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FOOD.



CROMWELL VALLEY C.S.A.  
Organic Community Supported Agriculture

# CVCSA Community Newsletter 2009 Season

JUNE 20, 2009

## Composting: Put Your Waste to Good Use

Highlights in this issue:

- Learn about composting
- Cook those peas
- Attend a workshop
- Enjoy a coloring sheet

### What is composting?

Composting is the process of taking organic (once-living) waste and creating a nutrient-rich material. Over time, food scraps and yard waste break down into a chemical-free fertilizer for your soil. With a little forethought and some time, you can turn your kitchen scraps into food for your garden, landscaping or houseplants.

### Why compost?

By collecting and composting organic you can noticeably reduce the amount of trash your household produces.

Composting can also improve the health of your garden and landscaping. You won't need to use chemical fertilizers if you feed your plants with organic compost instead.

### What can I compost?

Almost any material that was once living can be composted. That means you can add all the following to your compost bin.

#### Paper products:

- Unwaxed cardboard and clean paper
- Shredded newspaper

#### Food waste:

- Coffee grounds, filters and tea bags
- Eggshells
- Fruits and vegetables
- Nut shells

#### Yard waste:

- Houseplants
- Leaves, grass and yard clippings
- Hay and straw
- Sawdust and wood chips

#### Other things:

- Hair and fur

- Cotton or wool rags
- Dryer and vacuum cleaner lint
- Fireplace ashes

### What can't I compost?

There are some things that you should avoid adding to your compost bin. Attempting to compost dairy products, meat or fish bones and scraps, and fat, oil or lard can attract rodents and other pests.

You'll also want to keep trimmings, twigs or leaves from your black walnut trees; diseased plants; pet waste; and coal or charcoal ashes out of your compost because these things can harm your plants.

Lastly, avoid including anything treated with chemical fertilizers or pesticides because these chemicals can kill the bacteria that helps break down your compost materials.

### How do I get started?

By attending the Composting 101 workshop on Sunday, June 28th at Sherwood Farm of course! See page 3 for more details.

Have any eggshells, yard trimmings or grass clippings?

CVCSA relies on its members to help improve the quality of our soil. With your help, we can create rich compost to nourish our crops. If you have grass clippings (that haven't been treated with herbicides) and/or leaves please drop them off near the fields or the Apple House. We also use eggshells to help make a special compost and/or a powder for fertilizing our tomatoes. Save your eggshells (enough to make them worthwhile) in paper bags (they can go putrid in plastic) and bring them to us. We'll put them to good use!



(Picture courtesy of Flickr user Darwin Bell.)

## Garlic Snap Peas (Makes about 4 servings)

### Ingredients:

- 1/2 pound sugar snap peas
- 1/2 TBSP butter
- 1/2 tsp olive oil
- 1 medium clove garlic, minced
- 1/2 tsp sea salt
- ground black pepper

### Instructions:

Bring enough water to cover the peas to boil in a medium pan.

Remove the ends and pull the strings from the peas. Add the peas to the boiling water and cook 2 to 3 minutes, until just tender.

Drain and run cold water over the peas until cooled. Dry peas with a paper towel to absorb any excess moisture. (These steps can be completed up to 8 hours ahead of time. Just wrap peas in dry paper towels, place in a plastic bag and refrigerate until you're ready to use them.)

In a medium pan, heat the butter and oil over medium heat. Sauté the garlic 1 minute, until soft and fragrant. Add the peas and cook until heated through, stirring often. Sprinkle with the salt and stir for about 30 seconds. Season with pepper to taste and enjoy!

(Recipe adapted from [www.cditchen.com](http://www.cditchen.com) and submitted by CVCSA member Reba Goodall.)

Enjoy your peas in a stir fry, as a side dish or raw as a crunchy snack.

## Minty Sugar Snap Peas (Makes about 4 servings)

### Ingredients:

- 2 tsp olive oil
- 3/4 lb sugar snap peas, trimmed
- 3 green onions, chopped
- 1 clove garlic, chopped
- 1 TBSP fresh mint, chopped
- Salt and pepper to taste

### Instructions:

In a large skillet, warm oil over medium heat. Add the peas, green onion, and garlic. Sprinkle with salt and pepper to taste. Stir-fry for a few minutes until peas are just tender, then remove from heat and stir in the mint leaves.

Serve and enjoy!

(Recipe adapted from [www.allrecipes.com](http://www.allrecipes.com) and submitted by CVCSA member Ami Spencer.)

- Peas
- Lettuce
- Scallions
- Herbs

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## Workshops

Don't miss out on the upcoming Composting Workshop. Our Head Farmer Matt Belmont will be teaching you how to make your own compost from things you'd normally throw away! Workshop details are below:

SUNDAY JUNE 28  
9 - 11 AM, SHERWOOD FARM  
COMPOSTING 101

Cromwell Valley CSA Head Farmer Matt Belmont digs dirt, and can teach you how to enrich your own soil with composted yard and kitchen waste. Meet at the CSA sign just inside the Sherwood entrance. CSA members \$2, non-members \$4.

Turn your trash  
into rich soil.  
Learn how to  
compost with  
our own Matt  
Belmont!

## Announcements

Visit our new website!

The CVCSA website redesign is complete. Visit [www.cvcsa.org](http://www.cvcsa.org) to learn more about Cromwell Valley CSA and the farm. You can also check out our new blog and plenty of pictures, contributed by members of our CVCSA community.

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The new CVCSA  
website is up  
and running.

Calling all photographers!

We want YOUR pictures for the new website! All are welcome to contribute. Just take pictures of the farm, the fields, your fellow CVCSA members, your shares, and the meals you make with them. Then send the highest resolution (largest) pictures you have to our Webmaster, Hollis, at [gypsiedrummer@verizon.net](mailto:gypsiedrummer@verizon.net). If you want to be credited for the photo, we will be happy to site your name/email on the photo.

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Check it out at  
[www.cvcsa.org](http://www.cvcsa.org)!

Like to write?

As mentioned above, the CVCSA website will include a blog written by its members. If you're someone who likes to write and is passionate about the CSA, we want your words! You can post to the blog as often or as seldom as you like. If you're interested in contributing, send an email to Webmaster Hollis at [gypsiedrummer@verizon.net](mailto:gypsiedrummer@verizon.net).

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CVCSA heads to the market!

CVCSA will be selling extra produce at the Towson Farmer's Market to help raise money for a new tractor and other farm expenses not covered by membership fees. The market runs every Thursday through November 19th, from 11am to 3pm on Allegheny Avenue between Washington Avenue and the traffic circle on York Road. Spread the news to all your friends and family that the best organic produce in town will be sold at the CVCSA stand!

For the Kids

V v



vegetables

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## Farm Update (June 23 & 27, 2009)

### Rain Effects?

Well, I've been in Maryland all of four and a half years, but it seems to have been long enough to have seen most of the vagaries which local weather has to offer—a winter in which the mercury dropped to zero and one in which it didn't even get to ten; a last frost date in April and two last frost dates around May 20; 90 degrees in October and 18 degrees in October. And last but not least, the rainfall variations: in 2007, Cromwell Valley received just over three inches of rain between late March and late October. This year, we may receive ten times that in the same period.

So which is "better?" The answer is, if you're prepared, it's all good. If you're not, it's one disaster after another. In 2007, we did not have enough irrigation materials on hand at the beginning of the summer, which led to crop losses and delays—only the final two months of the year were worthwhile. This year, we're getting more rain than we ever bargained for. For those who've already got their summer crops in the ground, it's great; for those who are still getting them in, it's a struggle because it's not good to run your tractor in muddy ground. We're somewhere in between those two poles. So some of our crops are not going to be as early as we would have liked because of weather-induced delays, but so far nothing is outlandishly late. The plants which are already in the ground are jumping for joy with all the lightning-laced rainfall, since lightning has the effect of "fixing" nitrogen into rainwater, and nitrogen is the plant nutrient most often in short supply in organic agriculture. The peas and potatoes have really enjoyed the extended cool, as have the lettuce and beets. Hot, dry weather in June can really put a quick end to the peas, as it did last year. On the other hand, the frequent rainfalls led to a very disappointing strawberry harvest, due to grey mold and insect damage that attacked all ripe strawberries. We learned, too late, that the only effective non-chemical remedy is to pick all ripe strawberries each day, something beyond our labor capacity here with all our other responsibilities. We're considering non-permeable row covers for the strawberry beds in fruiting season next time around.

So there's our progress report. In the next week to ten days, you'll see beets and summer spinach begin to arrive. Next month, potatoes, squash, cucumbers, blackberries, and maybe some early tomatoes. Hope you Njoy!

*Matt*



(Picture courtesy of Flickr user [thebittenword](#).)

## In Your Shares

In the coming week, you can expect:

### Tuesday:

- Peas
- Lettuce
- Herbs

### Saturday:

- Peas
- Lettuce
- Herbs
- Beets & greens
- Maybe some Summer spinach