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## The Weekly Update

June 6, 2009

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Dear WCM Shopper



At last Saturday's market I had an interesting chat with **Amy Carr** of **Pecatonica Valley Farm** of Hollandale. The farm is well known for its eggs, each week selling hundreds of them at the [Westside Community Market](#) and elsewhere. Despite the volume of eggs sold by the farm, Amy says they still wash each one by hand.

My look of amazement was confirmed with her nod. She noted automation still requires them to place the eggs on a conveyor by hand, as it's done at even the largest of operations. It's a case where automation is just not worth the effort or the expense. That suits me just fine.

Amy also noted that the butterhead lettuce was a little too small to bring to market last week but should be available this week.

A few vendors have commented about Mother Nature's planting schedule this season. It's a little behind, depending upon the crop from a couple to four weeks. Some people, it seems, feel that it's too late to get tomatoes, flowers, and a few other nursery items into the ground. Not too late at all, according to those in the know.

We have plenty of knowledgeable vendors with plenty of stock for those looking to put

in a garden or flowerbed. **Morningwood Farm Nursery** from Mt. Horeb, **Natalie's Garden and Greenhouse** from Oregon, and **Tomato Mountain Farm** from Brooklyn are just a few of the folks with plenty of stock ready to go into the ground.

This is also the time of year to get those hanging baskets for the patio, garden, or deck. **Kopke's Fruit of the Bloom** out of Oregon and **Indian Trail Greenhouses** from Cross Plains, and Natalie's Garden and Greenhouse have a great selection of hanging baskets among their huge variety of flowers. Make sure to ask about the baskets because many of them will provide a colorful display throughout the summer and into the fall.

*Photo: We had a wonderful crowd at last week's market. Photo: Bill Lubing*



If you've ever wondered who enters all of the email addresses into the system from the weekly raffle you should know that **Elizabeth Wellenstein** is the hard-worker who makes sure you're on the list. Last week I received the following email from Elizabeth with the subject line "FABULOUS RECIPE!!!":

"Just made a big pot of this and it is delicious! In case you need suggestions for the newsletter (or your personal use) and asparagus is still around for another week. YUM!"

Asparagus should certainly be around for at least several more weeks. Your suggestion is our recipe, Elizabeth. Here it is.

**Recipe:**  
**Cream of Asparagus Soup**  
**(Crème D'asperges)**

**Ingredients**

- 2 pounds green asparagus

- 1 large onion, chopped (Or use the wonderful green onions now available at the market)
- 3 tablespoons unsalted butter
- 5 to 6 cups chicken broth
- 1/2 cup [crème fraîche](#) or heavy cream
- 1/4 teaspoon fresh lemon juice, or to taste

### Instructions

1. Cut tips from 12 asparagus.
2. 1 1/2 inches from top and halve tips lengthwise if thick. Reserve for garnish.
3. Cut stalks and all remaining asparagus into 1/2-inch pieces.
4. Cook onion in 2 tablespoons butter in a 4-quart heavy pot over moderately low heat, stirring, until softened. Add asparagus pieces and salt and pepper to taste, then cook, stirring, 5 minutes. Add 5 cups broth and simmer, covered, until asparagus is very tender, 15 to 20 minutes.
5. While soup simmers, cook reserved asparagus tips in boiling salted water until just tender, 3 to 4 minutes, then drain.
6. Purée soup in batches in a blender until smooth, transferring to a bowl (use caution when blending hot liquids), and return to pan. Stir in crème fraîche, then add more broth to thin soup to desired consistency. Season with salt and pepper. Bring soup to a boil and whisk in remaining tablespoon butter.
7. Add lemon juice and garnish with asparagus tips.

**Cook's note:** Soup keeps, covered and chilled, 2 days. If making ahead, add last tablespoon butter and lemon juice after reheating.

Recipe adapted from [www.epicurious.com](http://www.epicurious.com)

**And by the way, we can *always* use seasonal recipes from our local cooks and foodies.**

Photo: by Bill Lubing

Speaking of asparagus, we invite you to check out this [wonderful video](#) that features the ever humorous **Peter Robertson** of **RPs Pasta** showing how to blanch and prepare this springtime delicacy for use throughout the year. He's preparing 800 pounds of it, just *slightly* more than we can fit into our home freezer. Yet the techniques are the same.

Buying from several area farmers, the batch Peter works on in the video is from our own **Dan Deneen** of **Black Earth Valley Produce**, in the Mazomanie area. Peter also makes a great case for buying your food locally, naturally at the WCM. Note: You'll recognize another familiar face on this video.

For timely tips on using and growing spring herbs, **Jill Yeck** from **Harvest Moon Farm** from Stoughton offers us some [timely video tips](#).

Chances are when you stop by for your complimentary coffee at the info booth you'll see Elizabeth Wellenstein, who is the Information Tent Coordinator on Saturday in addition to her data entry duties (see recipe above). And even though you're on the mailing list, you can still enter the weekly raffle.

Until next week,

*Bill Lubing  
for the Westside Community Market  
[friends@westsidecommunitymarket.org](mailto:friends@westsidecommunitymarket.org)*

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## The Weekly Update

June 13, 2009

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### Dear WCM Shopper

If you're looking to bake that strawberry-rhubarb pie, it looks like the fresh ingredients are available at the market now. We saw some strawberries last week and expect the supply to ramp up quickly.

As I've mentioned before, it's easy to capture the essence of in-season produce by *putting food by* -- in other words, preserving it through canning, freezing or drying.

The early season strawberries available at the market for the next couple of weeks tend to be smallish, with the berry size increasing as the season progresses. While they may not be candidates for a *bon appétit* cover photo, these early season strawberries are perfect for freezing. The only process easier than *freezing* strawberries is *eating* them.

Buy whatever quantity you wish. Inspect them for quality. Wash the good ones, draining the strawberries well. Place them in a single layer on a cookie sheet. Place the sheet in the freezer until the berries are frozen, then transfer them to freezer bags. You'll thank yourself throughout the season.

Of course there is plenty more starting to show up at the [Westside Community Market](#). **Kevin Lucey** from **Happy Valley Farm**, in the Black Earth area, made his first showing at the market last week. He plans to remain the rest of the season. Kevin had some beautiful spinach and radishes.

We are happy to hear about and congratulate **Cassie and Mike Noltnerwyss** of [Primrose Produce](#) of Middleton on their recent organic certification. That makes their great looking stall even nicer.

Peapods are starting to appear. **Don's Produce** of Arena has some wonderful shelling peas along with beautiful tomatoes and cucumbers.

[Potter's Crackers](#) of Madison has a beautiful new banner for their stall and **Nancy** says they'll be bringing their grilled corn and onion crackers in a couple of weeks.

Salad greens continue to delight us along with mustard greens and chard. For a great selection of greens make sure to visit the stands of [JenEhr Family Farm](#) of Sun Prairie and **Yang's** of Madison.

*Photo: Baskets of Bounty from  
Blue Moon Community Farm. Photo: Bill Lubing*

## Recipe: Strawberry Flan

### Crust

- 1/2 cup butter, room temperature
- 2 tbsp sugar
- 1 tsp grated lemon zest
- 1-1/3-cup all-purpose flour

### Filling

- 1 cup mascarpone cheese
- 3 tbsp icing sugar
- 2 tsp grated lemon zest
- 1/4 tsp vanilla
- 1/4 cup whipping cream
- 2 cups halved small strawberries

### Glaze

- 1/4 cup red currant jelly



- 1 tbsp lemon juice

### Instructions

1. In food processor, combine butter, sugar and lemon zest; pulse until mixed.
2. Add flour and process until mixture just starts to cling together.
3. Turn out on to floured surface and gently knead until mixture forms a ball.
4. With floured fingertips, press dough into 9 inch (23 cm.) flan pan.
5. Place in freezer for 20 minutes.
6. Bake at 400 degrees for about 12 minutes or until golden. Let cool completely on rack.
7. In medium bowl, beat together mascarpone cheese, icing sugar, lemon zest and vanilla.
8. Add whipping cream and beat until blended.
9. Spread cheese mixture into cooled crust.
10. Top with strawberries, arranging berries in concentric circles.
11. Heat jelly and lemon juice until jelly melts; brush over strawberries.
12. Refrigerate until ready to server.

*Makes 6 to 8 servings*

Recipe adapted from [www.lesleycooks.com](http://www.lesleycooks.com)

Photo: by Bill Lubing

Most of us have probably felt this urge and managed to suppress it. You've got your reusable market bags organized, empty milk bottles ready to go, and one foot out the door.

Suddenly you're possessed by an urge to gather up your knitting, bring it to market, and ... knit. In public, for the world to see take shape that new scarf, sock, perhaps sweater (or was that supposed to be an afghan?).

Give in to your urge. Our intrepid knitter, **Elizabeth Wellenstein** (also WCM Info Booth Coordinator) reports that this Saturday is [World-Wide Knit in Public Day](#).

She assures me, "There will be knitters at the market. So bring your knitting and a chair and knit with us for a while. I will provide yarn and needles for anyone who wants to give it a try!"

Knitting, complimentary coffee, and a chance to win the weekly raffle. And strawberries too? Life is grand at the WCM.

Until next week,

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## *The Weekly Update*

June 20, 2009

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### **Dear WCM Shopper**

There is a reason the word "community" is a part of the WCM name. It's recognition of that part of the transaction the Market brings to us that we can't put on the scale and weigh, can't preserve by freezing or canning, and can't easily describe.

Actually, the explanation is simple. The community aspect of the Market recognizes that our love of buying fresh and local food from people we know and trust is just the beginning of a beautiful thing. The WCM allows us to share aspects of our lives that

bring meaning to the "buying" experience that no checkout scanner can ever tally.

We enjoy live musicians who show up at the WCM simply because they love the atmosphere and the appreciative audience, (the majority of whom come for produce, meats, plants, and dairy, not for the music).

Last week two market regulars, **Lillian Tong** and **Jane Grogan** celebrated [World Wide Knitting in Public Day](#) by sharing their knowledge of the craft with a multitude of market shoppers who stopped to watch these women spin and knit. The folks were there to listen, learn, and enjoy. For many of the children (and adults) it was the first time they'd ever seen a real spinning wheel. [Watch [WCM Knitting Video](#)]

It's the easygoing, friendly way of the Westside Community Market that makes the experience so much more than the excellent food and plants that we have come to expect. Which is not to minimize the hard work of our vendors and the appreciation they show to us market attendees.

Chatting with **Bruce Workman** from [Edelweiss Creamery](#), near Monticello, he promises some exciting treats at this Saturday's market. It seems Bruce has been experimenting with [Farmer Cheese](#) and has some samples he wants to "audition" at the market. He'll bring several flavors, including basil, cilantro, and chive.

It's a long time coming but **Eric and Carrie Johnson** of [Jordandal Farms](#) from Argyle will be introducing their **frozen soups** and **pasties** at the upcoming market. I tried some of the soup while [shooting a video](#) with Carrie Johnson. The soup looks and tastes absolutely homemade delicious. The video simply looks homemade.

**Amy Carr** of [Pecatonica Valley Farm](#), near Hollandale showed me a new brat they've crafted. Called the **Fresh Tailgater Beer Brat**, it contains extra onion and just a little more punch than your typical brat. If you haven't tried them though, all of Pecatonica's packaged products are simply wonderful. Pick up a selection to audition for the Fourth of July.

Included in the excellent selection of fresh produce offered by **Kristen Kordet** of [Blue Moon Community Farm](#), near Stoughton are [garlic scapes](#). These are an under-appreciated treat that, like the spring garlic, is only available for a few weeks of the year. Check them out.

**Josie Pradella** from [TerraSource Gourmet Chocolates](#), in Madison reports that the coming market will be the last for her until September. Here's wishing Josie fun and adventure in her travels this summer.

Strawberries will be holding strong this week and we should expect to see snap peas and possibly even green beans on Saturday. Asparagus appears to remain in good supply.

*Photo: Plenty of peas from Ka Vang. Photo: Bill Lubing*



*Garlic scapes from Blue Moon Community Farm. Photo: Bill Lubing*

**Recipe:**  
**Garlic Scape Pesto Recipe**

Garlic scapes are the serpentine curls on the tops of developing garlic plants. Scapes are milder than regular garlic, but still have enough 'punch' to satisfy garlic lovers. This quick and easy pesto, equally good on pasta or vegetables, is an ideal way to take advantage of the the garlic scapes' short window of availability.

**Ingredients**

- 1 cup coarsely chopped garlic scapes (about 10 scapes);
- 1/2 cup olive oil;
- 1/2 cup walnuts, pine nuts or sunflower seeds;
- 2 tbsp lemon juice, more if preferred;
- 1/4 tsp salt (optional);
- Water, as needed.

**Directions**

Place all ingredients into food processor and puree (smooth or coarse, as desired). Add water, 1 tablespoon at a time, to desired consistency. Taste for seasoning; add more salt or lemon juice as needed

Will keep, covered and refrigerated, for approximately one week.

*Makes 8 servings*

*Serving size: 2 tablespoons*

Recipe adapted from [www.recipetips.com](http://www.recipetips.com)

Photo: by Bill Lubing

Don't forget the WCM definition of "community" includes complementary coffee and a raffle each week. For a little extra coverage on a couple of this week's subjects, check out:

- The video of Jordandal Farms' [new frozen offerings](#).
- Lillian Tong and Jane Grogan giving us a [brief lesson on spinning and knitting](#).

Until next week,

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## The Weekly Update

June 27, 2009

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### Dear WCM Shopper

While we may be uncomfortably hot these last few days, the heat has helped move many crops along rather nicely. For many farmers the combination of rain and (finally) some warm weather was just what the doctor ordered.

We should expect to see more peas this week. Along with snap and sweet peas, look to find snow peas as well.

Cilantro, basil, and kohlrabi should be available. There were many cucumbers at market last week. Naturally that meant a trip to the grocery store to stock up on vinegar, sugar, and pickling spices. We feel comfortable with the level of frozen strawberries and freezer jam put away, but the pickle supply is going to need some work.

Like strawberry freezer jam, which doesn't require any canning "processing," there are pickles you can make without any special equipment. One of our favorites is the "Ice Cream Pail" (bread & butter) pickles found at [www.recipezaar.com](http://www.recipezaar.com) [[Recipe](#)]. We always make a batch of these for the Fourth of July. I never have been able to figure out what they mean by an ice cream pail. I just use a glass mixing bowl.

This Saturday Session II begins at the Market. We welcome **Barnard Orchards** from Egg Harbor, bringing strawberries and later cherries and peaches along with [Epplegarden](#), from Fitchburg.

We have it confirmed from **Master Pasta Maker Peter Robertson's [RP's Pasta](#)** will be joining the ranks of the WCM. Peter said he expects them to be set up next Saturday, June 27. Word has it they'll be across from **Stella's** on the far western end of the Market. (One of this week's recipes calls for RP's ravioli.)

*Photo: A quick stop for a loaf of bread at [Madison Sourdough](#) and then it's back on the bike. Photo: Bill Lubing*

*Green tomatoes from Flyte Family Farm. Photo: Bill Lubing*



## Recipes

We have a couple of recipes from readers this week that are perfect for this time of the season.

**Cheryl Busuttil** writes:

*One of the vendors at the far end (closest to Midvale Blvd.) sells wonderful green tomatoes. [That would be [Flyte Family Farm](#), Ed.] I told the woman at the stand that I would share my recipe for Green Tomato Salsa.*

*Here's the recipe. It's great with chips, over eggs or fish, on tacos or burritos.*

### Green Tomato Salsa

Makes two cups.

- 6 green tomatoes, coarsely chopped
- 1 or 2 jalapeños, large, seeded, and finely chopped
- 1-1/2 tablespoons extra virgin olive oil
- 2 tablespoons fresh lime juice
- Pinch of kosher salt
- Freshly ground black pepper, to taste
- 1/2 cup sweet onion, finely chopped
- 2 tablespoons fresh cilantro, finely chopped
- 2 cloves garlic

Mix all ingredients and set in fridge for 2 hours for flavors to mingle.

Or, for a salsa that has a rich, roasted flavor:

Preheat the oven to 350 degrees. Spray a little olive oil in two baking dishes. Leave the skin of the onion on. Slice it in half and put the onion in the baking dish, cut side down. Leave the peels on the garlic. Slice off the top quarter-inch of the garlic.

Put the garlic in aluminum foil, pour a little oil over the cloves, and seal with foil. Put it in the baking dish. Place the jalapeños and green tomatoes in the second baking dish. Bake for an hour, until the cut edges of the onion are brown and caramelized and the garlic is squishy and golden. Bake the jalapeños and tomatoes for twenty minutes, until slightly softened.

When cool enough to handle, remove the skins from the onions and garlic. Mince the onion into a mushy paste. Chop the tomatoes to small, quarter-inch pieces. Remove the stems from the jalapeños, slice them lengthwise, and remove the gills and most of the seeds. (Leaving more seeds will make the salsa hotter).

Grind or chop until puréed, though still chunky. Add lime juice and salt to taste.

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#### Lynn Courtenay writes us:

I offer this suggestion for local produce etc. as it is such an easy, quick meal using [RP's](#) raviolini parmigiano.

**[Editor's Note:** Peter Robertson of RP's notes, "We've chosen not to sell the Parmigiano-Reggiano Raviolini at the market just because it is not 100% Wisconsin cheese. Would your recipe work with the 4 cheese ravioli?" We haven't checked with Lynn on this, but believe the substitute would work just perfect.]



#### Lynn's Quick and Easy Garlic Scapes Italiano

I cut up 2 garlic scapes, a small bunch of young, very tender asparagus from the market, chopped a generous amount of sweet and lemon basil, and about a tablespoon of pine nuts, plus a bit of left-over roasted red pepper.

I put all the ingredients in my pasta bowl added olive oil, a little salt and pepper and stirred this together as the sauce. I cooked this for 2 minutes on medium to low in the microwave to warm through.

I then cooked the raviolini and put it on top of the sauce in the bowl, mixed and served with freshly grated parmesan cheese. The great thing is that I only used one bowl and one pot and it took just minutes.

---

Thanks Lynn and Cheryl. it's always wonderful to create in the kitchen what other WCM shoppers enjoy making. So, keep those seasonal recipes coming.

Alongside the complementary coffee at the market sits a jug of cool water. Please stop

by the info booth to refresh yourself. While you're there, sign up for our weekly raffle.

Until next week,

*Bill Lubing*  
for the Westside Community Market  
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