

ROLLING PRAIRIE

notes from rolling prairie farmers alliance



FOOD FOR THOUGHT

EAT FOOD * NOT TOO MUCH
* MOSTLY PLANTS *

* MICHAEL POLLAN, IN
DEFENSE OF FOOD

WEEK OF
JUNE 1, 2009

Coming Up

First Pay Day

Pay Days

You didn't really think we were giving you all this lovely food for free, did you? As you may recall from the brochure or the website where you first signed up, we collect payment for the previous month at your first pickup of each month. Your site coordinator can give you the amount you will owe each month if you ask. Please bring cash or a check. We cannot accept credit or debit cards.



Heartland Harvest Garden Opening

The public opening for the Heartland Harvest Garden at Powell Gardens is scheduled for June 14. Powell Gardens is located at 1609 NW US Highway 50 in Kingsville, Missouri.

Rhonda Janke

Dr. Rhonda Janke, Horticulturalist at K-State and author of *Farming in the Dark: A Discussion About the Forms of Sustainable Agriculture*, will be speaking about local food at the Annual Meeting and Food Fair of the Community Mercantile Cooperative Grocery in Centennial Park, Lawrence, Friday, June 5. Merc members should RSVP to the store by June 3 if they are attending. Food Fair starts at 6:00 pm, meeting at 7.

PREVIEW: HEARTLAND HARVEST GARDEN

Wednesday, May 27, I was privileged to be among a group of 100 "thought leaders" in the Kansas City area invited to preview the Heartland Harvest Garden, at Powell Gardens in Kingsville, MO (a short 30 minute drive from Johnson County Kansas).

Billed as "the nation's largest edible landscape", the Heartland Harvest Garden occupies more than 12 acres of land and features an array of innovative and fun displays of food crops typifying what is grown in this part of the country.

"The vegetable and fruit gardens are all organic," says Matt Bunch, Horticulturalist, who plays a major role in directing the vegetable displays. Matt is the son of Steve and Joy Bunch, Lawrence Rolling Prairie subscribers.

Visitors will start at visitors' center, then proceed through a Menu Garden, the Seed to Plate Greenhouse, the Apple Celebration Court, passing by an inviting Vineyard complete with a

model wine making shed, pass the Authors' Gardens with creative displays combining ornamentals and edibles, then through the Peach Plaza and Quilt Garden, ending in the Missouri Barn, where samples and demonstration cooking will be available.

Children will be invited to participate in all kinds of educational activities, learning everything from soils to seed starting to planting to eating to composting the "waste".



The Garden was a flurry of activity the day of the preview. Staff were on hand to talk about the various displays, explaining such features as the intercropping of herbs and fruits to attract beneficial insects. Sen. Claire McCaskill was on hand to give a rousing dedication to the \$9.2 million project.



Heartland Harvest Garden: Preview of the nation's largest edible landscape

Gardeners at the Heartland Harvest Garden are committed to an educational project showing the wide range of crops that can be grown organically in our area, in an esthetically pleasing and delightful display of skill and creativity.



For example, the Apple Celebration Court features an array of apple varieties grown in this region, including many heirlooms, laid out in a spiral pattern surrounding an apple core sculpture. Under the apple trees a variety of vegetables, fruits, and herbs are planted in attractive patterns that make optimal use of the space and take advantage of the benefits of companion planting.

A similarly arranged Peach Plaza also has a variety of Peach types, from dwarf to standard sized trees. All of the trees are small now, but one can imagine the beauty of a Spring morning in the not-distant future when the mature trees are all in bloom, and the even more exciting prospect of tasting the fruits when they ripen.



The Vineyard. Newly planted grape vines are intercropped with hyssop, other herbs, and strawberries.

Powell Gardens staff have plans to make sure that every visitor gets a chance to sample the food that is grown in the Heartland Harvest Garden, and they will even have some items that are in abundance available for sale.

Kids will benefit from the extensive educational activities that are being developed partly with the benefit of a federal grant for curriculum development. The kids will also get to partake in the rich experience of seed to plate gardening.



The Apple Celebration Court, seen from one of the outside spins of the spiral brick sidewalk. The bricks are exactly yellow, but the spirals do put one in mind of the Land of Oz.

Garlic Scapes

Garlic scapes are actually the flower spike of the garlic plant. We remove them from the plant so that it will put all its energy into forming the bulbs we like to eat so much all winter long, but the scapes themselves are not only edible, they are considered something of a delicacy. For simple preparation, simply slice, chop, or mince them and add to any dish you want to have a mellow, lingering, deep garlic flavor. Saute them with other vegetables and olive oil, add them to soups and pasta sauces, or even make pesto with them. You get all the great flavor, health, and vampire repelling properties of garlic before the bulbs themselves are ready for fresh harvest! Bon Appetit!

