



August 15, 2012 —

By Dawn Garden intern Amy Winzer

Meet Elizabeth Powell, farmer at Grassfed Gardens and HAH CSA coordinator extraordinaire. If you looked up “self-motivated” in the dictionary, you might find Elizabeth’s picture.

Elizabeth cultivates about 1/3 of an acre spread out over three separate sites. Other than occasional help from friends and plenty of moral support from husband Gabe, she is a farmer flying solo. She also somehow finds the time to coordinate the elaborate logistics of our favorite High Altitude Harvest CSA with its 100 members, 14 growers and three different pick-up locations—enough to induce a headache for most of us, but Elizabeth pulls it off each week, level-headed and with a beaming smile on her face.

Elizabeth has been growing for the CSA for five years now. The first two years she expanded from seven to ten members, supplying all of the produce from the Thompson Valley Ranch historic garden site, where she still grows today. With some help from a USDA grant during year three she expanded to 30 members,

brought in other growers, and officially adopted the “High Altitude Harvest” brand. Hopefully you all know the story from here—the next year she doubled HAH’s members to 60 shares, and this year we’re up to 100 members. With Elizabeth’s help, we’re not just cultivating fresh produce here in Plumas County, we’re growing our own grass-roots, local food movement!

Elizabeth loves the habitat that the garden creates. On any given day you can find her enjoying the company of a variety of critters at one of her sites. So far this season she has met a praying mantis among her beets, lots of ladybugs and birds in the trellised peas, tree frogs in the snap beans, beneficial wasps in flowering Napa cabbage and wolf spiders in the potting soil.

But Elizabeth hasn’t undertaken farm work just for the unconventional friends. She firmly believes that “we should be able to have financially viable farms in our community,” and hopes that her farm can someday serve as an example.

By coordinating High Altitude Harvest, Elizabeth secures a market for her own produce while providing, as she says, “opportunities for small growers in Plumas County to get their feet wet.” Thank you, Elizabeth! ¡Viva la locally-grown revolución!



Elizabeth with the sunchokes at Grassfed Gardens’ “Back 40” site

Full Share:

- Blueberries
- Cucumbers
- Sunflower Sprouts
- Summer Squash
- Basil
- Blackberries
- Spring Mix
- Radishes
- Carrots
- Garlic

Half Share:

- 8 Ball Zucchini
- Green & Jalapeno Pepper
- Kale or Chard
- Beets
- Basil
- Cherry Tomatoes
- Cucumber

What Grows Where:

DAWN GARDENS

kale, chard, basil, summer squash, blackberries, cherry tomatoes

GRASSFED GARDENS

sunflower sprouts

SIERRA VALLEY FARMS

spring mix, radishes

HANSEN FARM

carrots, 8 ball zucchini, beets

GREEN CEDAR FARM

blueberries

SWANN GARDENS

Tiger tomatoes

GREENVILLE HIGH SCHOOL

Peppers, jalapenos, cucumbers

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Bread Share Flavor:

3 Cheese & Walnut

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Cucumber Salad

...an East Indian-inspired spiced cucumber salad

INGREDIENTS

1/2 pound cucumbers	2 Tbsp yogurt	1/8 tsp turmeric
kosher salt	1 1/2 tsp mustard oil	1 T fresh lemon juice
1 Tbsp sesame seeds	2 Tbsp cilantro	1/8 to 1/4 tsp cayenne
1/2 tsp cumin seeds		

DIRECTIONS

Cut cucumber lengthwise in quarters. Slice off the seeds and discard, then cut into 1 1/2 inch lengths. Place in a colander, sprinkle on about 2 Tbsp kosher salt, and set over a bowl or in the sink to drain for 15 minutes. Meanwhile in a heavy skillet, dry roast the sesame seeds and cumin seeds until golden. Grind to a powder in coffee grinder or with mortar and pestle. Place in a small bowl and stir in the yogurt to make a paste. Rinse cucumbers with cold water and place in bowl with spice paste. Heat oil in small skillet and add the cayenne and turmeric. Pour over cucumbers and toss gently. Add lemon juice and toss, then set aside for 10 to 20 minutes to allow the flavors to blend. Just before serving, add the cilantro and 1/2 tsp salt and toss gently to mix.

Source: Mangoes & Curry Leaves: Culinary Travels Through the Great Subcontinent by Jeffrey Alford and Naomi Duguid

CROP Updates

Tomatoes — Cherry tomatoes are just starting to come on from the Dawn Gardens, complemented by a couple of Tiger tomatoes from Swann Gardens. Yeah tomato season!

Peppers — Green and jalapeno peppers are just starting to be harvested

by Dan Brown at Greenville High School. We've found that the hotness of jalapeno peppers can vary from pepper to pepper or plant to plant (we're not sure why), so err on the side of caution while cooking 'em up.

Snap Beans & Eggplant — Grassfed Gardens had an epic battle with deer breaking through fencing at their

Thompson Valley Ranch garden site early this summer. (And yes, it did involve Elizabeth running after a deer with a pocket knife at one point.) In the end, the deer were foiled, but not before they conducted some heavy pruning of the snap beans and eggplant. The plants are getting babied now, and hopefully they'll bounce back for a good harvest soon!

Green Smoothies

We are big fans of this amazingly easy way to eat greens. Take the basic smoothie concept—fruit, juice, maybe some yogurt—and then supercharge its nutrient value by adding a handful or two of greens. It's tasty, it's refreshing, and there's no pesky chewing required.

Let us say, we realize that not everyone is a fan of smoothies that involve leafy green vegetables. If you wrinkle your nose at the thought of green drinks, that's okay. Nobody's perfect. But we implore you to give them a shot. You'll thank us if you become a convert!

Though we *like* the taste of greens, it's interesting to note that their flavors mellow when mixed with fruit and other stuff in the blender. And the drinks are strangely satisfying - once you try one, you might end up craving them.

Our theory: green smoothies are what bubbles out of the fountain of youth!

Check out the HAH Facebook page for:

Tips on using RADISH GREENS in smoothies!

facebook.com/HighAltitudeHarvest

GREENS:

- * Spring Mix
- * Kale
- * Parsley
- * Spinach
- * Chard
- * Cilantro
- * Radish greens
- * Basil
- * Bok Choy
- * Mint
- * Mild mustard greens

OTHER FUN INGREDIENTS:

- * Almonds or walnuts
- * Peanut butter
- * Lime/lemon juice
- * Coconut oil
- * Peeled cucumber
- * Avocado
- * Coco powder
- * Honey, agave or maple syrup
- * Cooked sweet potato
- * And of course, any fruit you can think of!