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# The Newton Farmer

an e-newsletter from  
Newton Community Farm



September 2008

Dear Farm Friends,

Welcome to the September issue of the Newton Farmer. Greg writes about the change of season here in New England. Sam Fogel fills us in on the upcoming Harvest Festival and the status of the demonstration orchard. We have updates on two structures: the barn and the new information kiosk. Finally, save Wednesday November 5 for the second annual Newton Community Farm benefit dinner at Lumiere in West Newton. See you at the Harvest Festival!

Your editors,  
Carol Rose and Gil Rosen

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## Notes from Greg Maslowe, Farm Manager

The coolness in the air signals the end of the growing season. Summer crops—tomatoes, eggplants and peppers—if still alive, are growing only very slowly. Even cool weather crops like lettuce have significantly slowed down their growth. Everyone is getting ready for winter. This includes the various fauna that share the farm with us. The deer have been busy eating the tops off the carrots and nibbling the tips off the beans. We're reducing the size of the openings into the beehives to keep mice from trying to make nests in the warm interiors. Tom has managed to find time to work on the benches for the greenhouse, so we'll be trying out a little season extended lettuce and baby greens growing this year.

I often am asked what I do once the growing season ends. A month long trip to Jamaica and then lots of sleeping late? If only it were so. While my schedule certainly slows during the winter months, there's still lots to do. While this season is fresh in my mind I'll be working on next year's crop plan. What should I grow, how much should I grow, what did I like, what didn't do so well this year? These questions, and many others, will be at the fore as I sit down with my spreadsheets and work out the master plan for the field for next season. There's also a budget to write, supplies to order, and office work to catch up on that got put off all summer. Lest my bottom get sore from sitting too long, there are also lots of projects around the farm house and in the barn that need attention during the winter: tools to clean and sharpen; equipment to service and repair; a tool shed to organize; pipes to insulate. Seems like the list of odd jobs and projects around the farm never ends.

But we're not there yet. There's still much harvesting to do and putting the field to bed for the winter. I love this time of year, even if there's something melancholy in the ever presents signs that things are coming to their end. The crispness of the air and the color in the trees, the sound of geese overhead, and the slivery sheen of frost covering the ground in the morning all give fall a magical feeling. This is the time for fires in the hearth, roasted pumpkin seeds and spiced cider, and warm flannel clothes. This is one of blessing of living in New England. There's no other place in our country where autumn is quite so wonderful. I hope you get out and enjoy it.

(Photo by Suzanne McLaughlin)

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## **Newton Community Farm's Third Annual Fall Festival, Sunday, October 26, 1 to 4 PM.**

Our third annual fall festival is fast approaching, and it looks like another great event. We will have a return engagement from our favorite blue-grass band, the Boston Front Porch. For families, we have the multi-talented Julia Priest, who will lead singing and dancing. The Farm Education committee will host several demonstrations including jelly and jam making, sprout growing, lacto fermentation, and composting with worms. We will have farm tours for adults, pumpkin decorating for children, and good food for all. We are also planning a silent auction. Be sure to join us!

We do need volunteers for many activities, including:

- Tent and booth setup
- Running individual booths
- Helping with serving food prepared by Whole Foods
- Baking zucchini and apple breads-before the event
- Teenagers to assist with children activities

Contact Sam Fogel at [sam@fogel.com](mailto:sam@fogel.com) for more details.



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## **Second Annual Farm Benefit Dinner**

Please join us for a wonderful evening of fine food and celebration at Lumiere Restaurant in West Newton on Wednesday November 5 at 6:30 PM. We will close out the 2008 growing season and celebrate the barn restoration with a four-course dinner with wine pairings, featuring local produce, meats, and seafood. This is an important fundraiser for the farm. Tickets are \$150 per person. For those who are able to contribute more, "Patrons" may contribute \$500 for two tickets and "Sponsors" contribute \$1,000 for four tickets. Last year we sold out, so please reserve your seats early by emailing Jon Regosin at [berkowitz.regosin@verizon.net](mailto:berkowitz.regosin@verizon.net) (phone [617-244-0736](tel:617-244-0736)) or by sending payment (made out to Newton Community Farm) to Jon Regosin, 32 Garland Road, Newton, MA 02459. Thank you for your continued support.

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## **All About the New Information Kiosk**

The farm now boasts an informational kiosk near the Winchester Street entrance. The post and beam structure was built using a donation from Alderman Stephen Linsky. Ted Chapman designed and constructed the arbor using rough sawn pine similar to the frame of the barn. The arbor will double as a welcoming place for visitors and a source of information about the farm operation and our educational programs. When completed, the kiosk will contain three display panels: a mural depicting the farm, a bulletin board, and a map of the farm. Weather resistant bins will store printed brochures. The area between the kiosk and farm stand will be terraced with new plantings and meeting spaces.



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## Barn Renovation Update

The barn renovation is moving towards completion. The foundation, timber frame and exterior wall repairs are mostly complete. From the inside, one can see how beautiful the space will be for educational workshops and community events. New windows are on order. We will begin the exterior siding insulation work by the time this newsletter is published.

Near the end of November, the structural and exterior phase should be finished. The barn will again appear as it did in the past, with red cedar shingle siding. The building will remain in use as a barn until we have raised the funds for the second phase, during which we will install bathrooms, lighting, a demonstration kitchen, and a screened porch over the shed roof on the north side.



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## Apple and Cherry Orchard: Observations and Thoughts from Sam Fogel



This spring the orchard team planted a demonstration apple and cherry orchard next to Nahanton Street opposite the farmhouse. Overall, the newly planted orchard is doing well, and we look forward to apple production next year, perhaps three apples per tree. Here is a summary of the issues we've faced this year so far.

**Deer Problem:** Deer ate new growth in mid-August on eight of the twenty apple trees, and on all of the cherry trees. In response, the Apple team installed fencing with three tiers of string. We also sprayed trees with "Deer Off" because soap in an attached bag did not work. The deer problem has not continued and the cherries are beginning to recover. There was no permanent damage.

**Watering:** While watering with a hose once a week is not very demanding, a drip irrigation setup is necessary for next year. All trees need moats around them in order to retain water.

**Cover Crop:** We need to establish a low-maintenance cover crop, likely sod, or sod mixed with clover. Grass clippings will be used to recycle nutrients and will be used as mulch.

**Voles:** Due to the tall buckwheat growing close to the trees, we had some bark damage due to voles. Weeds must be kept away from trunks of all trees as they provide protection for small critters that eat bark. Again, there was no permanent damage.

**Japanese Beetles** were active and ate some leaves of cherries and apples. We will apply Milky Spore Disease powder to the soil. This powder contains a bacterium, *Bacillus popilliae*, which kills the beetle grubs that overwinter in soil.

Fungal Problems: Due to high rainfall this summer all trees were infected to some degree by an assortment of disease-causing fungi. Since fungicides were not used this year, I will prepare a fungicide application plan for next year in order to avoid recurring fungal diseases.

If you have any questions or are interested in being part of the "Tree Team" contact Sam at [sam@fogel.com](mailto:sam@fogel.com)

(Photo by Suzanne McLaughlin)

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### Farm Wish List

We received one picnic table, but could use one or two more. Wood tables and benches/chairs preferred.  
Full size, long bed pick up truck. 3/4 ton preferred.  
Hand weeding tools.

If you can help us with these, please contact Greg Maslowe at [617/916-9655](tel:6179169655) or [newtoncommunityfarm@comcast.net](mailto:newtoncommunityfarm@comcast.net).

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Please contact us if you have any questions about this newsletter, ideas for future issues or if you want to be added to our mailing list. Just email Carol and Gil at [carolgil@mac.com](mailto:carolgil@mac.com). For more information about the Farm, email Greg Maslowe at [newtoncommunityfarm@comcast.net](mailto:newtoncommunityfarm@comcast.net) or check out our web page at <http://www.newtoncommunityfarm.org/> (or click on the image at the top of the page).

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