

# THE WSU ORGANIC STANDARD



## Sun, Snow and Rain: That's FARMING!

The first week for the CSA has arrived and we are all excited for the season to start. As you know we've had a few really nice days since I sent the first letter out announcing the start dates but, in general, not as nice as I had hoped. We made a decision to start based on our best ability to anticipate the coming of better weather and a quicker pace of growth for many of our crops. Obviously that better weather hasn't been as nice and the crops didn't pick up the pace like I had hoped. That's FARMING!

We do have a beautiful crop of salad greens, baby spinach, radishes, green onions, and rhubarb to start this first week and hope you are ready for lots of fresh greens. The salad, spinach, and radishes all came out of our large plastic covered hoop house and were seeded in late March to early April. We knew we were having problems getting crops established in the field and decided to allocate some of our hoop house space that's usually reserved for summer crops for early spring crops. I'm glad we did as the field crops are still a couple weeks away from maturity.

As the crops from the hoop house are harvested we will quickly transition those beds to the waiting summer crops such as basil, okra, beans, and peppers. It seems that in these extreme years, timing is even more important.

The green onions are another story. The onions you will be eating this week were seeded last JULY! That's right; we were planning for this first onion crop last summer. By seeding the onions in the summer it allows us to transplant the crop in early September early enough for them to establish a healthy root system to allow the plants to overwinter in the open field.

(CONT'D ON NEXT PG.)

## Check Your Pick-Up Day, See You This Week!

*Wednesday 4-6pm*

**Pullman Fresh Farm Mkt.  
240 NE Kamiaken St.**

From Main St., turn right onto Kamiaken St. The lot is to the right between Swilly's and The Spot Shop, just above Paradise Creek and is open for parking during the market. The market will be at the far end of the lot and is accessible by foot or bike from either downtown or the bike path running along the creek. If needed, additional parking is available at the library and on nearby streets.

*Friday 3-6pm*

**WSU Organic Farm  
Located inside the Tukey  
Horticultural Orchard**

Heading east toward Moscow, turn left onto Airport Rd. then right at the sign: "Tukey Horticultural Orchard." Follow the paved road up the hill, turn right at the gray shed, and park in the gravel parking area on the right then walk down to the gardens. The orchard can be a busy place, especially during the u-pick sales, so please drive slowly and be respectful of this special place.

(CONT'D FROM PG 1) Onions are amazingly hearty, surviving deer attacks, freezing conditions, and a lot of rain. They are now looking great and will be a nice transition into our spring crops. We only planted enough for a couple weeks so there is time for our young shallots and spring planted green onions to reach a harvestable size by June.

One of the big changes this year is the switch in locations for the Farmer's Market in Pullman. After our second season at the Old Post Office parking lot we were experiencing some growing pains and began looking for a large site to expand into. Last winter the Chamber of Commerce was able to work with the city to secure the back section of the Spot Shop Parking Lot downtown above Paradise Creek. This site will be much safer for everyone to visit and provide ample room for additional vendors, music, and community interaction with the market. Check your assigned pick-up sites and we'll see you at the market or the farm!

--Brad Jaeckel

## MEET THE STAFF!

Justin Hougham has taken a full-time job at UI and has turned over the market management to one of our former students, **Francene Watson**.

**Claire** has returned this year and taken Jewlee's place as field manager. She does an excellent job leading our student crews and is a voice of reason for our farm. You will get a chance to see Claire at the CSA pickups on Friday at the farm.

**Alex Van Tuyl**, a recent graduate in the organic program has been helping this spring and will continue with harvest help in between his stints as front man for the local band Ironwood Run.

And finally, **Mark Howell** is returning this year to run the farm table and CSA pickup at the Wednesday market. He's also got a passion for flowers and will be maintaining our cut-flower garden and bringing more of those to our market sites.

And, as I mentioned in the last letter, **Jamaica** is continuing with the newsletter.

## Storage Tips!

If I don't anticipate using a particular vegetable one week, the freezer comes in handy. Some items from this week's box, like rhubarb, can be sliced into 1-2" pieces, packed in plastic containers or freezer bags, and transferred directly to the freezer. Other vegetables, like asparagus (which we'll start seeing soon) and spinach, should be **blanched** first. This preserves a bright color and fresh texture. **To blanch:**

1. Meanwhile, thoroughly wash produce and cut into pieces of desired size.
2. Bring a pot of water to a boil.
3. When the water boils, add the produce (one type at a time if you're doing more than one), and return the water to a boil.
4. Once returned to a boil, use a slotted spoon to transfer the produce to a bowl of ice water. Drain and pack into freezer bags or containers.

## ..... Three Recipes for Rhubarb .....

### **Rhubarb Compote** (*Quick and Easy for a Little or A Lot*)

This makes a quick and delicious sauce that goes especially well with pork; I *also* like it over vanilla ice cream for dessert, or in the morning over plain yogurt and granola. See below for the rhubarb to sugar ratio, and vary according to how much rhubarb you happen to have on hand.

**2 cups ½ pieces of rhubarb**  
**1/8 to ¼ cup sugar**

Combine rhubarb and sugar in a saucepan and let stand for about 15 minutes, until the rhubarb begins to exude some juice. Bring to a boil, stirring constantly. Once boiling, reduce heat to low, cover and simmer until the rhubarb is tender and the liquid is thickened. This should only take about 10 minutes. The compote will continue to thicken as it cools. If you're not using it right away, cover and store in the refrigerator, or freeze in a plastic container or freezer bag.

### **Rhubarb Galette**

Sounds fancy, but this is little more than pie pastry, rhubarb, and sugar. You can also add apple to the rhubarb (and use cinnamon in place of orange zest).

*For the pastry*

1 ¼ cup flour\*

1 tablespoon sugar

¼ teaspoon salt

6 tablespoons unsalted butter

1 teaspoon grated orange zest

(omit if adding apple)

2 tablespoons ice water

*For the filling*

5 tablespoons sugar

2½ cups rhubarb chunks (1-inch chunks)

\* Use all unbleached, all whole wheat pastry flour, or 1 cup unbleached and ¼ cup whole wheat flour.

1. To prepare the pastry, combine flours, sugar, salt and zest in a medium sized bowl. Cut the butter into the flour until the mixture has the texture of course crumbs. Sprinkle the water, 1 tablespoon at a time and toss with a fork until the moisture comes together into a ball.
2. Meanwhile, preheat oven to 350°F. Chop the rhubarb and apple or pear (if using). Combine fruit with the sugar and let sit while you tend to pastry dough.
3. Roll out the cooled dough to form a circle that is about 11-inches in diameter. Transfer to a greased or lightly oiled baking sheet. Spread the fruit over the pastry, leaving about 1 inch margin of pastry all the way around. Fold the margin of pastry up and just slightly over the fruit.
4. Bake for about 40 minutes, until the crust is golden and the filling is bubbling. Cool slightly and serve.

### **Rhubarb Pilaf**

A springtime twist on bulgur salad. From [www.rhubarb.org](http://www.rhubarb.org)

1 c uncooked bulgur

1/2 c chopped onions

1 tablespoon olive oil

1 garlic clove, minced

2 ½ c chopped rhubarb

7 dried apricots, chopped

¼ c apple juice

1 teaspoon cinnamon

1 pinch cayenne

3 tablespoon brown rice syrup

½ teaspoon tamari

¼ c slivered almonds

Fresh sprigs mint for garnish

Place bulgur in a medium sized saucepan or mixing bowl & add 2 1/2 c boiled water. Cover & set aside to steep for 30 minutes. In a large skillet, saute the onions in oil until translucent. Stir in the garlic & rhubarb & saute for 1 minute. Add apricots, juice, cinnamon & cayenne. Cover & cook over medium heat until bubbly. Add syrup & tamari. Stir in the bulgur. Garnish with slivered almonds & fresh sprigs of mint. Serve warm.