

April 2011

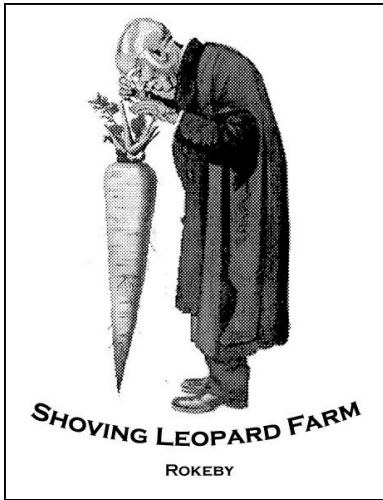
## The Shoving Leopard Leaf

*Shoving Leopard Farm: 845-758-9961*

*Website: [www.shovingleopardfarm.org](http://www.shovingleopardfarm.org) (for organic!)*

*Garden Manager: Marina Michahelles*

*Assistants: Louis Munroe, the fowl, and Mila*



### *News from the garden*

Shoving Leopard Farm has begun its 6<sup>th</sup> growing season and 4<sup>th</sup> year with CSA. Veggie shares were gobbled up quickly, and there are only a few flower shares remaining.

We had a successful winter of research and grant writing. This season, we will repeat last year's Nutrient Density trial; only this time we have USDA funds, via SARE, to help us cover the costs. We will be comparing the growth and Brix – among several other measurements – of our Red Norland potatoes grown with and without biological inoculants (which include mycorrhizal fungi and beneficial bacteria). Stay tuned for results on this trial.

In more gardeny news, the hoop house tables are filling up with seedlings. Already up are onions and leeks, beet, chard, spinach and lettuce leaves, all sorts of brassicae, herbs of all kinds, fennel, tomatoes, peppers, eggplants and flowers. This week, the squash family will make its way into soil blocks, along with another wave of greens. All these little plants are to be transplanted in the next couple of months. The first round of peas, radishes, and spinach are in the ground and fenced up so the hungry hens don't get them before we do!

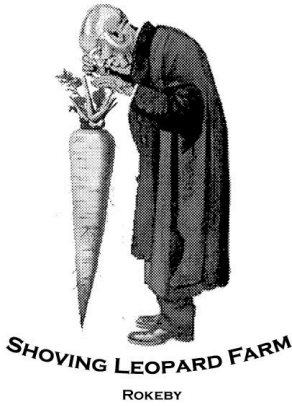
The hens – and their roosters, the geese and remaining duck are thrilled to see bare ground again. Almost three months of snow caused a bit of cabin fever in the hen house, and some of the birds look a bit worse for ware. The geese will be moving to a different farm this year, however, due to their overzealous display of dominance over the hens.



Me, Shlomo and Mila on a walk to the river.

We are coming up on the anniversary of the chicken wrangling (which led to a song available for download at [louismunroe.com](http://louismunroe.com)). To celebrate this, Louis and I adopted a guard puppy, that is lethal with her cuteness. Any malfeasant will surely be deterred by this 11-pound, big-velvet-eared, large-pawed, loose-skinned mutt. The flock and I finally sleep well at night.

Lastly, the Garden Work Party series is off to a great start. On Saturday, we painted the coop, planted narcissi, cleaned up the raspberries, and painted the roof of the CSA hub. Next party is on the 17<sup>th</sup>: potato and onion planting!



We are on  
facebook!

Become a member  
of the Shoving  
Leopard Farm  
group for updates  
and events.



PYO flower  
labyrinth

Closed for now

Shoving Leopard  
Farm

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## Fermentation Station, by Sarah Ashcroft

Every month I'll be sharing ideas on fermenting the veggies from our shares, but since pickups don't start until the asparagus pops up, let's talk about what you'll need to successfully inoculate your favorite vegetables with the health-supporting microbes produced during lacto-fermentation.

1) Vessels- Probably the most important piece of equipment for successful fermentation. You can use wide-mouth glass jars or Pyrex mixing bowls, but the best vessels are old-fashioned, cylindrical ceramic crocks. Keep your eyes peeled for crocks throughout the upcoming garage sale season--just be sure to check for cracks before buying. Glass and ceramic are good choices, whereas metal should be avoided as it reacts with the acid in the ferment. You'll also need something that fits inside the vessel that will keep the veggies submerged

under the brine--a plate, another jar--during the fermentation period.

2) Salt- Unrefined sea salt, which contains plenty of minerals, is the only way to go, in my opinion. Definitely avoid iodized salt, which is antimicrobial and will make your vegetable ferment an unhappy home for any micro-friends.

3) Water- Chlorine kills! ...and fermenting is about increasing the life of the food and its eater, so avoid water that is heavily chlorinated (either boil water that smells of chlorine first or find another source).

Fun places to explore:

<http://www.wildfermentation.com/>  
<http://westonaprice.org/food-features/501-lacto-fermentation.html>  
<http://citypicklers.com/culture.html>  
<http://fermentedfoodways.blogspot.com>

## The nutrition corner, by Rosalind [www.nutrition-matters.info](http://www.nutrition-matters.info)

### Why fermented food is especially good for you:

Besides preserving food, fermentation starts the digestion process, making the inherent nutrients more easily available.

Furthermore, the microbes involved produce a number of B vitamins, some antioxidants, some omega-3 fatty acids, and some digestive enzymes.

Beware of commercially produced sauerkraut, etc., as it is often pasteurized, thlacking the microbes.

### Saurkraut

1. If using municipal tap water, boil it ahead of time to release chlorine, then let it cool.
2. Chop and then soak the seaweed while preparing the rest of the ingredients.
3. Use glass or ceramic jars (never metal, "good" plastic, if necessary), preferably cylindrical or at least very wide-mouthed.
4. Chop the cabbage as for coleslaw and pound it or knead it a bit to get the juices

going.

5. Add other chopped vegetables at your pleasure: carrots, garlic, onions, seaweed, ginger, etc, or fruit, e.g. apples, and herbs.

6. Add ground spices, e.g., caraway, dill, or celery seeds.

7. Mix these ingredients and stuff them into your jars or crocks, pressing down as you go.

8. The brine: 1 tablespoon of sea salt for one cup of water.

9. Weigh the kraut down so that all is covered by brine. Use a slightly smaller jar or other receptacle, full of something to make it heavy. Cover the whole thing with a dishcloth to keep flies off.

10. Let stand at room temperature for three or four days, skimming off any scum that forms, and adding more salt water if the level drops below the kraut.

12. Transfer it to the fridge or cool basement.

Principal source: *Wild Fermentation*, Sandor Ellix Katz, Chelsea Green, 2003.

## Upcoming events

- April 17<sup>th</sup>, Shoving Leopard Work Party: Potato and onion-planting. 9:30-12:30, followed by lunch. RSVP required – space is limited
- May 7<sup>th</sup>, Shoving Leopard Work Party. 9:30-12:30, followed by lunch. RSVP required – space is limited.