

HEN HOUSE

MARKET



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Local Heirloom Tomatoes

The new "no till" method of farming



A variety of Heirloom Tomatoes



Eli Kurlbaum adding worm castings to holes for tomato plants

Kurlbaum's Dry Farmed Heirloom Tomatoes are grown right here in Kansas City, Kansas near the Missouri River Valley. The Kurlbaum and Kuklenski families farm about 5 acres on their 52 acre land. The farm has been in the family for over 50 years. It began as a peach and apple orchard. The families have grown apples, peaches and tomatoes for over 30 years, but have grown tomatoes for commercial use for the last 5 years.

This small family farm takes great care to grow these delicious tomatoes. They start with high quality seeds from heirloom varieties that have old fashioned tomato flavor. Some of the 32 heirloom varieties that they grow are: Brandywine, Cherokee Purple, Black Krim, Green Zebra, Trophy, Garden Peach, and Lemon Drop. They dry farm, which means they do not artificially irrigate, they rely only on the rain to water their crops. All tomatoes are handpicked and put into the shade immediately. They are kept at room temperature to preserve the intense flavors. Then the tomatoes are inspected, sorted and hand washed by Sally Kuklenski. The tomatoes are treated with great care during shipping. They are never stacked in shipping. They are delivered in single stack fresh from the farm within hours of picking. They do not use pesticides or artificial fertilizers. They ring the garden with marigolds and basil and add lady bugs and arachnoids wasps to fight bugs. They compost with leaves, old hay and horse manure. This year, they are experimenting with "no till" farming which is a sustainable farming method that keeps the soil system in a natural state. The Kurlbaum family will start leasing garden plots to other "wannabe local farmers" this year and hope to create another community of local farmers. Mr. Kurlbaum's dream is that someday the farm will be known as "Scholarship Gardens" where young deserving, hard working students can learn how to earn an entrepreneurial living with their own hands.

We are excited for you to taste and enjoy the Kurlbaum tomatoes in a future CSA. With each bite, you will know that you are supporting this small family farm and the community. The whole family, Liz, Sky, Max, Cecilia, Eli and Noah Kurlbaum and Sally and Elliott Kuklenski thank you for your support. For more information about the Kurlbaum farm or their tomatoes, visit their website at www.kurlbaumtomatoes.com

What are Heirloom Varieties?

An heirloom is generally considered to be a variety that has been passed down, through several generations of a family because of its valued characteristics. All heirloom varieties are open-pollinated but not all open-pollinated varieties are heirloom varieties. In the past 40 years, we've lost many of our heirloom varieties, along with the many smaller family farms that supported heirlooms. The multitude of heirlooms that had adapted to survive well for hundreds of years were lost or replaced by fewer hybrid tomatoes, bred for their commercially attractive characteristics.

Another Benefit for CSA Members!

Watch your email inbox for more exclusive offers for Hen House CSA members. We will send out special offers for more local products. Just use your Hen House Rewards card when you purchase the promotional item during the specified time period to receive your discount- it is that easy! Look for special deals on produce, deli, soap, candles and many many more items!

New this Year- We want your recipes!

We would like to have your favorite recipes using local foods to share in the CSA Newsletter. We will feature several recipes in each week's newsletter. We are looking for recipes with heirloom tomatoes, basil, bison, eggs, chicken, sweet corn, peaches, Athena melons, vine ripened tomatoes, zucchini, and yellow squash. Just send them to Jennifer Egeland at 5300 Speaker Rd, Kansas City, KS 66106.

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Storage Tips

Cold temperatures ruin tomatoes by affecting their flavor and texture, so DO NOT REFRIGERATE! You should ideally store them between 55°-70°F. Avoid direct sunlight and make sure to store them with their stems up to avoid bruising. If you can not eat all your yummy tomatoes fast enough, do not worry—here are some helpful tips. Share them with your friends, make fresh pasta sauce, freeze them, dry them or can them. For more information on how to freeze, dry or can tomatoes, visit <http://www.backyardgardener.com/tomato>

Recipe from Liz

Kurlbaum: GOAT CHEESE OLIVE TAPENADE TOMATOES

One thick slice of heirloom tomato
Spread a thin slice of goat cheese on top of the tomato
Spread with olive tapenade
Drizzle with balsamic vinegar

Look for Olive Tapenade in the store or make your own:

Olive Tapenade:
20 pitted Kalamata olives, coarsely chopped
1 Tbsp rinsed, drained, and chopped capers
1 tsp fresh lemon juice
2 tsp olive oil
1/2 tsp anchovy paste (optional)
Fresh cracked black pepper
Combine Kalamata [olives](#), [capers](#), lemon juice, [olive oil](#), [anchovy](#) paste, and [pepper](#). Mix well. Refrigerate and use within two weeks.

Totally Green – What Can You Do? By May Evans, Communications Coordinator, Bridging The Gap

You may see people walking around wearing a little round, green button. No words or symbols, just *totally green*. Why? Because that's their goal: a *totally green* healthy, sustainable world. But what's so important about being green and sustainable? Nothing much - just the ability of people and creatures to live comfortably and peaceably on the Earth is at stake, and it's up to each one of us to do what we can. The future is uncertain for us as we have become accustomed to ways of life which Earth's systems can no longer sustain. The average U.S. household creates about 26,000 pounds of carbon dioxide (CO2) every year — *about five times what the rest of the world uses!* This is a problem since carbon dioxide build-up is the main cause of climate change. Even if you're skeptical, ask yourself: is our lifestyle sustainable? Is air quality in Kansas City at acceptable levels, when you can see the smog driving downtown, and when we're violating EPA laws several times each summer? Do you want to breathe free-floating mercury molecules, which are put out when coal is burned? Is it okay to keep putting pharmaceuticals and hormones into our water supply? The solutions for these issues are the same solutions which will help address climate change. Bridging The Gap, Kansas City's leading educational environmental organization, has created a program, Five Green Things, to help you: 1) Choose which green actions you will commit to taking 2) Teach you how to follow-through on your commitments and 3) Track your progress and environmental impact

By taking the pledge and committing to making changes, you can reduce your household's emissions by 4,000 pounds or more — that's over 15 percent! Imagine if we all did our small part to keep our air and water clean, our food healthy and our communities sustainable. We can reverse our impact on the planet if we act now to change the way we live, so we can enjoy a healthier environment now, and future generations can survive and prosper. The hardest part is to get started, but at www.bridgingthegap.org, you'll find out it's not really that hard, and we will help with every step you take! Just click on to www.bridgingthegap.org to take the pledge and begin making our world more beautiful and healthy than it was yesterday

Good Natured Family Farms



Our labor of love is taking local farm fresh foods from the small family farm to the mainstream supermarket. Today the GNFF alliance is comprised of over 100 family farmers in KS & MO Reach us at www.goodnatured.net



Our mission: Bridging The Gap works to make the Kansas City region sustainable by connecting environment, economy, and community. BTG is the Kansas and Missouri Regional Chapter for Buy Fresh Buy Local. For more info go to: www.bridgingthegap.org