

## SCA NEWSHEET MARCH 2008

This newsheet is an attempt to keep you in touch with what you can expect from the farm over the next month or so. It is an idea that we have had for a while but haven't found the time to write. It has particularly been prompted this week because this is the first time this winter that we have included that strange black root vegetable, scorzonera.

### SCORZONERA

Scorzonera is a native of southern Europe and was introduced to this country before 1700. It is closely related to salsify (which has white parsnip like skin as opposed to the brown-black skin of scorzonera) but is reputed to be slightly tastier. I know it looks like some old weed that we dug out of the hedge but I think that that it tastes delicious. It keeps well in the ground during the winter and so makes for something different to eat during this time.

Jane Grigson in the "Vegetable Book" suggests that scorzonera (or salsify) can be used in a number of carrot, parsnip or turnip recipes, but warns to keep in mind that it has a more delicate flavour and therefore to subdue any strong ingredients. She recommends that the roots are scrubbed clean, cut to fit the pan and then boiled for approximately 30 minutes. I found that they cook much quicker than this. After cooking run the roots under a cold tap and then peel away the skin. If you want to peel before cooking they need to be put into acidulated water to stop them discolouring.

### CARROTS

We have about a month's supply of carrots left now. They are slightly infested with the larva of the carrot root fly. It's this larva that creates all those annoying tunnels in the carrots. The infestation hasn't been too severe this season, and we try to sort out as much of the damaged roots as we can, but we still miss some, and sometimes we deliberately leave some as the damage doesn't appear too severe. We have slightly increased the amount of carrots in the share each week to make up for the damaged roots.

### OTHER VEG.

We have a lot of purple sprouting broccoli coming on now. This should be available from now until May. We still have leaf beet (spinach) growing in the polytunnels. Unfortunately, because of our poor crop, most of the leeks that you have had in the share this winter have been bought in, but we will now lift our own from the field at Brookthorpe for a few weeks. There is still plenty of mixed salad from the polytunnels, parsnips from Hawkwood, and the last of our winter cabbages and kale.

### MEAT AND EGGS.

There is plenty of our own meat for sale at both Hawkwood and Brookthorpe, especially beef. Please don't forget that you can buy Colin Cameron's lovely fresh eggs each week.

### KATE

Kate is rather large Percheron horse that we have on loan for a few months. We are going to trial her for some farm jobs. More about this in the next quarterly newsletter. You are always welcome to come to Brookthorpe to visit her (and her mate, Laurence and Katja's horse Bolle) and all the other animals there.

The next quarterly newsletter is due out this month. If anyone would like to contribute an article, poem, recipe, whatever, please do. Contact Sue Baker on 01453 757 259. The deadline is Friday March 14<sup>th</sup>.

Thanks, Mark, Laurence, and Ute.