



September 19, 2012 —

**Featured Grower:
Sierra Valley Farms**

Gary Romano is the visionary and muscle behind Sierra Valley Farms' success. At 5,000 feet elevation in Beckwourth, it's an unconventional altitude for a market vegetable farm. On more than one occasion we've heard Gary chuckle and say that he needs to have his head examined.

Don't let the easy going personality fool you though—Romano is a man on a mission. He is bound and determined to keep market farming alive in the Sierras, and we're happy to support him in that quest.

Diversity is a key part of Romano's strategy. Not only does he grow the food, he also leverages the farm to host events like Dinners in the Barn and the on-farm Romano's Farmers' Market.

Every Friday throughout the summer Romano's Farmers' Market is a destination for locals and tourists alike who load up on fresh produce, meats and cheeses. The market is so popular with vendors that Gary has a waiting list of farmers who would like to attend. It takes a farmer to put on a really great farmers' market!

You can catch last Romano's Farmers' Market of the season this

Friday, September 21st from 10am to 2:30pm. Get more info and directions at SierraValleyFarms.com.

Also unique about Sierra Valley Farms is a niche they identified early on: growing winter veggies in the summer. Many California climates are too hot to grow tender greens, which tend to go to seed—aka, bolt—in the heat. Gary's alpine location provides an ideal cool growing season for those crops (albeit a short one!).

What we love most about Gary is his intrepid determination to farm, and his refusal to be discouraged by failure. When a crop gets eaten by flea beetles, or succumbs to a frost, or germinates poorly, Gary doesn't let it get him down for long. Perhaps this is one of the keys to farming successfully—not taking Mother Nature's jabs personally.

Another thing we admire about Gary is his incessant quest to develop new crops, products and markets. One year a new quarter acre of asparagus will go in the ground, and the next he's working on fine tuning his bottled Bloody Mary mix. Early on he realized that his climate was perfect for growing horseradish, and SVF bottled Horseradish Mustard has been a staple of the farm's year-round sales ever since.

Keep an eye out for Gary's new book, scheduled to come out next spring: *Why I Farm: Risking it All for a Life on the Land*. We're waiting with bated breath!



Gary showing off one of his hoop houses
Photo by Quincy Natural Foods

Full Share:

- Green Peppers
- Jalapeno Peppers
- Cherry Tomatoes
- Carrots
- Garlic
- Spring Mix
- Lemon & Green Cucumbers
- Apple Pears
- Parsley
- Mizuna
- Apples

Half Share:

- Potatoes
- Slicer Tomatoes
- Summer Squash
- Apple Pears
- Carrots

What Grows Where:

DAWN GARDENS

summer squash, cherry tomatoes, green peppers, slicer tomatoes, apples, pears, garlic, parsley

GRASSFED GARDENS

mizuna

SIERRA VALLEY FARMS

spring mix, carrots

HANSEN FARM

carrots

HARMONY ACRES

potatoes

GREENVILLE HIGH SCHOOL

green bell peppers, jalapenos, green & lemon cucumbers

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Bread Share Flavor:

**Papas y Queso
(potatoes & cheese)**

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Carrot Basmati Rice

"Fragrant basmati rice sautéed with carrots, onions, fresh ginger, peanuts, and cilantro."

INGREDIENTS

1 cup basmati rice	1 teaspoon minced fresh ginger root
2 cups water	3/4 cup grated carrots
1/4 cup roasted peanuts	salt to taste
1 tablespoon margarine	cayenne pepper to taste
1 onion, sliced	chopped fresh cilantro



DIRECTIONS

Combine rice and water in a medium saucepan. Bring to a boil over high heat. Reduce heat to low, cover with lid, and allow to steam until tender, about 20 minutes. While rice is cooking, grind peanuts in a blender and set aside. Heat the margarine in a skillet over medium heat. Stir in the onion; cook and stir until the onion has softened and turned golden brown about 10 minutes. Stir in ginger, carrots, and salt to taste. Reduce heat to low and cover to steam 5 minutes. Stir in cayenne pepper and peanuts. When rice is done, add it to skillet and stir gently to combine with other ingredients. Garnish with chopped cilantro.

Source: by Sowmya at www.allrecipes.com

CROP Updates

Apple Pears — This week both Full and Half Shares are receiving what the Dawn Gardens calls "apple pears." As with many heirloom fruit trees, we don't know exactly what variety these are, but we know they're tasty. The "apple pears" will ripen a bit if left out at room temperature, but they shouldn't need much time. They're best eaten crisp, similar to an Asian pear.

Corn — To grower Kathy Tedford's utter dismay, the corn crop came to an abrupt end last week. She wrote a heartfelt note explaining that critters raided the corn patch just a day before she was set to harvest for the Full Shares. If all goes well though, we'll see another appearance of E Sheep Farms' crops in the early-November Grand Finale Share (which is sold out, but we hope to offer more next year!).

POTATO & HAM SOUP

"This is a delicious recipe for ham and potato soup that a friend gave to me. It is very easy and the great thing about it is that you can add additional ingredients, more ham, potatoes, etc and it still turns out great."

Ingredients

3 1/2 cups peeled and diced potatoes	1/2 teaspoon salt, or to taste
1/3 cup diced celery	1 tsp ground white or black pepper
1/3 cup finely chopped onion	5 tablespoons butter
3/4 cup diced cooked ham	5 tablespoons all-purpose flour
3 1/4 cups water	2 cups milk
2 tablespoons chicken bouillon granules	

Directions

Combine the potatoes, celery, onion, ham and water in a stockpot. Bring to a boil, then cook over medium heat until potatoes are tender, about 10 to 15 minutes. Stir in the chicken bouillon, salt and pepper. In a separate saucepan, melt butter over medium-low heat. Whisk in flour with a fork, and cook, stirring constantly until thick, about 1 minute. Slowly stir in milk as not to allow lumps to form until all of the milk has been added. Continue stirring over medium-low heat until thick, 4 to 5 min. Stir the milk mixture into the stockpot, and cook soup until heated through. Serve immediately.

Source: by ELLIE11 at www.allrecipes.com

MIZUNA TIPS

Here are some pointers for getting to know your mizuna:

It's Versatile. Just because it's popular in Japan doesn't mean this green is limited to Asian flavors. We threw a bunch into the filling for veggie enchiladas this weekend and it rocked.

Cook it Gently: This green doesn't need as much time on the heat as some other cooking greens. Throw it into whatever you're making at the last minute, and give it just a few minutes to wilt down.

Soba Noodle Salad with Mizuna: Check out our Facebook page for a link to this tasty recipe!

[facebook.com/HighAltitudeHarvest](https://www.facebook.com/HighAltitudeHarvest)