

THE CULTIVATOR

SEASON 25

NEWS OF THE WALTHAM FARMERS' MARKET

2015

Free Market Concerts

June 20: Broken Rose. Classic rock and Dead tunes.

June 27: Afrika Gente Duo. Latin jazz.

July 11: The Karolines. African song and dancing.

July 18: Solstice Sackbuts. Medieval and Renaissance music. (*Rain date July 25*)

August 1: Dave B and the Hot Shots. Jump blues, swing, R&B and jazz. (*Sept. 26*)

August 8: Outrageous Fortune. Acoustic early jazz and blues. (*Sept. 12*)

August 15: N.E. Centre for Promoting Indian Arts and Culture. Traditional Indian music and dance.

September 19: Moody Street String Band. Celtic, Scots and Yankee traditional music. (*October 10*)

October 3: None of the Above. A cappella octet.

All concerts begin at 11 a.m.

Sponsors: **Waltham Tourism Council, Waltham Cultural Council, The Merc, Charles River Canoe & Kayak, Doctors Express Waltham, Watertown Savings Bank, Waltham Local First, Brookline Bank, Allegra Waltham.**

2015 Vendors

Farmers: **Bedford Blueberry Goat Farm,** goat milk, cheese • **Burnshirt Valley Farm/Caledonia Farm,** Pork, beef, chicken, eggs, mushrooms • **C & C Lobsters & Fish,** lobster, fish • **Dick's Market Garden,** produce, herbs, potted plants • **Flats Mentor Farm,** Asian specialty produce • **Heavens Harvest Farm,** certified organic produce • **Mycoterra Farm,** mushrooms • **Pamuzinda Farm,** fruits, vegetables • **Smith's Country Cheese,** cheese, hamburger, eggs • **Soluna Garden Farm,** herbs, spices, teas • **Spring Brook Farm,** fruits, vegetables • **The Warren Farm & Sugarhouse,** maple sugar products

Baked Goods: Bread Obsession • Cookie Lady Treats • Galit's Treats With Love • Harriet's Bakery • Lyndell's Bakery • Roma's Bakery • Uyghur Bread

Specialty Foods: Boston Smoked Fish Co. • Brookie's Cookies for Dogs • El Camino • Cucina Aurora • Fior D'Italia • Halvah Heaven • Powerhouse Juice • El Recreo Coffee • Roll the Bones Barbecue • Samira's Homemade • Seasoned and Spiced • Zoll Cellars Winery

Crafts/Other: Brookfield Candle Co. • John J Crookes Photography • Dirty Boys Composting • Donna Dee's Watch City Soaps • Suzette Durso • MGreenstein Designs • Shayna Made Bags • Smiley Baby Hats & Esoterica Jewelry

PARTICIPANTS SUBJECT TO CHANGE



Sinikiwe "Nikki" Makarutsa of Pamuzinda Farm on her tractor.

From Zimbabwe to Zucchini

Growing up in colonial Rhodesia (now Zimbabwe), Sinikiwe "Nikki" Makarutsa and her first-grade classmates were each given a small plot of land and a tree to take care of in their agricultural science class.

"As long as you are from Zimbabwe, you're a farmer," she explains. "Not a professional, but a 'peasant' farmer. You stay in your village. There's no going into the city to go shopping."

Nikki grew up to become a seventh-grade teacher and in turn helped her own students learn to farm, growing corn and sweet potatoes behind the school to feed children who would otherwise have gone hungry.

She also sought to empower her students in other ways, urging the girls to report assaults and rapes, which were rampant, in part fueled by the myth that AIDS could be cured by having sex with a virgin. One of her students had been raped by her father, a prominent local military official.

When Nikki reported this, she herself was targeted by the military and had to flee the country in the middle of the night, leaving behind

her husband and children.

In the fifteen years since her escape, she has been joined by her family and resettled in Chelmsford, Massachusetts. At first she thought she would try to teach in this country, but she found the level of disrespect in the classroom—even evinced by her own children!—to be more than she wanted to deal with. So she began a new career, first as a certified nursing assistant, then, after additional schooling, as an LPN and finally an RN. She now works as a mental health nurse in Somerville.

But she missed farming. So, in the midst of raising her family, working and studying, she began looking for some land to cultivate. She received assistance from the New Entry Sustainable Farming Project (NESFP) and has been farming since 2004. Since 2009 she has rented seven acres in Littleton.

Nikki raises a variety of vegetables, including collard greens, mustard greens, cucumbers, squash, corn, pumpkins, watermelon, kale, lettuce and cabbage. She uses "dry planting" methods she learned in Zimbabwe and organic practices. ►

◀ She has help from her husband, who drives a van by day, and two part-time workers. Although none of her children have chosen to pursue farming (her daughters studied psychology and nursing), her 20-year-old son and members of his football team can be counted on to help plant for \$10 a row . . . and pizza.

It hasn't always been easy. Loans are hard to get. Good land was hard to find. The migrant workers Nikki used to hire had visa problems. Her new hoop house was destroyed by snow. And she also had to contend with the loss of her mother and seven of her nine siblings since 2005.

But she persists. "I love the air, the birds and being outdoors," she says. And she cites WFM's supportive customers and committee as another highlight. "They keep my spirit going."

Waltham is Nikki's only market, though she also sells through the NESFP CSA and gives crops to the Fishes & Loaves food pantry and her church. She also manages to run Rutendo Zimbabwe, a group which helps villagers with water filtration and education. In her "spare" time, she plays lawn tennis and goes to the gym. Still, it's the farm where she's happiest, which is why she named it Pamuzinda, meaning "at home" or "headquarters." Her smile, as she walks the field and shows off the tractor, shows that for Nikki, there's definitely no place like *pamuzinda!*



Nikki in the main field of Pamuzinda Farm in Littleton, Massachusetts.

Market Celebrates 25th Season

The Waltham Farmers' Market kicks off its 25th season on June 13. For the second year it will be at the corner of **School and Lexington Streets in the Government Center Lot**. There is on-site parking (accessible from Lexington Street) as well as convenient parking at the Central Square Parking Deck. The site is wheelchair-, stroller- and bike-accessible. (Look for special Bike to Market days throughout the season!) The market runs every Saturday,

9:30 a.m. to 2 p.m., rain or shine, through **November 7**.

Since 2011, SNAP (formerly known as "food stamps") customers have been able to use their benefits at the market. In 2012, WFM began a program of **matching SNAP purchases** up to \$10 per customer per week, resulting then in a total of \$4,895 in additional purchases free to those shoppers and also boosting farmers' sales. This season, the market will continue to match SNAP sales using generous funding from **Jones Partnership Fund First Parish in Waltham, Park Lodge Hotel Group and Watertown Savings Bank**. Additional market support comes from **Lincoln Property Co.**

In other news: **Leo Keightley**, the market's on-site manager since 2012, was given a Community Hero Award for his work. His efforts were especially heroic during the 2014 season, when he had to reconfigure vendor locations for the new site!

Condolences to **Frank Zoll** of Zoll Cellars Winery on the loss of his wife. Get well wishes to **Carol Smith** of Smith's Country Cheese, who will be out this season and greatly missed.

2014 Season Thank You's

Thank you . . . to our wonderful **vendors**, who make the market what it is. To the many performers, who add yet another incentive to attend the market. To our concert sponsors, **Waltham Cultural Council, Watertown Savings Bank, Doctors Express Waltham, Waltham Local First and Brookline Bank**. To **Waltham Fields Community Farm (WFCF), First Parish in Waltham and Watertown Savings Bank** for their support of the SNAP/EBT matching program. To the **Waltham/West Suburban Chamber of Commerce** for sponsoring our banners. To **Mayor Jeannette McCarthy and the Building Department**, for generously hosting the market. To the **Wires Department**, for putting up banners. To **Michelle Feeley of the Health Department** for keeping the market safe. To **Father Michael Nolan and St. Mary's Church**, for hosting vendor parking. To **Northland Development** for assistance with the transition to our new site. To our heroic market master, **Leo Keightley**, and to **Jim O'Brien**, who sets up and breaks down the market. To **Sara Minsky**, for set-up help. To **Amy Rothstein**, for graphics help. To **Mass Farmers' Markets**, for insurance. To **WFCF** for serving as our fiscal agent. Finally, thanks to our **loyal customers**, who have kept the market going strong for so many years! —**Martha Creedon, Elisse Ghitelman, Jennifer Rose, Marc Rudnick, Scott Shurr and Dan Taylor, Market committee**

THE CULTIVATOR, a publication of the **Waltham Farmers' Market**
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