

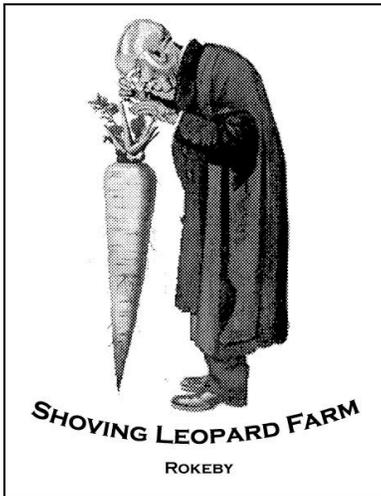
April 2008 Issue

The Shoving Leopard Leaf

Shoving Leopard Farm: 845-758-9961

Garden Manager: Marina Michahelles

Garden Assistants: Louis Munroe, Gretchen Poulet and the chicks



News from the garden

The garlic is weeded and mulched, the flower labyrinth is manured and expanded, and the hoop house is going up this week. The chicks are growing at an alarming rate and are eager to move outside into their chicken tractor... What will little Gretchen think of them?

Gretchen, the Road Island red hen who presides over the garden, is laying consistently, despite losing yet another fowl friend to vermin. Though she is cautious coming out of her pink coop, she's always eager to help me weed and look for worms.

Seven families have already joined the new CSA and there is room for only a few more members. Spread the word!

The month of April will be spent seeding peas, spring onions, parsnips, and some flowers directly in the garden, seeding tomatoes, peppers, eggplants, greens, brassicae, okra, and more flowers in flats in the new hoop house, and helping the chicks to acclimate to the great outdoors. In the latter part of the month, there will be a big potato, onion, asparagus and raspberry planting. If you're interested in helping out, please email me and I'll keep you posted on what's happening when. Many hands make light work!



From fluffy to feathery friendly fowl



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Recipes of the month, by Abra

Morel Salad

4oz bacon or pancetta
2 Tblspn olive oil
1 shallot diced
4 Tblspn white wine vinegar
4 morel mushrooms washed and sliced
Salad leaves
2 sprigs of tarragon

Dice the bacon and cook until crispy
Remove the bacon and briefly fry the morels in the bacon fat
Make a vinaigrette out of the bacon, bacon fat, olive oil and vinegar
Toss the shallot, mushrooms, tarragon and bacon with the salad greens and add the vinaigrette
Taste and season as necessary

Grilled Trout in Ramp Escabeche

4 fillets of trout or similar fish
4oz ramps cleaned and cut into \hat{A} ½ inch pieces
6oz olive oil
3oz white wine vinegar
1 shallot diced

Grill the ramps and mix with the olive oil, shallot and vinegar
Grill the fish and while warm place directly into the ramp sauce
Allow the fish to marinate for at least 8 hours
Serve either at room temperature or slightly warmed
(Escabeche is a Spanish method of cooking, usually seafood, where a warm piece of meat is placed directly into an acidic marinade immediately after cooking.)

The Nutrition Corner, by Rosalind

Before Marina's ready to sell you her delectable greens, you might want to forage for some early wild leeks – ramps or allium tricocca. According to Steve Brill, the "Wildman" forager, you can "recognize this premier member of the onion/garlic family by it's elongated-oval smooth-edged, stalked leaves, 4-12 inches long and 1 to 2-1/2 inches wide, emerging in dense stands from the floor of moist, open woodlands throughout Eastern North America every spring." <http://www.wildmanstevebrill.com>
He recommends harvesting only the leaves at this point because the bulbs are still small. But beware! The ramp resembles its poisonous relation the lily-of-the-valley. How to tell the difference? Pinch the leaves. A leeky-oniony smell? Then it's OK to eat it. If not, then don't.

Should you come from the Appalachian Mountains, this will not be news to you. Ramp Festivals there welcome the spring and the return of fresh, edible, vitamin-C-laden greens. For those in New York, start looking in April and, if you find them in May, you'll see the bulbs are big enough to eat, as well. But don't over-harvest – ramps are precious.

The web offers recipes, usually wedding ramps to potatoes or eggs or chicken. What will the ramps provide you with? Lutein (think of your eyes), magnesium, calcium, and vitamins A and C primarily, according to Jill Cueni-Cohen. www.tablemagazine.com/pdf/table%20spring%20ramps.pdf Another "beware," however: they do have a laxative effect.

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