspoons salt
1/4 teaspoon fresh-ground black pepper
4 1/2 cups water
1 1/3 cups coarse or medium cornmeal
6 tablespoons grated Parmesan
*1 or 2 ears of sweet corn

Directions

In a large nonstick frying pan, heat 1 tablespoon of the oil over moderate heat. Add the onion and garlic and cook, stirring occasionally, until the onion starts to brown, about 5 minutes. Remove. Heat 6 tablespoons of the oil in the same pan over moderately high heat. Add the eggplant and cook, stirring occasionally, until golden, about 10 minutes. Add the onion mixture, fresh and canned tomatoes, parsley, and 1 teaspoon of the salt. Simmer until thick, about 10 minutes. Stir in the pepper. Meanwhile, in a medium saucepan, bring the water and the remaining 1 1/4 teaspoons of salt to a boil. Add the cornmeal in a slow stream, whisking constantly. Whisk in the remaining 3 tablespoons of oil. Reduce the heat and simmer, stirring frequently with a wooden spoon, until the polenta is thick, about 20 minutes. Stir in the Parmesan. Serve the hot polenta topped with the vegetables.

*Cut corn of cob and stir into polenta while cooking for extra fresh corn flavor.

Kale with Toasted Almonds

Adapted from "Everyday Greens" by Annie Somerville

Ingredients:

1 or 2 bunches kale, about 1/2 pound, stems and ribs discarded, leaves cut into thick strips
2 tablespoons extra-virgin olive oil
2 teaspoons minced garlic
salt and pepper
1 or 2 tablespoons unskinned almonds, toasted and chopped

Preparation:

Bring a large pot of water to a boil and salt lightly. Drop in the kale, cook until tender, about 5 minutes, and drain. Heat the oil in a large sauté pan and add the kale, garlic, 1/4 teaspoon salt, and a pinch of pepper. Sauté over medium heat for 3 to 4 minutes, adding a little water if needed to keep the kale from sticking to the pan. Toss in the almonds just before serving and season to taste with salt and pepper.