



Live Earth Farm (Com)Post

A weekly newsletter for the Live Earth Farm CSA Community

21st Harvest Week

September 18th – 24th, 2002

Season 7

What's in the box this week:

Strawberries
Pears
Asian greens
Carrots
Chard
Garlic
Green beans
Lettuce
Onions
Mix of sweet peppers
Blue Peruvian potatoes
Radishes (Wednesday
only)
Spinach
Summer squash (few)
Tomatoes

Sweet corn coming
soon -- 2 weeks!!!

and if you have an extra-fruit share:

Strawberries, apples
and pears

The opportunity to leave the farm these past two weeks and take a break from its daily responsibilities not only left me recharged but also gave me a deep sense of appreciation for the commitment and dedication by everyone who works so hard every day to keep this farm alive. The food we receive from the land is linked to the human effort that goes into it. Since late winter we've been continuously preparing the earth, planting, caring for, and harvesting crops... like an on-going and ever-turning wheel. Now the time has come when nights are getting colder and days shorter. The first pumpkins are donning their colorful orange dresses, and some trees, like our river birches, are turning yellow. Twice a year time is in balance – the days are just as long as the nights. These events are known as Equinoxes, and mark the beginning of Spring and Fall respectively. In the Spring we celebrate the beginning of our planting season, and with the coming of Fall we acknowledge and celebrate* the land's generosity, and the harvest received from these plantings.

*Come join us at the farm this Saturday Sept. 21st, 3 - 9pm, for our annual celebration of the Fall Equinox! Walk the fields, pick strawberries, flowers, and the last of the raspberries, help press apples for cider and bake bread

in our wood-fired oven. There will be pony rides and story readings for the children. Marimba music will accompany us throughout the afternoon and into the evening. Kuzanga, a local and very popular 8-member marimba band, will surely delight everyone with their wonderful sounds and rhythms. Bring a dish for our traditional potluck, and we recommend a blanket to sit on and something warm to wear in the evening. With a small bonfire we will mark the beginning of the Fall season, and we can expect a beautiful harvest moonrise over Mt. Madonna to light up the night sky. Hope to see you all on Saturday!! - Tom

Crop Notes

Strawberries: Many of you have probably noticed a difference in the taste, shape and color of our strawberries this year. The reason is that we grew three different varieties instead of just our usual favorite, 'Seascape'. We wanted to compare other everbearing varieties with Seascape, to find one with larger foliage in order to protect the berries from sunburn, and with greater resistance to different leaf diseases. We selected two: Aromas and Diamante. The variety most people noticed as markedly different, in both color and taste, is Diamante. They are naturally paler than Seascapes, and although sweet, are not as flavorful as the other two. We will discontinue the Diamante next year but keep the Aromas. We always welcome your feedback -- this helps us in our selection process for future seasons.

Eggplant: Green eggplant??? Is Tom suddenly colorblind? Doesn't he know what eggplants are supposed to look like when they're ripe? Sorry I didn't warn you earlier, but it is not colorblindness, but curiosity – I wanted to try something new, which led me to plant all these different colored eggplant. They are not the regular dark purple Globe Eggplant, which perform poorly under our cooler coastal conditions. The kind of eggplant which we have had more luck with are the Asian types, which are more slender and long. What struck me when I opened the seed catalog is how many colors they come in! They can be white, green, magenta, yellowish/green, and purple. But rest assured you can use these colorful eggplants in just the same way as the more traditional purple varieties, so don't let the color fool you... they are ripe!!!! 🍆

*The rounded world is fair to see,
Nine times folded in mystery:
Though baffled seers cannot impart
The secret of its labouring heart,
Throb thine with Nature's throbbing breast,
And all is clear from east to west.*

- Ralph Waldo Emerson

Member to Member Forum

"Our Week with The Box," by fellow member Nicole Fravel of Willow Glen.

We are a family of two working adults who eat a vegetarian diet. Since we love to cook, weekend meals are ones that take longer to prepare. Weekday meals are either leftovers from the weekend or foods that are quick to prepare. We struggle to eat all of the contents of each box by the end of the week and have started to make some meals to keep in the freezer for later use. Lunches are usually leftovers or sandwiches, so I haven't included them in our diary.

Saturday – We ate leftovers made from some of the contents of last week's box. This is our usual M.O.

Sunday – Carrot-Ginger Vichyssoise* with Grilled Pepper Tapenade* spread on slices of French bread. For dessert, Cornmeal Cake with Strawberries* and whipped cream. Sounds very exotic and complicated, but is actually very easy to make. The cooking is not labor intensive and most of the food cooks while you do other things.

Monday – Jumbo pasta shells stuffed with greens and topped with walnut sauce*. Unlike Sunday's meal, this one did take a long time to cook. (It was Labor Day, so we had extra time!) It took both of us working together over an hour, then the pasta had to bake and rest (an *additional* hour). We ate more cake and strawberries for dessert.

Tuesday – Cooked the carrots, cilantro, and garlic from the box with some peppers from our garden and cauliflower from the store. Added some Indian spices and served it over rice for a quick and easy stir-fry. For dessert, we heated some of the cornmeal cake (it was getting a little dry.) Had some extra time, so I baked the beets and blanched the peas (in their pods) in prep for tomorrow's salad.

Wednesday – The main dish was a reprise (sounds better than leftovers!) of Monday's stuffed shells with a side salad of beets and peas tossed with minced onion, chives, rice wine vinegar, sesame oil, and freshly ground pepper. If you care what color your peas are when you eat them, don't mix them with the beets until you are ready to eat. Since dinner took all of 30 seconds to prepare and TV stations were still showing reruns and summer reality series, I decided to make some homemade spaghetti sauce with the tomatoes from the box. Not too bad – once I got past the peeling and seeding part! I put the sauce in the freezer for later use.

Thursday – We ate out. Actually this was our first time eating out since we started getting the boxes at the beginning of August!

Friday – We decided to grill the rest of the vegetables. (Toward the end of the week, we usually dump everything that is left into a new creation – sort of our version of the leftover casserole. One week it was pasta primavera. Another week it was a veggie frittata. This week, we grilled.) We had potatoes and carrots left from the box and more tomatoes and peppers from our garden. We grilled everything and served it over lettuce with a warm cilantro sauce* (using leftover cilantro and a little bit of onion from the box). The cilantro sauce was yummy. The vegetables were good, but were definitely not the best variety for grilling. And we learned that if you're going to grill potatoes, they must either be sliced fairly thin or boiled ahead of time.

At the end of the week, we still had one bunch of lettuce and two small carrots to use. We tossed them with some tomatoes from our garden, some olive oil, and balsamic vinegar to make a side salad accompanying Sunday's meal. 🍷

*recipes are on web version of this newsletter at <http://www.writerguy.com/deb/compost/2002/Nws21-2002.html#WeekWithBox>.

Live Earth Farm Calendar

| | |
|-------------|--|
| Sat. Sep 21 | <u>Fall Equinox Celebration</u> 3pm - 9pm |
| Sat. Oct 26 | <u>Halloween Pumpkin U-Pick</u> all day |
| Nov. 20/23 | (Weds/Sat) **Last box** |

Notes from Debbie's Kitchen

Have a recipe you'd like to share? Contact the newsletter editor.

A delightful tomato soup recipe submitted by member Sumana Reddy of Prunedale, and garlic storing tip from Mary Teter of Gilroy, who says she's seen a lot of it in the exchange box lately. - Debbie

Cream of Tomato Soup, Indian style

from Madhur Jaffrey's "World of the East Vegetarian Cooking" (with adaptations by Sumana's husband, Vikram) Serves 4 - 6

1 1/2 lbs. red-ripe tomatoes, chopped
1 tbsp. sliced lemon grass
1 tbsp. dried or fresh curry leaves (can only find in Bay Area Indian stores – has a wonderful aroma that's hard to substitute, but okay to omit if not available).
1-inch sliced fresh ginger
4 tbsp. unsalted butter or ghee
1/2 C heavy cream or milk
2 tbsp. white flour
2 1/2 C milk

1/2 tsp. ground roasted cumin seeds
pepper to taste
1/8 tsp. cayenne pepper
2 tsp. lime or lemon juice
1 tbsp. minced fresh cilantro

Combine the tomatoes, lemongrass, curry leaves, ginger, 1/2 tsp. salt and 1/2 cup water and bring to a boil. Cover, lower heat and simmer gently for 15 minutes. Put the tomatoes through a sieve (you should have about 2 cups of thick tomato juice). Bring this juice to a simmer and keep on a low heat. Melt the butter in a heavy saucepan. Add flour. Stir and cook the flour on low heat for 2 to 3 minutes. Do not let it brown. Pour in the hot tomato juice, stirring all the time. Add cream and 3/4 tsp. salt. Simmer and add rest of ingredients except cilantro. Serve garnished with cilantro. May serve cold. This recipe is very tolerant of changes in quantities or omission of flavoring ingredients.

Too-Much-Garlic Storage Idea

by CSA member Mary Teter

Peel cloves. Crush. On a large sheet of heavy-duty aluminum foil, spread crushed garlic in a square wafer of about 1/4-inch thickness. Using butter knife (so as not to puncture foil), gently make cross-hatching pattern, sized to suit your taste. Freeze on cookie sheet about 1/2 hour. Go over cross-hatching again if needed to make snapping frozen pieces off easier. Fold up foil to protect garlic, keeping flat as possible to keep air out. Put this in ziploc-type bag or other container to keep garlic smell and taste out of everything else in freezer. Voila, now you have ready-crushed garlic at your fingertips when in a hurry! Organic, to boot!

Note: You can do the same with ginger, julienned or minced, so that that three-quarters of a root you didn't use last night won't die before you can get to it again!