

The Beet

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What's Happening in the Food Roots Gardens

What a long, strange year of weather it has been. Through the rain, snow, and shine, the Food Roots gardens continue to thrive and grow. The **Sacred Heart Food Bank Garden**, whose bounty is shared with low-income families in Tillamook County, produced fresh vegetables until Thanksgiving, with the support of many generous volunteers and school groups. The 2008 Sacred Heart garden yielded over 900 pounds of produce that was distributed through food pantries

countywide. Some of our most successful crops included our beautiful celery, lettuce, pumpkins, summer squash, potatoes, beans, and broccoli. Sacred Heart is now "winterized", with some beds resting, some planted with cabbage or garlic, as we prepare for spring and hope for a little more sun in 2009!



TJHS students and teacher Kevin Kacmarsky constructing the hoop house, September 2008

Food Roots' newest garden, the **Hoop House** at Tillamook Junior High School, is well underway. Construction of the hoop house is nearly completed and planting has commenced. The hoop house will serve as a demonstration and learning garden for year-round vegetable and fruit production using sustainable agricultural techniques. We are currently working with two classes and the TJHS Garden Club. Students are learning hands on food production and self-reliance skills, while having fun. The kids are



TJHS Students till the hoop house site for their first planting of tomatoes, May 2008

excited about the possibility of a summer program. Food Roots would like to see the hoop house project evolve into a youth-run garden enterprise.

Food Roots is working with **Pass It On Ministries Food Pantry** in Beaver to assist in developing a self-reliance garden on-site at the pantry. All food will serve volunteers and food pantry clientele, while building skills, resources and confidence for all who are involved.



Food Roots exists to cultivate a healthy food system in Tillamook County

BOARD MEMBERS

Shelly Bowe
Erica Rubin
Pam Sears
Gina Emanuel
Courtney Fortenberry
Rebekah Laszlo

VISTA VOLUNTEER

Katherine Cofell

Serving Youth, Serving Food Roots

Four Tillamook High School students chose to work with Food Roots to complete their Service Learning Projects. We sure appreciate and admire the efforts of these students. Here's a little bit about them and their projects!

Annette Nazaroff. Upon first meeting Annette, she shared with us her memories of gardening with her grandmother as a young child. These memories inspired Annette to complete her service learning project working at Sacred Heart Garden, where Annette is learning that gardening is about knowing your vegetables, feeling out the weather, and getting down and dirty in the soil. Annette is helping with garden upkeep, from propagation to harvest. Annette is interested in pursuing writing and massage therapy after high school.

McKinley Dickson is lending a hand with the Hoop House project. With some amazing volunteer recruitment skills, McKinley organized two workdays to complete construction of the hoop house. McKinley is a business student at THS and plans to help Food Roots educate THS students about youth entrepreneurship opportunities for economic development in Tillamook County. McKinley is passionate about filmmaking and hopes to attend a filmmaking course in Vancouver BC after he graduates.



THS Student Annette Nazaroff and Joyce Kirkland showing off some of the Sacred Heart pumpkin harvest

Star Kacmarsky is helping with Food Roots' Education and Outreach program. As a Health Occupations student at TBCC, Star was interested in completing a project that focuses on nutrition education. She is currently working with Food Roots to develop a youth gardening curriculum, to support our Garden Enhanced Nutrition Education (GENE) grant, specifically addressing growing food in Tillamook County's maritime climate. Star will also help Food Roots conduct outreach to community groups through presentations about the health benefits of local food. Star plans to continue her education in health care.



People of all ages participated in Kyle McCanna's block printing workshop, December 2008

Kyle McCanna is completing his project with Food Roots' Outreach Program. As a passionate artist, Kyle joined with Food Roots to apply his interest in art to service learning and building community. Kyle worked to organize and teach a local foods art workshop. With support from Bay City Arts Center and THS art teacher Jenny Wyss, Kyle's *Art of Eating Local: Block Printing Workshop* was a huge success. Twenty-two people gathered for a local soup supper, followed by the workshop. Kyle is also busy creating the design for the first Food Roots t-shirt! After graduation, Kyle hopes to attend art school.

Meet Our Newest Board Member

Rebekah Laszlo moved to Tillamook from Oklahoma with her husband Geza Laszlo, a math instructor at Tillamook Bay Community College. As the mother of three young garden enthusiasts, Rebekah spends much of her time raising her boys and taking classes at TBCC, where she is a member of the Phi Theta Kappa Honor Society. She also founded and leads the Dirt Heads gardening club for young families. Rebekah received her B.A. from Oklahoma State University in Spanish and hopes to continue her education in naturopathic medicine.

Looking to the future, Rebekah shares that her “greatest hope for this community is to find a shared idea of common sense in Food Roots’ mission. If my sons choose to live here when they are grown, I hope they find they have a strong local food system around them and that they feel empowered to play a role in it.”



Rebekah leads Dirt Heads Gardening Club participants through investigations of bugs and broccoli.

A Different Approach to Food Security by Erica Rubin, Food Roots Co-Chair

It’s clear to all that we are facing some hard times as regards food and hunger, especially in Oregon. Emergency food is an important part of addressing the problem, but we also need to think about long term solutions that will give people more control over their access to good food.

Tillamook County has the potential to generate a great deal more of the food its residents eat. Food that is produced locally can be cheaper (eliminating long-distance transportation costs), healthier, fresher (less time getting from the farm to your plate), and better tasting. If we can increase the number of local farms and market gardens, and make it easier for local residents to grow some of their own food, we will have a better chance of seeing our community well fed.

There are many challenges to making this scenario a reality. More people need to understand

how Grow Local – Buy Local – Eat Local benefits our community. People need support in learning how to grow a successful garden and how to preserve their bounty. There need to be more places for people to garden. Local food distribution systems need improvement so that people can get the food they need nearer to home.

This is the heart of our work at Food Roots. At this time, we have chosen to focus much of our day to day work with youth, supporting local producers, and encouraging micro enterprise development. At Food Roots’ community suppers and film nights, we strive to spark conversations that will lead to actions to improve local food access. Food Roots continues to collaborate with other local and regional groups in addressing food issues and provides support and resources to all those who have a stake in seeing food security become a reality in Tillamook County.

Meet our Volunteers: An Interview with Joyce Kirkland

Joyce Kirkland, a recently retired accountant who grew up in Hillsboro, began volunteering with Food Roots in the gardens this autumn.

1. *Why do you volunteer with Food Roots?*

I had been wanting to volunteer some time and I was thrilled to do some gardening. I had always had a garden, however small or large, until we settled in Barview. I couldn't wait to get my hands in the dirt again, and I was helping in some small way.

2. *Why do you think Food Roots' work is important?*

I slowly learned what Food Roots was all about by listening to Shelly as we harvested produce for the food bank, weeded or planted new seedlings. Using and promoting local food resources has always seemed like a logical and important step toward sustainable living. I don't do enough myself yet but I am learning. Food Roots' program in the schools was a new idea to me, but also now seems so logical and worthwhile. I hope the program can continue to grow.



Joyce reads a story to excited Liberty Elementary 2nd graders at the Tillamook High School FFA pumpkin patch, October 2008

Local Food, Local Art!



"Eat Your Veggies" Block Print by Tillamook High School art teacher Jenny Wyss

Volunteer with Food Roots

There are many volunteer opportunities available with Food Roots for young people and adults. Some areas where we could use some help include:

- Gardens
- Office / Administration
- Youth / Community Education
- Service on our Board of Directors or a committee
- Events & Outreach
- Micro-enterprise programs

If you are interested in volunteering, please contact Food Roots at 503.842.3154 X2 or info@foodrootsnw.org

Cabbage: Fabulous Fermentations

Cabbage thrives in our cool maritime climate, creating opportunity for great experimental food projects through the dark winter months. Wild Fermentations of sauerkraut are an easy and healthy treat. Here is a basic recipe from **Chef Alan Joynson** of the HTR program. Alan serves on Food Roots' Education Committee. We treasure his contributions to local food and his kitchen goodies.



Cabbage Block Print by Helen Hill

Sauerkraut

Supplies:

-A non-reactive (glass, crockery, or clean, hard plastic, no metals please!) straight-sided container that has a cover that fits into the container. Some people use a plate.

-Saran wrap

-Something heavy (a juice jug or plastic ziplock bags filled with water work well)

Ingredients

-5 pounds of vegetables, the harder, and firmer the better; cabbage (red or green), carrots, celery, fennel bulb, parsnips, celery root, etc.

-3 tablespoons of un-iodized salt (preferably sea salt)

-Seasonings and spices: we like pickling spice, juniper berries, hot peppers, etc. Be careful with the amount, you don't want to overpower the natural flavors.

Now all ya gotta do is . . .

- Slice the vegetables very thin

- Toss them with the salt and any spicy stuff you've decided to include

- Pack the mixture tightly into your container.

- Cover the mixture well with saran wrap and press the plate or cover down on top to prevent air from spoiling the soon to be sauerkraut)

- Weigh the cover down to keep the cabbage under the water that is going to form

Burp out any air around the plastic wrap (this will have to be done on a daily basis) and leave it for a month, at least. You can leave it for up to 3 months at room temperature. It can be eaten anytime after a month, it depends on how strong you want the flavors.

The salt will draw out the water in the veggies and create a liquid. As the sauerkraut ferments, white stuff will form on the top of the liquid. This is supposed to happen, but you should skim it off, don't let it get mixed in with the vegetables.

If enough liquid to cover the vegetables does not form within a day, try pressing down harder on the cover to see if that compresses it enough to get the water out. Otherwise, you will have to make a brine and pour in enough to cover the vegetables. This is a rare occurrence, but it does happen with some harder root vegetables. To make a brine, mix 2 tablespoons of salt into one quart of water, without heating it, and stir well. You should have a little salt left after stirring, if not, add more. Pour the brine into the container until the veggies are well covered.

Happy fermentations and have fun!

Cabbage, cauliflower, broccoli, kohlrabi—they love our north coast maritime climate. They like it cool, will tolerate mild frosts, and all of them are packed with nutritious vitamins.

Food Roots

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Food Roots' UPCOMING EVENTS:

- North County Film Night
Showing "Broken Limbs"
23rd January, 7pm
NCRD Senior Room, Manzanita

- South County Film Night
 - Producers' Gathering
- Contact Food Roots for dates and details

MARKET NEWS:

Garibaldi Saturday Market
at the Old Mill

Local Food, quality handcrafts &
live music

November 15th — April 11th
10 am — 2.30 pm

201 S 3rd Street, Garibaldi

For more information call 815-8142



Thank You * Thank You * Thank You

It's time to give a big THANK YOU to all the people and organizations that have given us support during the past year. It helps so much to know that you believe in our work.

- * Our faithful donors who send regular contributions
- * Those of you who responded to our fund mailer
- * Those of you who surprised us with unexpected gifts
- * Those of you who contributed on behalf of others
- * Those of you who attended or provided food or services for our Harvest Dinner
- * Economic Development Council of Tillamook County
- * Garibaldi Saturday Farmers' Market
- * Organic Valley Family of Farms
- * OSU Extension Service
- * Siletz Tribal Charitable Contribution Fund
- * Spirit Mountain Community Fund
- * Tillamook County Creamery Assn.
- * Tillamook County PUD
- * TLC Credit Union
- * Trust Management Services, LLC



A day is coming when a single carrot, freshly observed, will set off a revolution.

-Paul Cezanne