

# Roots & Sprouts

News and Ideas from the Belmont Farmers' Market

late summer 2010

[www.belmontfarmersmarket.org](http://www.belmontfarmersmarket.org)



*Open rain or shine  
Until October 28th!*

**Thursday afternoons  
1:30 to 7:00 pm  
(6:00 pm starting Sept. 9th)  
Belmont Center parking lot**



*In this issue . . .*

**The Market through a child's eyes  
Kids' crossword puzzle  
Off to college without "home cooking"  
Berry banana bread  
Healthy kids' snacks**

*The Belmont Farmers' Market is a member  
of the Belmont Center Business Association.*

*In honor of back-to-school month, this issue celebrates the kids who tag along, volunteer, perform, and shop at the Belmont Farmers' Market, all while making it a more lively, enjoyable place. We hope families have fun doing the crossword together on page 2 and making the after-school snacks and recipe on page 4.*

## Through a Child's Eyes

*Joyful childhood experiences abound at the market*

The afternoon is torpid, with forecasts of thunder and a bad storm. Vegetables and berries in their boxes are still crisp-looking, but a few of the vendors are wilting. The adult customers are wilting too, with their ecological totes and environmental intentions. But not the kids.

A five-year-old strides past holding a container of Underwood Greenhouse heirloom tomatoes instead of a teddy bear in his arms. Twins in a stroller can't decide whether to chew on the pieces of peach their mother has handed them, or on their toes. Two little girls in braids clutch pints of strawberries. Pint and quart boxes are popular here — they fit cupped hands, and carrying berries feels like as much of an accomplishment as growing them. The girls toss different sizes into each other's mouths — like tossing horseshoes — until an extra large one drops in front of Stillman's at the Turkey Farm. They look at their father. He stoops down. "Ten second rule," he says, and throws it into his own mouth.

Farm stands encourage free-ranging communication; one wants to be a fly on these invisible walls. While a vendor at Hutchins Farm weighs a bunch of carrots so vibrant they almost glow on her scale, a child watches closely. "My grammy grows carrots," she says, following her own associations. "She has a garden. Do you have hot dogs?"

These kinds of conversations occur everywhere; the heat and slow, pleasant, personal

commerce invite them. A small girl, satisfied with the bag of baked goods her father has just bought her, folds her arms on the Goodies' counter. "I'm going to be a big sister," she says, "and he," pointing to her shy brother, "is going to be a big brother." The vendor offers congratulations and asks the customary question. "I don't know," the girl says. "It could be a boy or a girl, or," she adds, "something else."

Across the lot, a little boy with a Mamadou baguette end dangling out of his mouth points to the Bee-Cause Apiaries honey stand. He wants one of the honey stix, four for a dollar. But his mother leads him to the soft fromages from Foxboro Cheese (Lawton's Family Farm), where there are samples of chive and tomato basil. "They're from our own farm cows," the vendor says. This should be a pleasing image in the mind's eye, but the little boy is unappeased: chive and basil are for grownups, and at the moment there aren't cows in his mind's eye, there are honey stix. He pulls hard on his mother's arm. Since the start of time, children have pulled hard on their parents' limbs; it may explain why our reaches so often exceed our grasps.

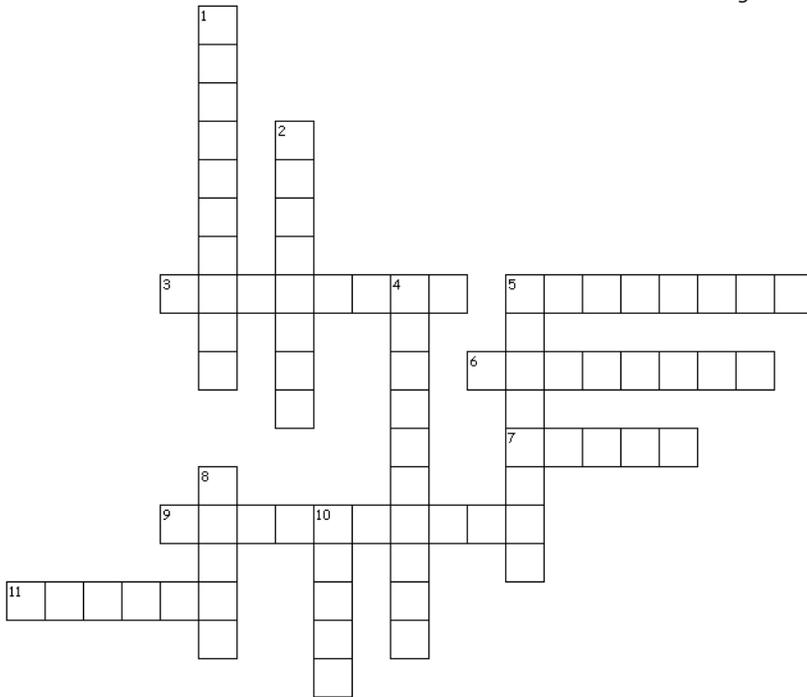
Two preschoolers in rompers and matching sun hats glance at the boy as they wander by with their dad. They look like they are wandering in their own yard, carrying half pints of raspberries and mini chocolate chip cupcakes with Reese's centers. The Goodies' proprietor says this is her most popular seller with kids,

*(continued on page 4)*

# To Market, to Market

Solve this crossword to prove your market knowledge

— Jennifer Angel



## ACROSS

3. Polish sausage found at Stillman's
5. Zebra, big boy are types
6. Known as courgette in French
7. Name of Belmont's own working farm
9. Cheese for caprese
11. Goodies product

## DOWN

1. Pasta Man has them in tricolor
2. Purple, ovoid veggie
4. June berry
5. Belmont's market day
8. Bees make it
10. Fruit to give teacher

## Overheard at the Market . . .

### Kids weigh in on their market favorites

"I like the French baguettes and corn."

— H.K., Age 8

"My favorite things to buy at the market are cookies and peaches."

— W.J.D., Age 14

"I like that there's honey and bread and that there's fresh, home-baked goodies. And I like the violin songs."

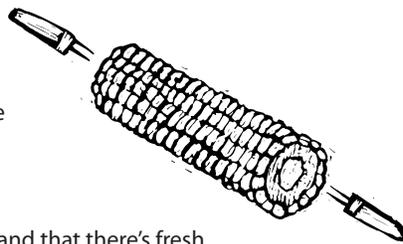
— N.W., Age 8

"I love the peach pie!"

— L.W., Age 4

"My family plans the meals on Thursday depending on what I got from the market."

— I.H.R., Age 13



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## 2010 Vendors

- **Bee-Cause Apiaries** local honey and hand-made beeswax candles
- **Coutts Specialty Foods** jams, jellies, applesauce, relishes
- **Dick's Market Garden Farm** vegetables, fruits, and plants
- **The Farm School** organic vegetables, fruits, flowers, eggs, grass-fed meat
- **Fior d'Italia** pasta in many different shapes and flavors
- **Fiore di Nonno Cheese** handcrafted fresh mozzarella and burrata
- **Goodies** award-winning, better-than-homemade cookies
- **Hmong Farms at Flats Mentor Farm** fresh produce featuring Asian vegetables
- **Hutchins Farm** certified organic plants, vegetables, herbs, small fruit, and apples
- **In Good Taste** Pam's black bean salsa
- **Kimball Fruit Farm** vegetables, fruit, and plants
- **Lawton's Family Farm** fresh cheeses and veal
- **Leslie Wolf Baking** baked goods from a Belmont kitchen
- **Mamadou Bakery** handcrafted breads
- **Nicewicz Family Farm** apples, peaches, plums, berries, vegetables, flowers
- **NorthStar Farm** perennial plants, produce and more from Westport
- **Samira's Homemade** Middle Eastern dips & salads, freshly made and delicious
- **Sassy River Sauces** savory sauces without the fat
- **Sassy Sauces** sweet dessert sauces
- **Sergi Farms** Belmont's only remaining working farm
- **Siraco** sharper knives since 1953
- **Stillman's at the Turkey Farm** grass-fed meat and freshly-cut flowers
- **Underwood Greenhouses** potted plants grown in Belmont



## Food for Thought

*Residents share their passion for fresh food, farmers' markets, and good living*

During the longest summer vacation of my life, from late May to mid-September, I find it hard to sit still. There are only a few weeks left before I leave the East Coast to go nearly a thousand miles west for college. Needless to say, it is a bittersweet feeling. I am overwhelmed with excitement to move out and live on my own, meet new people, and explore a new environment. However, I know there will always be a nagging feeling in the back of my mind for the consolation of familiarity, of home.

Among the elements of familiarity is the comfort of homemade food. This is something I further identified with throughout the summer as I've had more time to help my mother cook. There is something organic in experiencing the entire process of cooking, from chopping the raw vegetables to the presentation on the plate. This appreciation of food and seeing the process of cooking from beginning to end became apparent to me as I grew more adept in the process every day. Additionally, it was comforting to know the familiar tastes and flavors that were always served up. There's never any mystery, only soothing bites of a humble meal.

While I'm sure the last thing on any college-bound teenager's mind is the change of cuisine, I still shiver when I think about cafeteria food I've experienced in the past. Though I understand college dining halls might be a step up from middle-school cafeterias, how big is the difference, really?

On a recent trip to my prospective college, I got a chance to sample my edible options for the next four years. A block away from campus there was a Whole Foods, which could prove to be useful if I wasn't chained to

a mandatory meal plan. Gone were my hopes of budgeting my own groceries and cooking my own wholesome meals, my original petty plan to replicate homemade comfort food.

However, to my surprise, there was a plethora of options and cuisines on campus, most of which were customizable. The dining halls were very distinguishable from grade-school cafeterias, and I could easily put together a personalized meal from the different choices

*Bound for college  
and an expanding  
world of food*

offered. I knew I should be grateful for the convenience of my meal plan. Between my classes, job,

and an endless list of extracurricular activities I want to do, I will have no time to even walk to the grocery store. Also, the various choices of meals in the dining halls, far from the monotony of cafeteria food, should keep me interested for at least a couple of months. In fact, as I visited the campus, I realized the adaptability of my palate. I was actually quite open-minded toward a variety of foods.

As for my reminiscence for homemade dinners, I know I will have to give something up. I will probably not experience the fresh snap of crisp green beans, feel the tug of a ripe tomato on a vine, or hear the sizzling of pungent garlic in a pan. There's nostalgia in the comfort of these meals for a reason: it would be impossible to re-create the experience of home hundreds of miles away.

Nevertheless, the inability to enjoy a home-cooked meal will only allow me to further appreciate one when I return. After all, I'll be home for the holidays.

— Denise Lu, 2010 graduate of Belmont High, will be heading to Northwestern University this fall.

(continued from page 1)

although they also love sugar cookies “because of the name.” The oatmeal-cranberry jumbles with walnuts are not heavy sellers with the underaged.

An enormous Bernese Mountain dog has been eyeing their baked goods himself, and when the girls stop to pet him, can barely control himself, though it is not strictly for the joy of meeting them. On their way out, one of the girls traces the chalk sign on the NorthStar Farm board. Then she swipes two fingers down the length of her romper. They

leave a thick smudge. With any luck, unlike the mini chocolate chip cupcakes, this souvenir might last a whole week.

Suddenly, the torpor changes. Black wind rises. Sky clouds over. Belmont begins to look like Kansas. Vendors gaze up and start to collapse the aluminum frames of their stands. They know it will rain, but they hope it won't storm. The preschoolers also gaze up. They know it will rain too, and they hope it will pour. It's all how you look at the sky. Rough weather is thrilling, risky, like swimming in the deep end — too much sunshine is like

the kiddie pool. Storms are strikes of childhood magic: tents blow away, boxes overturn, strawberries and raspberries topple, and then the ten second rule is everywhere.

For children who believe in magic, there is a parking lot in Belmont that comes under a spell on Thursday afternoons. For those who don't, the parking lot is still transformed. It's the Farmers' Market, which is close enough.

— Elissa Ely, MD, is a practicing psychiatrist, Belmont resident, and contributor to THE BOSTON GLOBE

## Berry Banana Bread

Kim Raubenheimer, Certified Nutrition & Fitness Coach, shares her favorite banana bread recipe. To keep things interesting, she tweaks it each time by varying the type of fruit added. Kim says, “Kids especially love when I use black raspberries with the bananas because the muffins are purple and they are delicious.” Find more nutrition tips from Kim at <http://www.yourhealthsense.com>

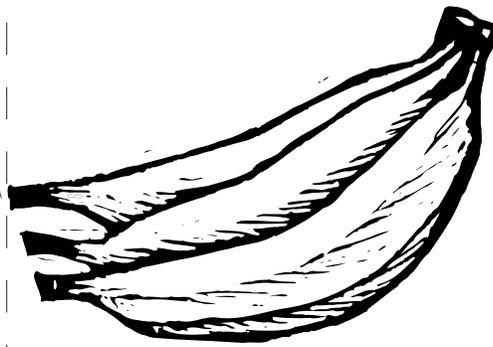
- 1/3 cup canola oil
- 2/3 cup sugar
- 2 eggs
- 5 ripe, medium-sized bananas
- 1 cup frozen red raspberries, black raspberries, blueberries, chopped strawberries, or chopped cherries
- 2/3 cup whole wheat flour
- 1 cup whole white flour
- 1/2 teaspoon baking SODA
- 1/4 TEASPOON baking POWDER

Preheat oven to 350 degrees.

Combine oil and sugar. Add eggs and mix. In a separate bowl mash bananas, add berries and 1/4 cup of water. Mix, and add to the oil, sugar, and eggs.

In a separate bowl, mix flours, baking powder and baking soda. Add to banana mixture. Combine until smooth. (Bananas should be slightly chunky along with the berries.)

Pour into lightly greased loaf pan or mini muffin tins. (Recipe makes one large loaf or 24 mini muffins.) Bake loaf for approximately 55 minutes (mini muffins for 18-20 minutes) or until toothpick comes out clean in the center.



## Healthy Snacks for Kids

Courtesy of Kim Raubenheimer

- 1** Celery with any nut butter, soft cheese, or cottage cheese, and a few raisins or craisins on top
- 2** Red peppers with low-fat ranch dressing or hummus
- 3** Baked potato with low-fat cheddar cheese and salsa
- 4** Frozen banana treat: Peel a banana, roll in low-fat yogurt, dip into whole grain cereal, and freeze.
- 5** Frozen fruit: Freeze fresh blueberries, or cut-up strawberries, mango, peaches or melon (Note: #4 and #5 are not for smaller kids because of choking hazard).
- 6** Cheesy tortilla: Fill whole wheat tortilla with low-fat cheese and salsa (drain excess liquid first). Microwave for 10 seconds or until cheese is melted.
- 7** Alternative to soda: Seltzer water with a splash of lemonade or orange juice