

# Pennsylvania Women's Agricultural Network

# NEWSLETTER

SPRING 2006

## 2006 FARMING FOR THE FUTURE CONFERENCE



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The Pennsylvania Women's Agricultural Network developed two entire days of women focused workshops at the 2006 Farming for the Future Conference, Pennsylvania Association of Sustainable Agriculture's (PASA) signature event. PA-WAgN programming included tractor safety and maintenance, business planning and empowerment workshops.

### PA-WAgN's New Heavy Metal Band

The interests of PASA staff in extending the annual Farming for the Future conference by a day this year intersected very nicely with PA-WAgN's interest in having an equipment workshop at the conference.

Instructors Shane LaBrake and Davis Hill presented an inspiring two-day intensive workshop on equipment design, usage, safety and maintenance.

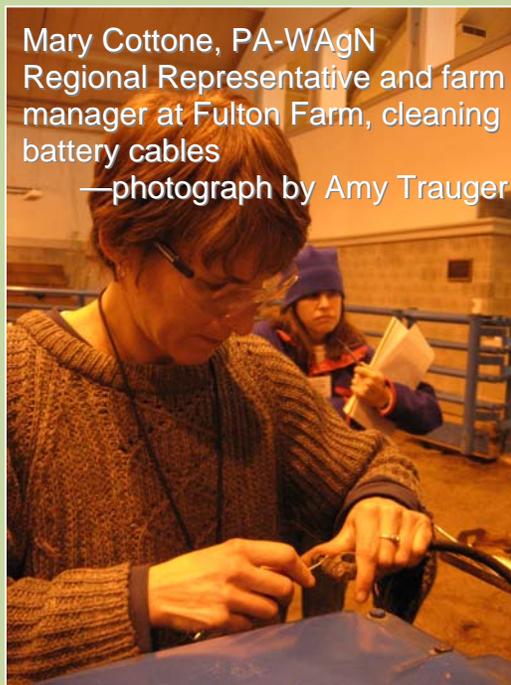
Shane and Dave gave an overview of the workshops on Wednesday with a tour of the eight pieces of equipment that were all donated for PA-WAgN's use, and a presentation of the dangers of equipment and what to do in case of an emergency.

Highlights of this day were watching the grins of delight on participants driving tractors for the first time.

On Thursday, Shane took 14 PA-WAgN members on a private tour of the innards (and how to care for them) of three donated tractors. Participants changed the oil, air filter and battery. While we had hoped to resuscitate a couple of them, there was not enough time in the day for what they needed. There was, however, plenty of time for questions, interaction and hands-on experience.

Thursday's highlight was watching the participants go from shy observers to creative and competent problem solvers.

Shane is a natural teacher, and we are very excited to continue to offer tractor safety, usage and maintenance workshops in the very near future. Stay tuned...to PA-WAgN, and keep your tractor tuned up too!



Mary Cottone, PA-WAgN Regional Representative and farm manager at Fulton Farm, cleaning battery cables  
—photograph by Amy Trauger

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## PASA'S 2006 FARMING FOR THE FUTURE CONFERENCE

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### The Value of Planning

Amber Lockawich, Income Opportunities Educator in Franklin County, presented a business planning program. She guided participants through the steps for developing a business plan, including the marketing and financial parts of the process.

"A successful planning process is owner-driven and gives everyone involved a say," Amber said. "In addition, a plan must reflect reality, address the worst-case scenarios, and be reviewed and revised often."

After the business plan discussion, the group discussed managing risk, the possible legal structures for farms (sole proprietorships, partnerships, and corporations), and the federal and state regulations — from taxation to employee regulations, zoning, and ag-specific regulations — by which farmers must abide.



Amber Lockawich presenting PA-WAgN's business planning session at the 2006 Farming for the Future Conference

—photograph courtesy of Christopher Hon

The group ended the day by discussing marketing and how to target customers and write a marketing plan. Amber closed her presentation with some advice from P.T. Barnum, "Give your customers more than their money's worth, advertise extensively, believe in the power of the press to help you reach your customers, and most of all, be positive, upbeat, and passionate about your business."

Linda Moist  
PA-WAgN  
[lsm9@psu.edu](mailto:lsm9@psu.edu)

"Give your customers more than their money's worth, advertise extensively, believe in the power of the press to help you reach your customers, and most of all, be positive, upbeat, and passionate about your business."

—P. T. Barnum

### Embodiment, Empowerment and Holistic Living

Old, young, farmers, agricultural professionals, mothers, and others shared their life successes and struggles in a warm, trusting atmosphere.

Theresa Shay, yoga instructor and holistic life coach, and Rose Bohn, spiritual director, skillfully created an atmosphere where women felt free to share difficult experiences as well as strategies for changing their lives.

There was time for talking in small groups, breathing, stretching, journaling, reflecting, and visioning. Participants learned that physical and financial strength on the farm are not enough; mental and emotional well-being are also needed.

Theresa and Rose thoughtfully and warmly guided us as we explored our highest visions in all areas of life: farm, business, relationships, and family.

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For additional information about Yoga and class schedules, contact Theresa Shay at [theresa@triyoga.com](mailto:theresa@triyoga.com) or 814-364-2435.

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# LEARNING FROM THE PAST TO BUILD TOMORROW

## A HISTORY OF PA-WAGN

*The recent growth of PA-WAgN has been phenomenal! As of this writing, we have 502 members. Many of these newer members have been asking about PA-WAgN's history and how it all started. This article will allow us to share a common history and take some steps toward building our future.*

The idea for PA-WAgN developed out of a series of conversations between Carolyn Sachs and Amy Trauger, in which they discussed the need for a network of women in agriculture for Pennsylvania (patterned after the Maine and Vermont WAgNs). Amy's master's degree research on women farmers revealed that many women farmers did not know each other. The most often cited problems with farming for women are the isolation of rural life, the lack of support from peers (typically male farmers or agricultural professionals), and the scarcity of hands-on educational opportunities, this social network gap was the source of many challenges to a successful and fulfilling farming livelihood for women. PA-WAgN is an organization that seeks to fill these gaps and provide education and mentoring in empowering environments.

Carolyn and Amy met Vivianne Holmes of the Maine WAgN at the Rural Women's Studies Association annual meeting in Las Cruces, New Mexico in February 2003. Both knew immediately that this kind of organization could meet the needs of women farmers in Pennsylvania. PA-WAgN officially got off the ground in May of 2003, with the first PA-WAgN steering committee meeting. The steering committee met several times in 2003 and developed a series of events and field days for 2004 and a strategy for building and funding the network.

In October of 2004, the steering committee developed (along with the directors of the Maine and Vermont WAgNs) a strategic plan for PA-WAgN. The group developed the mission statement that continues to guide the network: *"Supporting women in agriculture today and in the future by providing a positive learning environment, networking, and empowerment."*

In 2004, PA-WAgN also organized the first annual Women in Agriculture day at PASA's annual Farming for the Future conference. Ninety women attended this conference. Thirty-seven women there responded to a survey asking about their needs as women in agriculture (the first needs assessment). In these surveys and those conducted since, a few main themes have been identified which guide the planning and decision-making of PA-WAgN staff. These include: (1) women in agriculture often feel isolated; (2) they are often not granted

the respect that men in agriculture have automatically; (3) they often were not brought up on a farm and did not have the education or skills necessary to run a farm; (4) women often think differently than men and their approaches are frequently dismissed. The events organized by PA-WAgN are built to mitigate these problems for women. All educational events are hands-on, farm-based, and led and organized by women. PA-WAgN events allow time for networking and learning from each other, and take place in a supportive and respectful environment.

In January of 2005, Linda Stewart Moist began as a senior extension associate with PA-WAgN, supported by funding from Penn State Cooperative Extension and the College of Agriculture. A major part of Linda's job is planning educational events. Seven field days were held in 2005 and there are currently eleven planned for 2006.

PA-WAgN received two grants (one from Northeast Sustainable Ag Research and Education, and one from USDA's National Research Initiative) in the summer of 2005, which allowed PA-WAgN to hire Amy Trauger as a research associate and Ann Stone as a staff assistant. Amy conducts the needs assessments, focus groups, surveys and interviews that are essential to learning about what women farmers want and need from PA-WAgN. Ann produces the wonderful PA-WAgN newsletter, keeps us all organized and otherwise works her magic to keep us all sane!

Although PA-WAgN is only a few years old, the network has grown rapidly, reflecting the need for women across Pennsylvania to connect with other farmers and to share their knowledge and experiences. The strength of the network is the notion that everyone has the opportunity to be both teacher and learner at different times and places!

*(This article summarizes work from multiple sources, especially Amy Trauger's dissertation!)*

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# PA-WAGN LEADERSHIP TRAINING

## PA-WAGN LEADERS OF TODAY & TOMORROW

The truth is there is no such thing as a natural-born leader. Just like the fruits, flowers, vegetables and livestock on our farms, leaders are cultivated and trained. The path toward leadership takes time and along the way there are going to be difficulties, setbacks, and even outright failures. Leaders are those who refuse to give up, taking even the darkest moment and ultimately turning it into a learning experience from which others can draw knowledge and strength.

Nearly two dozen PA-WAGN members gathered at Camp Woodward near State College in early March to learn more about leadership. As we often learn by example, we were fortunate to have two leaders (and women) from the Pennsylvania Department of Agriculture join us —Cheryl Cook, Deputy Secretary for Marketing and Economic Development and Kyle Nagurny, Director of PDA's Bureau of Market Development.

Despite Mother Nature's attempt to put a damper on the training with icy traveling conditions, women traveled from all over Pennsylvania to participate in six of the thirteen *Learning Today*

*Leading Tomorrow* modules developed by Penn State's College of Agricultural Science and presented by Cooperative Extension educators.

The afternoon began with *The Leader Within You* presented by Patty Anderson from Clarion County. She began her session by having everyone write their name down on index cards and attach a leadership character-

istic to each letter of their name. Although those with short names got off easy on this exercise, the list included such qualities as "motivated," "inventive," "ambitious," and "enthusiastic."

And just how many women does it take to screw a bunch of wing nuts on a length of all-thread?

Patty explained exercises such as this enable a group to "bond" and "loosen up."

The next part of the session had everyone discuss their most valued leadership characteristics.

On a second index card, we wrote down the name of someone who we admired, listing their leadership characteristics. The group split into pairs discussing their choices and later came back together to share their answers. The leaders the group admired were visionaries, charismatic, respected, empathetic, effective, creative, knowledgeable, grounded, and levelheaded, and possessed a sense of humor.

Our next presenter, Bill Kleiner from Adams County, shared effective strategies for *Facilitation*. The mood was upbeat and jovial as we began our session, but then a phone call sent Lyn Garling racing out the door—

Lyn's barn was on fire. In spite of our deep concern, we forged ahead learning the key points to successful facilitation—remaining neutral, using open-ended questions

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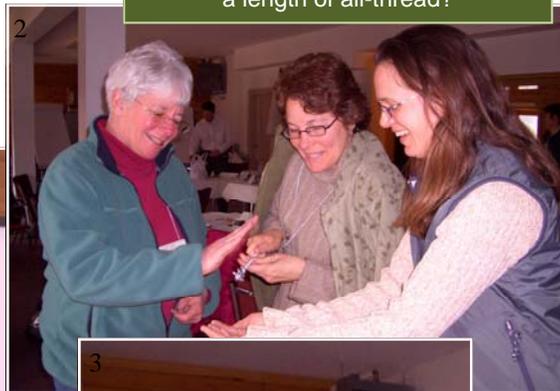


Photo 1, Barb Kline facilitating a meeting; Photo 2, Carolyn Sachs, Maryann Frazier, Jennifer Halpin in a team building activity; Photo 3, Kathryn Brasier with opening remarks; Maggie Robertson (& baby Claire, PA-WAGN's youngest member), June Hertzler, Linda Moist reaching a consensus

—Photographs courtesy of Sandra Miller

## PA-WAGN LEADERSHIP TRAINING

(Continued from page 4)

to promote discussion, keeping a positive tone and avoiding getting off track.

At the close of our session, Amy Trauger broke the devastating news that Lyn's barn was a total loss and a sow with eleven piglets had perished in the fire.

Despite the hardships of the afternoon, Lyn returned for the remainder of the evening—an incredible example to many women of strength in the face of adversity. After a delicious meal, Cheryl Cook took a few minutes to speak to everyone about the necessity for trained leaders to actively fill positions within our communities. Recognizing the growing numbers of women in agriculture, Cheryl recognizes the valuable dedication women can offer in determining the future of agriculture within the state.

For our final session of the day, Mike returned to talk about *Productive Groups*. Interestingly, at this point the women began to focus the exercises on practical applications with regard to PA-WAgN as a group. The question, "What is special about PA-WAgN?" was raised and from there the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats were listed. The term that kept popping up throughout this session was "passion," pointing out that leaders as well as groups themselves emerge because people are passionate about a common cause. It is the leader's role to focus on the process (how things get accomplished) as compared to the content (what the group does).

The evening social time centered around the great room and the warmth of the glowing fireplace where everyone gathered to share stories, strengthen friendships, and establish new ones before turning in for the night.

The next morning it was back to work after breakfast with Joyce Morrison of Delaware County teaching the women about *Effective Meetings* by having small groups put together simple puzzles. However, each group neared the completion of their puzzles, it became evident that one piece did not belong and in order to complete the puzzle, the missing piece would have to be located. This exercise got the blood flowing and brains thinking.



Cheryl Cook, Deputy Secretary for Marketing and Economic Development, PA Department of Agriculture, speaking candidly with attendees

Again, the women applied practical WAgN issues to the subject material by planning future work days and field days that will take place later this summer. Unlike many seminars where generic materials are presented, throughout the two days the attendees actively pursued WAgN issues while putting leadership practices to the test.

Jon Laughner from Indiana County had everyone working with wing nuts and beads while learning the dynamics of *Group Decision Making*. This very hands-on session presented an excellent demonstration of the Consensus Process. A jar of beads was passed around the room and each woman was asked to guess the amount. Next, we split into pairs to estimate, then groups of three until eventually only two large groups tried to determine the exact amount. The numbers were all over the board and there were significant changes made to the

guesses as the groups became larger. Had Jon not decided to finally disclose the exact amount of beads in the jar after asking for individual, small group, and split-room estimates, he might have had a group revolt instead.

Chris Wise offered this astute observation about the success of Consensus Decisions, "Even though we were all wrong, each one of us bought into the answer and were not unhappy with our ultimate decision."

Well-fed and in a warm sunny room, everyone tried not to yawn too much as Neal Fogle from Montour County presented our final session, *Active Leadership*. Once more, the women tackled the exercise of Strategic Planning head on using issues at hand with WAgN as an organization.

Overall, the two days offered women new ideas as well as a refresher on leadership skills that can actively be put to use in any organization—not just WAgN—as was encouraged by Cheryl Cook. June Hertzler summed up the experience, "I'm glad we got to actually work and not just listen."

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# PRACTICAL TIPS

## SPRING IS A TIME TO.....START SEEDLINGS

By now you have probably chosen your seeds for this Summer's garden. Here are a few hints for getting your season off to a great start. There are many reasons to start your own seedlings including cost, variety and quality. Buying seedlings is expensive, the selection is usually limited, the possibility of disease or insect infestation in purchased plants is greater, and they may have been treated with a growth retardant.

If this convinces you to start your own seeds, following are some helpful hints. Basically, these are things I have learned from making many mistakes; but if you have a different approach that works for you, stick with it).

While a greenhouse is certainly the most luxurious option to start seeds, it is not the only one. Any-

thing you can set up so that the seedlings are in a semi-warm area with florescent lights no more than 4 inches above them is fine. To germinate, most seeds need an air temperature of 65 to 75° F; however bottom heat is very helpful in hurrying some plants along. We use the hot water radiators and homemade wooden flats in our house to start tomatoes and peppers. Be creative about your heat sources and don't think you have to go out and buy something really expensive! As soon as your seeds sprout and you can see them, move them under florescent lighting.

Always use a good potting soil. We use "Pro-mix" which is not the cheapest but well worth every penny. Be sure to wet your potting medium before you begin and not just on the top of the pile. I dump a half a bale on the potting bench, soak it with water, stir it up from the bottom, spray and mix again, and let it sit for at least 30 minutes before using. Ideally, it should be able to be squeezed into a ball in your hand but fall apart when you drop it.



Tomato seedlings bursting to life with their newly formed cotyledon leaves



Approximately two weeks after the cotyledon leaves emerge, the seedlings develop their first set of true leaves

Timing is everything with spring seedlings and heating a greenhouse is costly, so for these reasons I wait until the last possible day to plant seeds and begin the season. This is actually ideal for the seedlings as well, because they prefer to sprout and grow steadily until they are planted out in the field. Vegetable plants have a single mission in life; their job is to grow, flower, and produce fruit and seeds. They march ever onward to this goal, so be sure to keep them growing, not holding as they will get leggy and be less productive overall.

Containers are not a very big consideration, I recommend that you use whatever you have with the exception of clay flower pots, as they dry out too quickly. As long as your containers hold potting soil and plants but let water drain out, they will work. For example, yogurt cups with holes poked in the bottom, wooden or plastic flats, and of course recycled plastic flower pots all work

well. Whatever you find to use, wash it in hot soapy water with a little bleach to prevent the spread of diseases to your plants.

When planting your seeds, be sure to label every pot

or container with variety, color and planting date. Permanent ink markers work great for writing either directly on the pots or on masking tape. Wooden marking sticks work sometimes but they can fall out and leave your plants without a label.

Loosely fill the container with properly moistened potting soil. **NO patting down the potting soil!!** Level off the pot with a ruler or stick. Lightly touch the surface of the soil with your finger to make a small indentation, put one seed in each and cover lightly with 1/2 inch of soil. Water from the bottom by sitting the pots in a tray of water until the top of the pot is barely moist. Use this method of watering until your seedlings are up and well estab-

*(Continued on page 7)*

## PRACTICAL TIPS – SPRING IS A TIME TO...START SEEDLINGS

*(Continued from page 6)*

lished in their pots. Never allow seed pots to completely dry out as this can kill a tiny seed that is just beginning to grow.

For larger seeds, particularly those in the cucurbit family (squash, cucumbers, pumpkins, melons, etc.) gently push the seed down into the soil, but not too deep, and then cover lightly. Plants in this family do not like to have their roots "messed with," so choose a container with enough space to allow the seedlings to grow undisturbed until you plant them out in the field.

Most of your seedlings will need to be transplanted to pots with more room and to prevent them from getting root bound. This should be done after the seedlings have at least one true leaf (not to be confused with the two seed leaves every seedling is "born" with). The true leaves have the distinct shape of the family of plants your seedling belongs to and let you know it is time to transplant. This is a job that requires preparation as it can be quite tedious. I suggest you make a pot of coffee, call a friend to help, and crank up some good working music.

To transplant, hold the seedling by the seed leaf and at the same time use a small stick or old dull knife to lift out their roots. Never, never, never pick up a seedling by its stem as it is way too easy to crush and kill the plant. However, even if one (or both) of the seed leaves gets torn off, the plant can survive and grow fine. Be gentle and kind — These are tiny babies you are dealing with here! Fill the new pot about half full of potting medium, make a space in it with your same dull knife or stick, place the seedling in the pot and add more soil up to the top of the pot. This time it is okay to **gently** pack the soil around the seedling. Don't smash it or act like you are making bricks in your flower pots, just firm it down enough to keep the seedling standing up straight. Water with a transplant solution of your choice, fish emulsion or kelp-based products are fine.



Seed starting offers growers greater variety and better quality

If the stems of your seedlings are long, spindly, or weak, plant them deeper than they were originally growing.

The buried stem will grow additional roots and the stem that grows above the soil will be stronger and stockier.

Always transplant extra of everything. This allows you to pick the best and compost the rest. Don't waste your time and resources planting less than perfect plants out in the field, or transplanting them either for that matter.

### A few last transplanting hints:

Don't crowd your seedlings. They need room for air to circulate between them to prevent fungus and the dreaded damping off disease. Water in the morning or early afternoon, but never evening, to allow time for the leaves to dry before dark. This also helps to prevent fungus and molds from growing.

Harden off your plants before planting them out in the field. Place the plants outside during the day for a few hours to condition and prepare them for transplanting. Beware of windy days, their tender stems will break right off. Transplant out into the field on a cloudy day, or late in the day, and water immediately.

I hope these tips work for you. Don't be afraid to improvise and experiment until you find a system that works best for you!

Good luck with your seedlings!

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# REGIONAL REPRESENTATIVES

## GET TO KNOW YOUR REGIONAL REPRESENTATIVE

Currently, PA-WAgN has eighteen Regional Representatives volunteering to serve female farmers and communities throughout Pennsylvania.

Chris Wise (pictured below), owner and operator of Friends Farm, is a PA-WAgN Regional Representative living in Blair County and serving the Southwestern Region. Together with her family, she has developed a profitable Community Support Agriculture (CSA) program with shares available to forty families.

Chris was born in the outskirts of Philadelphia where she was raised in a suburban setting without a family farm to gain experience, knowledge, and skills. Chris met her husband, John Favinger, and future farm partner while attending West-

chester University, where she studied to become a registered nurse. In 1979, Chris and John married and their first child, Rita, was born in 1982. Their second daughter, Lila, was born in 1985.



In 1987, the family took steps to realize

their farming goals by moving to Altoona, Pennsylvania; where farmland was much more attainable. They purchased two acres and homesteaded for ten years. Chris vigilantly maintained notebooks concerning seed varieties, successes and failures. Chris and John added fruit trees, gardens and chickens in their efforts to become self-sustaining. They cultivated their land as well as their skills.

In 1992, Chris and John bought a 20 acre farm, complete with dilapidated house, falling barn and inadequate soil. After more than a year of laborious renovations, Chris and her family were able to take up residence and begin farming. Their initial focus was to rejuvenate the soil.

After attending PASA's annual conference in 1994, Chris and John were inspired to begin their first CSA, supporting six families. Their porch served multiple purposes as a packing facility and pick-up location for many

years. Without the luxury of a well and an irrigation system, they learned to conserve resources as they hauled water in a truck to their fields. By 1999, the family exceeded their CSA capacity after supporting thirty families. Now, with the addition of a well, irrigation, market building and commercial kitchen, the family is ready to increase their CSA shares and offer seasonal dinners to their community.

Through all of their renovations and additions, Chris and John have not incurred additional debt. They base their growth on their income. They value their crops and charge a fair market price for their CSA shares. "We need to make a living wage and our customers are willing to pay more because they understand that we abide by the highest organic standards," Chris said.

Treating the farm like a business, keeping good records, determining production costs, charging a fair price, and taking time to reflect upon successes as well as failures have contributed to the farm's success.

Chris is a leader in her community. She founded and facilitates a 4-H livestock club entitled *Kids for Kids Goat Club*. Chris is actively involved in the Williamsburg Community Farm Show, the Blair County Livestock Council, and several committees in her church.

Chris is employed at a mental health clinic where she provides behavioral health counseling, life-coaching and motivation to her patients.

Chris's motto for life is based on the 4-H model — MAKE THE BEST BETTER! She is passionate about her faith, her family, and sustainable agriculture.

When asked about her driving forces, Chris responded, "I do everything I do because I believe it is what I am supposed to do. I think it is important to have a small organic farm. I am supposed to educate people and provide examples of how to farm without chemicals. The guiding principle for my life and my family is faith and our decisions are based on faith. I try to do what is right — not just right morally but right for the earth."

Chris's open-door policy and willingness to share her extensive knowledge and experiences makes her an asset to women in beginning farming and an inspiration to us all.

When I think of integrity, I think of Chris Wise.

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# PA-WAGN IN YOUR REGION

## REGIONAL REPRESENTATIVES

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## COUNTY/REGION GUIDE

### NORTH WESTERN (1)

ARMSTRONG  
BUTLER  
CLARION  
CRAWFORD  
ERIE  
FOREST  
LAWRENCE  
MERCER  
VENANGO  
WARREN

### SOUTH WESTERN (2)

ALLEGHENY  
BEAVER  
BEDFORD  
BLAIR  
CAMBRIA  
FAYETTE  
GREENE  
INDIANA  
SOMERSET  
WASHINGTON  
WESTMORELAND

### NORTH CENTRAL (3)

CAMERON  
CENTRE  
CLEARFIELD  
CLINTON  
COLUMBIA  
ELK  
HUNTINGDON  
JEFFERSON  
JUNIATA  
LYCOMING  
MCKEAN  
MIFFLIN  
MONTOUR  
NORTHUMBERLAND  
POTTER  
SNYDER  
UNION

### SOUTH CENTRAL (6)

ADAMS  
CUMBERLAND  
DAUPHIN  
FRANKLIN  
FULTON  
LANCASTER  
LEBANON  
PERRY  
YORK

### NORTH EASTERN (4)

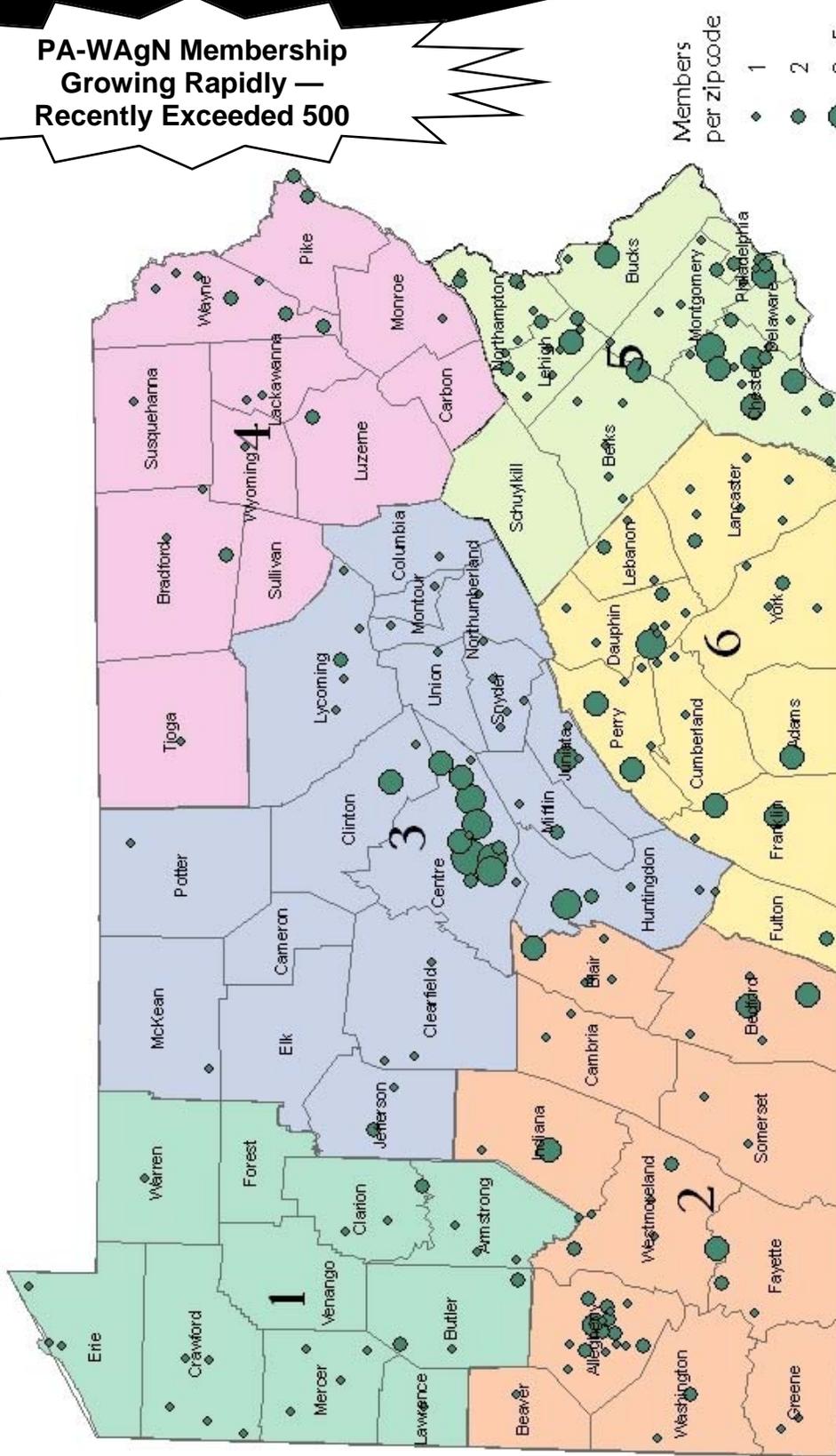
BRADFORD  
CARBON  
LACKAWANNA  
LUZERNE  
MONROE  
PIKE  
SULLIVAN  
SUSQUEHANNA  
TIOGA  
WAYNE  
WYOMING

### SOUTH EASTERN (5)

BERKS  
BUCKS  
CHESTER  
DELAWARE  
LEHIGH  
MONTGOMERY  
NORTHAMPTON  
PHILADELPHIA  
SCHUYLKILL

# Women's Agricultural Network (WAgN) Membership in Pennsylvania (n=508)

**PA-WAgN Membership  
Growing Rapidly —  
Recently Exceeded 500**



Members per zip code

- ◆ 1
- 2
- 3 - 5
- 6 - 10
- 11 - 28

zipcodes not mapped include:  
29 without zip codes  
64 out of state

WAgN Regions

Amy Trauger, March 2006  
Data Source: The Women's Agricultural Network

# GOING LOCAL

## THE CONFESSIONS OF A LOCAL FOODS CITIZEN-EATER

***The Cookbook Method of Planning a Garden (or how the eyes are bigger than the stomach, pantry and freezer).***

In this installment of ravings from a citizen-eater gone local, I am reporting on the progress I've made toward planning my meals for the year. Yes, that's right, the year. My very good friend Heather stops by periodically just to see what I have on my calendar of meals a month in advance. It's a bit of a curiosity for her, like a circus side-show, a rare opportunity to be amazed at the truly bizarre idiosyncrasies of some people.

Truth be told, planning meals in advance (however far you can bring yourself to do so) reduces waste (you know the expensive organic veggies growing mold in the bank of the fridge because they looked so good in the store), reduces tension (everyone knows what's coming, and can plan to be elsewhere when the cabbage, kale, and white bean sauté is on the menu), and makes it much easier to eat locally. Why? Because you can PLAN to eat locally and not just let what is easily available find its way willy-nilly into your diet, while some of the more elusive local produce is overlooked because it didn't get put into the freezer, or even planted in the first place. But because you planned, now, in the dead of winter, you, the local eater, know that you have available to you: roots from your CSA/local food purveyor/cellar, fresh milk, eggs and cheese from local farmers, greens from a greenhouse if you're lucky and whatever might be canned, dried or frozen in your freezer and pantry.

My soon to be well-stocked and well-planned larder has its beginnings in the cold nights of deep winter when I cuddle up with my seed catalogs and plan my garden. You all know already that I take cookbooks to bed with me, and about this time of year, seed catalogs find their way there too. My husband, far from feeling crowded by two cats, one dog, (my horse would be there too if he could) and several cookbooks, doesn't mind at all when the seed catalogs find their way into bed as well. Looking ahead at what might be a delicious summer or fall meal inspires me to plant something I might not have

bothered with before, such as radicchio for a grilled bitter greens salad or fennel to braise with lamb shanks and fingerling potatoes. The seed catalogs themselves become a source of inspiration to try varieties with unique colors and flavors, like yellow lemon cucumbers for a stunning yogurt, garlic and dill salad, or Rosa Bianca eggplants, which are not only beautiful, but are reported to have no trace of bitterness.



Amy Trauger preparing an abundance of sweet corn for a mid-winter's feast  
—Photograph courtesy Ryan Peterson

Aside from all these luscious and nutritious, but hardly year-round staple foods, I include oodles of easy to preserve foods such as sweet corn, potatoes, winter squash, onions, garlic and tomatoes that form the basis of our winter diet. We are starting from scratch in our new home (and rumor has it, our garden will be tilled with horses this year!), so I've expanded to include some new items in our seed order: three kinds of shell beans (black, white and red), green and wax beans, broccoli, cabbages, leeks, eggplants and on and on! Because supporting local growers is important to me, I also leave some blanks that I know I can fill with local transplants. I also use the farmers' markets throughout the season to find fruit, rare and heirloom varieties, fresh greens, flowers, eggs, meat and dairy products and of course, most

importantly, community! My CSA provides early- and late-season produce, supplemental quantities in season and some of that crazy stuff that I'm not quite ready to grow myself, like edamame and broccoli raab!

Generally, I plan for about one meal per week per year of our staple items. So that means about 50 squashes, 50 frozen quart bags of sweet corn, 50 quarts of tomatoes and 75-100 pounds of potatoes. I use an onion and several cloves of garlic in just about everything I cook, so I plan for about 300 onions and 150 heads of garlic. (While I COULD eat three heads of garlic per week, I always save about 20 for planting in the fall!). Non-staples like red peppers that don't get gobbled up in season get frozen as they ripen, but I plan for about one frozen quart of non-staples every other week. Not knowing the yield, my proficiency in growing, or our appetite for shell beans (which I anticipate to be another staple in our diet), I plan to plant one 2 oz pack

*(Continued on page 12)*

# KEYSTONE KITCHENS PROGRAM

## INCUBATOR KITCHEN IN YOUR AREA

*Keystone Kitchens Program* is a survey developed by the Pennsylvania Technology Assistance Program (PENNTAP) and Penn State Extension, to determine the feasibility of setting up one or more shared kitchen incubators in the state of Pennsylvania. They are exploring the interest that farmer/producers and food entrepreneurs have in using such a facility, and the types of services and information that participants would like to receive from a shared kitchen incubator.

Survey participants are asked to complete a survey that asks specific questions about their current or proposed enterprises, and the services they will need to create commercial food products.

The survey and implied consent can be downloaded and printed from PA-WAgN's website at <http://wagn.cas.psu.edu>. Paper copies are also available through PENNTAP.

Mail completed surveys to:

Larry P. Grunden  
Senior Food Industry Specialist  
Pennsylvania Technical Assistance Program  
Penn State Harrisburg  
116 Educational Activities Building  
777 West Harrisburg Pike  
Middletown, PA 17057  
717-948-6523  
[lpg11@psu.edu](mailto:lpg11@psu.edu)

PENNTAP is collecting responses until March 31, 2006.

If an incubator kitchen could assist you in your value-added farming endeavors, please take a few moments to complete and return the survey.

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## THE CONFESSIONS OF A LOCAL FOODS CITIZEN-EATER

*(Continued from page 11)*

of seeds of each kind (about a 50' row) and see how far it gets us. Record keeping is as important as planning, and while it's not as fun as planning, it makes it easier to remember what to do (or not do!) next year.

Eating locally and moving toward food self-sufficiency is mostly a process of trial and error, but planning to have at least a year's worth of produce stored, frozen, or otherwise available year round goes a long way towards deliciously nourishing yourself and your local community. To help get you going, here are a couple useful lists:

An abbreviated list of other items in my pantry and freezer to serve two (all but the herbs and some of the veggies are purchased locally):

Apple cider and applesauce (canned and/or frozen): 12 gallons of cider (or one quart per week) and 30 pints of homemade applesauce (about a pint every other week)

Asparagus, broccoli, brussels sprouts, kale, spinach, green beans etc.: at least one frozen quart of something dark green and/or leafy per week

Herbs: Cilantro, parsley, and basil are chopped and stuffed into quart yogurt containers. Rosemary, oregano, and sage are dried and stored in canning jars.

Meat and fish: About 20# of lamb; about 30 chickens

(whole, split and cut into pieces); a 20# variety pack of organically-fed pasture-raised beef, pork and veal; 10 # of wild salmon

Fruit: about one pint per day of strawberries, raspberries (wild), blueberries, and peaches

A few tools for planning a garden (market or otherwise) on the web:

Seed Catalogs: [www.fedcoseeds.com](http://www.fedcoseeds.com),  
[www.seedsofchange.com](http://www.seedsofchange.com)

Planting Schedule: <http://www.attra.org/attra-pub/continuous-harvest.html>

Approximate Yield: <http://webpages.csus.edu/%7Eesac95710> (under "Yield" tab)

Planting and Harvest Calendar: <http://www.extension.iastate.edu/Publications/PM534.pdf>

Crop Rotation Plan: <http://www.yankeegardener.com/resource/croprotate.html>

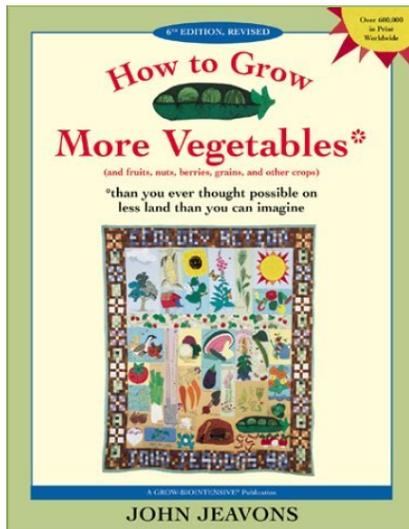
Good All-Around Guide: <http://www.extension.iastate.edu/Publications/PM819.pdf>

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## BOOK REVIEW

*How to Grow More Vegetables*, written by John Jeavons, director of Ecology Action, a California-based environmental research and education organization, is a valuable planning guide for all vegetable producers.



The book, which was recently released in a sixth edition, is based on the biointensive method of growing pioneered by Alan Chadwick. This method, which Jeavons calls the "miniaturization of agriculture," aims to reduce soil loss and water usage and to greatly increase soil fertility and yields per acre.

The goal of the book is to lay out a plan—from preparing the soil and planting the seeds and plants to watering, weeding, and harvesting—that will allow you to grow all the vegetables needed for a family of four on limited acreage. But the master charts contained in the book can benefit all farmers and gardeners, including those who are growing for market and feeding many more than four people.

The master charts list all common vegetables, grain and vegetable-oil crops, fodder and cover crops, as well as fruit and nut trees and berries. They allow you to identify the amount of seed you need for each crop; schedule successive plantings; determine spacing in the seeded flats and in the field; and anticipate yield (in pounds). It's easy to multiply these calculations to accommodate the yield you need, whether you're growing for four or forty.

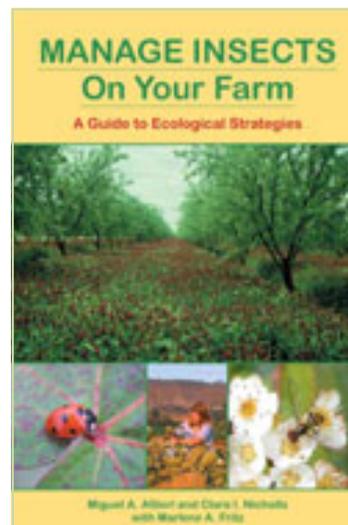
If scheduling successive plantings seems a daunting task, this book is for you. The "garden plan" charts allow you to insert the dates of your first and last frosts and estimate when to plant and replant each vegetable to keep your harvest coming, and schedule cover crop plantings to maintain soil fertility. The book takes a conservative approach, directing you to seed into flats as late as two weeks before frost, while most of us are probably seeding directly into the garden long before that. But overall, it's a very usable and complete plan.

*Manage Insects on Your Farm: A Guide to Ecological Strategies* is another new book that can help you get the

most from your plantings this year. Published by the Sustainable Agriculture Network, a SARE outreach program, the book relies on three key strategies of pest management:

1. Growing healthy diverse crops that have natural defenses against pests;
2. Stressing pests by interrupting their life cycles, removing food sources, etc.
3. Increasing the populations of beneficial insects.

The book has great color photos of both beneficial insects and pests, as well as descriptions of insect pathogens that farmers can use for biological pest control.



The authors take a whole-farm approach, advising farmers to enhance diversity (through cover-cropping, providing corridors for wildlife and beneficial insects, practicing agroforestry, etc.) to create a biodiverse farm with fertile, productive fields. Every chapter features a farm that has accomplished this goal and increased its productivity.

If you're willing to consider ecological farm design as the key to managing pests, this book is a great place to start.

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Publisher Information:

Jeavons, John. *How to Grow More Vegetables*. Berkeley, CA; Ten Speed Press. 2005. \$ 19.95. To order, visit [www.tenspeedpress.com](http://www.tenspeedpress.com)

Altieri, Nichols, and Fritz. *Manage Insects on Your Farm*. Beltsville, Md: Sustainable Agriculture Network. 2005. \$15.95 plus \$5.95 s/h. To order, call 301-374-9696 or purchase online at <http://www.sare.org/publications/insect.htm>

# CALENDAR OF EVENTS

## PA-WAGN FIELD DAY SO YOU WANT TO BE A BEEKEEPER! ESTABLISHING A HOME FOR HONEY BEES

APRIL 10, 2006, 12:30-4:00 P.M. , HUNTINGDON COUNTY  
HOST: MARYANN FRAZIER  
PENN STATE'S HONEY BEE EXTENSION SPECIALIST  
SINGING CREEK FARM, MOUNT UNION, PA

- LEARN THE IMPORTANT CRITERIA TO CHOOSE AN APIARY (BEE YARD) LOCATION
- IDENTIFY APPROPRIATE BEE KEEPING EQUIPMENT
- INSTALL SEVERAL PACKAGES OF HONEY BEES & NUCLEUS COLONIES INTO HIVES
- LEARN HOW TO CONDUCT A TYPICAL INSPECTION OF A NEW AND/OR ESTABLISHED COLONY



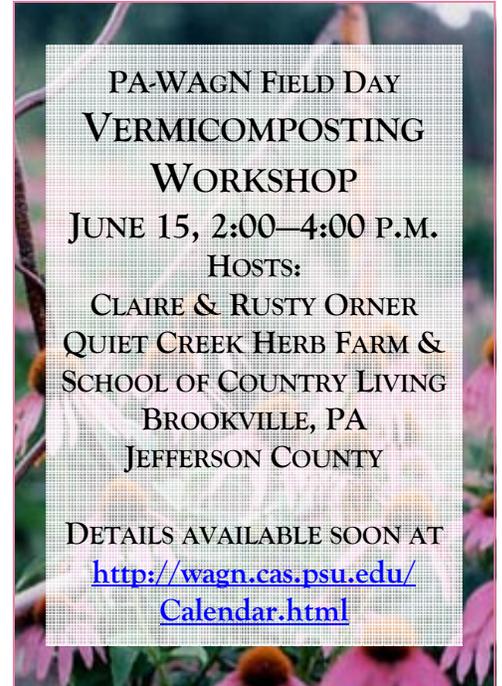
Details &  
Online Registration available:  
[http://wagn.cas.psu.edu/  
Calendar.html](http://wagn.cas.psu.edu/Calendar.html)  
or e-mail or call  
Linda Moist, [ism9@psu.edu](mailto:ism9@psu.edu)  
814-865-7031  
\$10 includes lunch

## PA-WAGN FIELD DAY VERMICOMPOSTING WORKSHOP

JUNE 15, 2:00—4:00 P.M.  
HOSTS:

CLAIRE & RUSTY ORNER  
QUIET CREEK HERB FARM &  
SCHOOL OF COUNTRY LIVING  
BROOKVILLE, PA  
JEFFERSON COUNTY

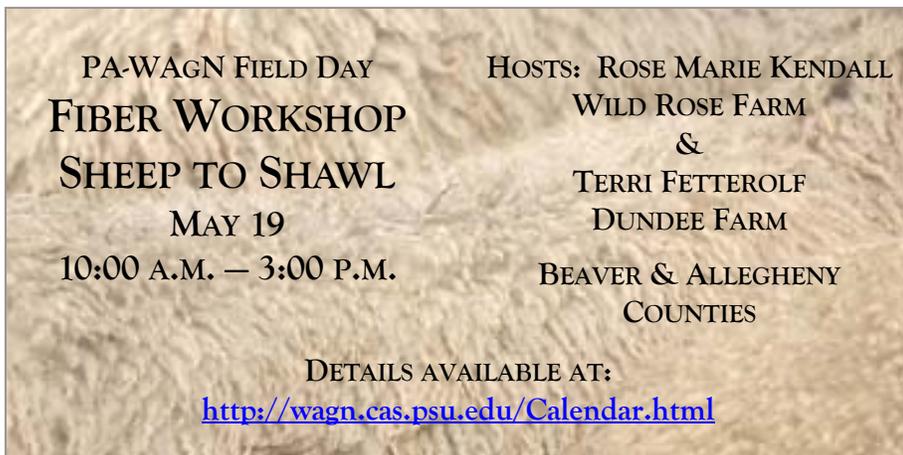
DETAILS AVAILABLE SOON AT  
[http://wagn.cas.psu.edu/  
Calendar.html](http://wagn.cas.psu.edu/Calendar.html)



## PA-WAGN FIELD DAY FIBER WORKSHOP SHEEP TO SHAWL MAY 19 10:00 A.M. — 3:00 P.M.

HOSTS: ROSE MARIE KENDALL  
WILD ROSE FARM  
&  
TERRI FETTEROLF  
DUNDEE FARM  
BEAVER & ALLEGHENY  
COUNTIES

DETAILS AVAILABLE AT:  
<http://wagn.cas.psu.edu/Calendar.html>



## PA-WAGN/PASA FIELD DAY URBAN FARMING USING THE SPIN METHOD



JULY 24  
10:00 A.M. — 2:00 P.M.

HOST: ROXANNE CHRISTENSEN  
SOMERTON TANKS FARM  
PHILADELPHIA, PA

DETAILS AVAILABLE AT:  
[http://wagn.cas.psu.edu/  
Calendar.html](http://wagn.cas.psu.edu/Calendar.html)

Visit Somerton Tanks Farm at:  
<http://www.somertontanksfarm.org>

## PA-WAGN/SLOW FOOD EVENING A PROGRESSIVE DINNER HOSTED BY PENN'S VALLEY FARMERS JULY 10

ENJOY FARM FRESH PRODUCTS WHILE TOURING  
CENTRE COUNTY FARMS

DETAILS AVAILABLE SOON AT  
<http://wagn.cas.psu.edu/Calendar.html>



# THE KITCHEN GARDEN



## PEA TENDRILS

As I peruse seed catalogs and plan my garden layout, I try to add items that are unavailable or cost prohibitive to purchase locally and organically. My seed selections depend greatly upon my dining preferences.

Sugar snap and snow peas are planted in abundance and treasured for their aesthetic appeal, soil building qualities, quick maturity and, most importantly, their delicious flavor.

Newly born seedlings are a cause for celebration in my home as we anticipate the fresh-from-the-garden flavors that we have all been craving since we put the garden to sleep last fall. I can rarely watch peas climbing the garden trellis without deciding to sacrifice a few plants for their delicate, sweet tendrils.

Properly refrigerated, pea tendrils may keep for a few days but are best when served within minutes of their harvest. Eaten alone or added to a salad, fresh pea tendrils are a true luxury afforded primarily to their growers. Combine a whole-grain bread with a pea tendril salad and you have a meal fit for a queen!

Enjoy all of the glories and anticipation that Spring has to offer and eat well!

—Ann Stone  
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### PEA TENDRIL SALAD

4-6 ounces pea tendrils  
1 tablespoon toasted sesame seeds  
Soy-Vinaigrette Dressing

Toss pea vines with dressing. Sprinkle with sesame seeds. Enjoy!

#### Soy-Vinaigrette Dressing

2 tablespoons soy sauce  
2 tablespoons rice wine vinegar  
¼ cup vegetable oil  
2 teaspoons sesame oil  
2 teaspoons brown sugar  
1/2 clove garlic (optional)  
1/8" slice fresh ginger pressed through garlic press (optional)

Mix all ingredients in a blender until emulsified.

## PENNSYLVANIA WOMEN'S AGRICULTURAL NETWORK

THE PENNSYLVANIA STATE UNIVERSITY

302 ARMSBY BUILDING  
UNIVERSITY PARK, PA 16802

[HTTP://WAGN.CAS.PSU.EDU](http://wagn.cas.psu.edu)

FAX: 814.865.3746

**PENNSYLVANIA WOMEN'S AGRICULTURAL NETWORK  
THE PENNSYLVANIA STATE UNIVERSITY**  
302 Armsby Building  
University Park, Pennsylvania 16802

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<http://wagn.cas.psu.edu>



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