

April 5th, 2021



The Farm at Saint Michael's College Newsletter

WEEKLY UPDATE

Despite the snow fall for April Fool's Day, it is officially spring here on the farm. With the days reaching for 12+ hours of daylight and temps sitting in the 50's during the day, there is more energy captured by the plant life around us! More and more plants are transplanted or seeded directly into the ground in the hoop houses and we our harvest yields are steadily increasing. The fields are also slated for prep this coming week. The Farm begins to serve as our constant for experiencing the seasonal cycles and connecting with our community - both human and ecological. With things heating up, it's time to prioritize our time to make sure everything is accomplished to meet our market demands and promises. One of the key reasons we work so hard to stay on schedule is because the Farm really begins to take on a life of her own and show us what needs doing! We also have to make decisions based on what is good for the environment, the plant, and inevitably the people our food nourishes.

Stay tuned for that variety to hit your plates soon! Enjoy!

~Maggie Fennelly '22



RECIPE OF THE WEEK: ONION RINGS

Ingredients:

- | | |
|--|--------------------------------|
| <i>1 large onion, cut into 1/4 in slices</i> | <i>1 cup of milk</i> |
| <i>1 1/4 cups all purpose flour</i> | <i>3/4 cup dry breadcrumbs</i> |
| <i>1 teaspoon of baking powder</i> | <i>Seasoned salt to taste</i> |
| <i>1 teaspoon of salt</i> | <i>1 quart oil for frying</i> |
| <i>1 egg</i> | |



Instructions

1. Heat the oil in a deep-fryer to 365 degrees F
2. Separate the onion slices into rings, and set aside. In a small bowl, stir together the flour, baking powder, and salt
3. Dip the onion slices into the flour mixture until they are all coated; set aside. Whisk the egg and milk into the flour mixture using a fork. Dip the floured rings into the batter to coat, the place on a wire rack to drain until the batter stops dripping. Place rings one at a time into the crumbs and scoop the crumbs up over the rings to coat.
4. Deep fry rings a few at a time for 2-3 minutes or until golden brown. Remove to paper towels to drain. Season with seasoned salt, and serve. <https://www.allrecipes.com/recipe/82659/old-fashioned-onion-rings/>
- 5.

CROP OF THE WEEK ONIONS

Onions are a widely cultivated vegetable in the genus *Allium*. They are a cool weather crop that may be grown from a seed or transplanted as a bulb. Wild onions are grown on nearly every continent and due to the fact that they can be stored over the winter, their popularity has increased. If you have ever cried cutting onions you're not alone! The sulfuric compounds are what make most people cry when they are released during cutting. Fun fact! the first known onion harvest was over 7,000 years ago!

Maggie Fennelly '22

Outdoor Volunteer Efforts

**Volunteer at the farm
each Friday 2 - 4pm!**

(See the Farm's Instagram page for a
link to the sign up genius!)

**Next CSA pick up date:
April 8th & 9th. 10am -
6pm in the Farm Office,
Alliot 204.**



FARM FABLES WITH ANNA

Have you ever considered what spring means from a plant's point of view? While we often think of the arrival of spring in terms of daylight hours, crops on the farm are also concerned with growing degree days (GDD) or "thermal time." Their developmental stages, such as flowering and fruit set, all march to this invisible rhythm.

Paying attention to plant development (phenology) is essential for food production. For some, the progression of seasons as it relates to phenology can become intuitive, which is how one would know to plant beans and squash when lilacs or in bloom, or to seed cucumbers when these blooms are passing, or plant the potatoes when the dandelions bloom.

~Anna Beach '22

HONORING THE SEASONS

One way to witness the spring season is to learn about the seasonal cycles as they relate to Indigenous agriculture and foodways. In *Voice of the Dawn* (2001), Frederick Wiseman outlines the traditional yearly cycle of the Abenaki, the native inhabitants of what we now call Vermont.

After the maple sugaring season, the ice covering local waters would break, causing agricultural fields to flood and bring new fertility to the soil. The Abenaki would gather the first greens and groundnuts, and the fish would once again fill the rivers to spawn. Corn, beans, squash, tobacco, and other crops were planted in the fields, which were often cleared by the slash and burn technique. Summer brought the careful tending of young plants and the harvesting of wild berries



by women and children, while men were tasked with hunting and fishing for the community. Medicinal and ceremonial plants, such as sweetgrass, were harvested in late summer. Come fall, crops and wild nuts would be harvested, and the hunting of deer, bear, and moose would be a priority. Many foods would be processed and stored for the region's long winters, during which storytelling and social renewal became central to everyday life.

Although our culture's food system looks very different today, we can still look for these cycles and rhythms and come to more deeply know our environment and its history. One of the best ways to actively participate in the spring season is to be on the farm caring for crops that will nourish our campus community! As you're signing up for classes this week, consider taking Food Systems & Sustainable Ag to open your opportunities to dive deeply into this content in that course, then Farm & Food Intensive, then, Farm Leadership Team. If your interests or schedule don't allow for that dedication, try Friday Volunteer Days on the Farm through MOVE's OVE program! Look at the Farm's Instagram for the sign up!

~ by Anna Beach '22