

28 November 2018

# Local Food News

ORGANICLEA

## Growing notes from Sarah Green's farm in Essex....

For the first time this autumn our thermometers dipped below zero degrees Celsius at the beginning of the week and, complimented by a biting north easterly wind, it was bitterly cold in the vegetable fields. Although the days ending the week are now murky and grey, at least it's not as cold as it has been.

After the weekly harvest has been completed we have collected all our irrigation pipes and sprinkler lines - feeling confident that we won't need to water again now until the spring. It's important to get the pipes picked up and stored safely out of the way, otherwise they are easily driven over with a tractor or lost amongst the weeds in the spring.

At the beginning of November, Virginija from Lithuania joined the field team on the farm. Our work force for the winter months is now complete, especially for harvesting and packing the seasonal vegetables for Christmas. Finding people to work in the vegetable fields has got harder over recent years so we are very relieved to have a full team now with Nerjuis, Agnes and Virginija, all from Lithuania. Bob has been with us for several years now. He first came for a work placement from his college, nearly 6 years ago, and once completing his agricultural course in Czech he returned to work here full time. Despite whatever the weather throws at them, they always seem happy and smiling.

Best wishes, Sarah Green

## ...and from Hawkwood Nursery

**What's sowing...** Spring garlic

**What's growing...** Horseradish

**What's going to market...** Green tomatoes

**In the bags this week:** Produce from Hughes Organics (Norfolk), Ripple Organics (Kent), Sarah Green (Essex) and organic wholesaler Langridge (especially non-UK fruit). We aim to contribute 15% of produce from Hawkwood Nursery (Chingford) or our farm

starters London Grown (Enfield), Daniel (Chingford) or Stort Valley (Hertfordshire). Contents may vary due to availability.

**Standard vegetable bags** have Ambo potatoes (Essex), onions (Norfolk), carrots (Herts), leeks (Kent or Norfolk), stir-fry greens (Kent), Jerusalem artichoke (Chingford), beetroot (Linc or Herts) and radicchio (Essex) or cauliflower (Lanc or Essex).

**No potato bags** have bunched turnips (Herts or Essex).

**Large vegetable bags** have Ambo potatoes, cavolo nero (Essex), carrots (Herts), onions, mushrooms (Norfolk), spinach, leeks (Herts or Kent), cauliflower (Lanc or Essex), beetroot (Linc or Herts). **No potato bags** have Jerusalem artichoke (Chingford).

**Medium vegetable bags** have Ambo potatoes (Essex), carrots (Herts), kale (Kent or Herts), leeks (Norfolk or Kent), beetroot (Linc or Herts), cauliflower (Essex or Lanc) and chillies (Chingford). **No potato bags** have bunched turnips (Herts or Essex).

**Small vegetable bags** have Ambo potatoes (Essex), onion (Norfolk), salad (Kent or Norfolk), broccoli (Essex or Norfolk) and beetroot (Herts or Linc). **No potato bags** have Harlequin squash (Linc).

**Standard fruit bags** have bananas (Dominican Republic), apples, pears (Norfolk), mango and oranges (Spain).

**Medium fruit bags** have pears, apples (Norfolk), oranges and mango (Spain).

**Small fruit bags** have pears, bananas (Dominican Republic) and oranges (Spain).

=====

**Organiclea Community Growers** [www.organiclea.org.uk](http://www.organiclea.org.uk)

Distribution hub: Hornbeam, 458 Hoe Street, E17 9AH ☎ 020 8558 6880

Growing site: Hawkwood Nursery, 115 Hawkwood Crescent, E4 7UH ☎ 020 8524 4994

Email [box@organiclea.org.uk](mailto:box@organiclea.org.uk) Join us online Facebook: Organiclea Twitter: @organiclea



## About the Produce:

### **Spinach, salad, kale and stir-fry greens (Kent):**

We're excited to add Ripple Organics, a 14-acre farm near Canterbury, to our small number of suppliers from this week. You may have encountered their produce at Growing Communities' Farmers Market in Stoke Newington; run by Martin and Sarah, they've been certified organic since 1989 and will be supplying a much-appreciated range of leafy greens to our box scheme.

**Tommy Atkins Mangos (Spain):** Tommy Atkins mangoes are a Florida variety and became popular among mango growers in Florida in the 1950s. Mangoes are a great source of vitamin C and vitamin A, as well as a good source of fibre. They also contain folate, vitamin B6 and minerals like potassium, calcium, and iron. Store at room temperature until ripe, then peel and de-stone and use in sweet or savoury dishes (mango salsa is sure to brighten up your November!)

**Radicchio (Essex):** This beautiful red leaf is a regular in our mixed salad leaves but these lovely heads from Sarah Green's farm in Tillingham are perfect for cooking, especially if you are not fond of bitter flavours. Remove the outer leaves (these are included for protection to save us using plastic bags), then halve or quarter lengthways before grilling or roasting with a drizzle of balsamic vinegar to sweeten the flavour.

## Grains and greens

A meal in its own right, especially served with pita bread and unsweetened soya yoghurt.

2 lemons

250g quinoa, buckwheat, couscous or any grain you have to hand

1 teaspoon veg stock powder

1 head broccoli, stalks chopped, florets left whole

A good handful of frozen peas

Olive oil

2 leeks, washed, trimmed and finely sliced

A handful of basil, mint, or any fresh herbs you have, leaves picked and chopped

3 big handfuls of spinach or kale, washed and shredded

2 tbsp toasted pumpkin seeds

2 tbsp toasted sesame seeds

Cut 1 of the lemons in half and place both halves in a pan with the grain. Cover with 600ml of water and crumble in the stock cube, bring to the boil, then reduce the heat and simmer for about 15

minutes, until most of the water has been absorbed. Top up with more boiling water, if needed, until the grain is almost cooked. Lay the broccoli and peas directly on top of the grain, put a lid on and steam for a couple of minutes.

While the grain is cooking, get a frying pan on a medium heat, add a splash of olive oil and the sliced leek and cook slowly for 10 minutes or so, until soft and sweet.

When the grain and broccoli are both cooked and tender, drain off excess water, remove the lemon halves and squeeze their juice over the grains.

Put the grain, broccoli and peas into a bowl and add the chopped herbs, shredded greens, toasted seeds and cooked leek. Squeeze over the juice of half of the second lemon, add a couple of tablespoons of olive oil and mix well. Taste and season with salt and pepper.

## Veganic Certification

Organiclea focuses on plant-based nutrition as this is where we believe the biggest gains are to be made in terms of community engagement, the environment, animal welfare and human health. Alongside this, as Soil Association certified organic growers on our Hawkwood site, it is very difficult to use traditional inputs such as manure and bone meal due to the risk of Genetically Modified and other contaminants now endemic in non-organic animal husbandry.

This year we have chosen to *go the whole hog* and acquire "Veganic" certification, meaning all our produce grown at Hawkwood is free from any inputs derived from animals, at any stage in the process. We continue to work alongside friends in the Landworkers' Alliance who are attempting a



more compassionate and proportionate approach to animal farming, and hope to use our certification to engage the burgeoning vegan community with the principles of food sovereignty.

## Eliot Coleman - Sunday 6 January

We're excited to announce a visit to Hawkwood from renowned international market gardener, Eliot Coleman, author of *The New Organic Grower*. He will be giving a talk on new approaches to growing winter salads and launching his new book on this subject on 6 January 2019. Come from 12pm for lunch with talk at 1pm.