



Live Earth Farm (Com)Post

A weekly newsletter for the Live Earth Farm CSA Community

13th Harvest Week

July 2nd – 8th, 2003

Season 8

What's in the standard share:

Fruit:

Strawberries

Veggies:

Beets

Red cabbage

Carrots

Chard

Chinese (garlic) chives

Fennel

Garlic

GREEN BEANS!

Lettuce

Potatoes

Spinach

Summer squash

next week: cauliflower
and broccoli

and if you have an extra-fruit option:

Strawberries and raspberries (cherry tomatoes and plums soon!)

Help us increase our Summer Membership: This is a great time for enjoying the flavors and bountiful diversity of crops the summer season has to offer. With this bounty in mind, we would like to reach our goal of 350 members during the month of July. Our community of members has just reached 300 and although we reach out through conventional venues such as local newspapers, farm events, displays, fliers and brochures, it is through your support in the form of sharing your experience as CSA members with friends, in your neighborhood, at work, schools and community organizations that most people find out about our CSA program. I thank you for helping us in our outreach efforts, and ask for your continued support in order for us to reach our membership goal this season. As I have mentioned in the past, our CSA depends on this cooperative relationship in order to operate sustainably. Remember, you are not simply paying for healthy, locally-grown produce -- it is much more than that. You are also supporting sustainable agriculture (a form of farming which aims to achieve a more harmonious relationship with the earth) by buying directly from a farm that stewards its land. You are also supporting social sustainability, because we strive to provide our workers with fair wages, a healthy work environment, and an opportunity to live decent lifestyles. You are also supporting education. Last year we had approximately 300 children visit the farm, and this year in addition to multiple school visits, we are expanding our education program by working together with a local non-profit organization (CAFF - Community Alliance with Family Farmers) to support their Farm-to-School program. And every year we sponsor interns, who live and work and learn on the farm, hopefully to some day take what they learned and be involved in sustainable agriculture or organic farming. And we will continue to have our children's mini-camp, seasonal farm events, and workshops. It is important to promote this multifaceted connection between your CSA membership and all of the above, not to mention the food you consume and the land and the people who grew it. We hope you can help us by reaching out in your community and promoting our CSA, sharing with others what you enjoy by being a member of Live Earth Farm. Thank you, and let us know if there is any way we can participate. – Tom

"And forget not that the earth delights to feel your bare feet and the wind longs to play with your hair."

- Kahlil Gibran

Kid's Corner

Question posed by young Connor, from Willow Glen, "How do seeds start to grow when they are so hard on the outside?" That is such a good question since we can't see seeds once they are planted in the soil. Most plants ensure their survival from one season to the next by wrapping all their growing instructions and some food (to get them started) into a tough armored capsule. This capsule will only open if the conditions outside allow the plant to grow healthy and strong. Most of the time when we plant a seed, we plant it into moist soil. It is the water in the soil that the seed will absorb to soften the tough seed coat. Everything inside the seed will wake up and stretch, pushing against the seed coat. The first plant part to erupt from the seed is the root, searching for water and food in the soil. If things feel right, the first leaves will push upwards through the soil surface to catch the light from the sun, to turn into food. For a seed to grow, not only will it need water, but also all the other things we humans need to grow healthy bodies, such as air, warmth, light, and good food. To see for yourself how a seed starts growing, try putting a bean or sunflower seed between moist paper towels (remember to keep it moist!). This way you can peek and watch for yourself what normally goes on below ground. It's like a little miracle of nature, to see a plant being born from a tiny seed.

Next week: "How do carrots grow legs and look like an octopus?" 🐙

(over for more!)

Crop of the Week

Green beans. On Friday last week we started picking our first green beans of the season, which adds another variant to our seasonal concerto. Green beans are one of our staple crops, grown in succession (planted every 7 to 10 days, weather permitting). We plant 8 to 10 times, and in a good year we are still offering them come Thanksgiving! Unlike most fibrous commercial green beans, the Blue Lake variety we grow is picked tender, crunchy and slightly sweet. Different from most dried beans (which require a long, warm growing season), the 'snap' or 'green' beans grow best in moderate, cooler climates like ours. The green bean is native to Central America. Fossil seeds found in Mexico date back to 5400 BC. In the Americas, beans are traditionally grown among the corn, and supposedly French Huguenot refugees in Britain were the first to grow green beans in the 1500s, hence the expression "French" bean. Although green beans are not as high in protein as their dried cousins, they are a good source of vitamin A and C, as well as dietary fiber. My favorite and simplest way to prepare them is to steam them a few minutes and toss them with butter, a little salt, and chopped chives or parsley. 🌱

Goat Cheese Redux

Regarding the goat cheese we talked about in last week's newsletter (if you missed it, remember: our newsletters are all online), it is important to know that the chevre is made from raw (un-pasteurized) milk (the ricotta is heated above pasteurization temperatures in the process of being made though). Also, Lynn (who makes the cheese) performed a test to be sure the cheese would stay cold at pick-up locations, and we are pleased to report that, after more than 10 hours left outdoors in the middle of last week's heat wave, the inside temperature of the test cooler was only 45°F and both cheese samples were still frozen solid. 🌱

Ordering Almonds or Goat Cheese

In both cases, contact the seller directly to place your order and to pay (do not order through Live Earth Farm). We will deliver your order (usually) the following week with your share.

From *Anderson Almonds*, a certified organic, small, family-owned and operated farm, you can get almonds or almond butter. Almonds are available raw, roasted, or roasted and salted. Almond butter comes in 15 oz. jars. Prices: 5 lbs. almonds + 1 jar almond butter, \$32; Almonds only (5 lbs.), \$25. Almond butter only, \$10, or a 6-pak of jars for \$32. A case (25 lbs.) of almonds (raw only) is \$120. Contact Mele (rhymes with 'jelly')

Anderson at (209) 667-7494 or go to their website at www.andersonalmonds.com.

From *Summer Meadows Farm*, just across the Pajaro Valley from Live Earth Farm, you can get raw goat milk chevre or ricotta, made fresh then frozen, and delivered (frozen) and left in a cooler at your pick-up site. Prices: either cheese is \$6 for a half-pound, or get a half-pound a week for 4 weeks for \$24. Supply is somewhat limited. Contact Lynn Selness at (831) 345-8033 to place your order, then mail your check to Summer Meadows Farm, 405 Webb Road, Watsonville, CA 95076.

Notes from Debbie's Kitchen

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

I have been saving this green bean recipe since the beginning of the year. Submitted by Kathy Keenan of Los Gatos, she says, "children love these almost as much as french fries – no kidding!" - Debbie

Crispy Green Beans

by Kathy Keenan

1 to 2 lbs green beans
olive oil
lots of chopped fresh garlic
sea salt

Arrange the green beans in a single layer on baking sheets. Drizzle with olive oil and coat the beans. Sprinkle with garlic and sea salt to taste. Bake 40 to 45 minutes in a 375 degree oven. They come out looking ugly, but they are delicious!

Warm Red Cabbage Salad with

Pecans from Vegetarian Cooking for Everyone, by Deborah Madison serves 4 to 6

1 garlic clove, finely chopped
1 tbsp. sherry vinegar
3 tbsps. olive oil
1 red onion, quartered and thinly sliced
1 small red cabbage, about 1 1/4 pounds, quartered and thinly sliced
Salt and freshly milled pepper
3 oz. crumbled goat cheese or mild feta
1 red apple, quartered and thinly sliced
1/4 C pitted and chopped Kalamata olives
1 tbsp. each chopped parsley and marjoram
1/2 C pecans or walnuts, toasted

Heat the garlic, vinegar and oil in a wide skillet, add the onion, and cook for 30 seconds. Add the cabbage, season with 1/2

tsp. salt, and cook over high heat, tossing constantly with tongs. When the leaves begin to soften and change from red to pink, remove from the heat. Add the remaining ingredients and toss just enough to combine them, then remove from the heat. Season with plenty of pepper and serve warm.

Re: toasting the nuts (tip from Debbie)
If you have a toaster oven, I've discovered the quickest and easiest way to toast nuts is to make a little tray out of aluminum foil, scatter the nuts in it, then literally 'toast' them (using the toast button or setting) for a few minutes. Warning: nuts can go from toasted to burnt really quickly, so keep a close eye on them! I've found that pecans toast quicker than walnuts, because they are sweeter. If you don't have a toaster oven, you can do this in a moderate-heat regular oven.

Live Earth Farm Calendar

(see calendar on website for more detailed info)

Aug 8, 9, 10 Children's Mini Camp
Friday evening to noon Sunday

Sat. Sep 20 Fall Equinox Celebration
3pm - 9pm with the *Banana Slug String Band!*

Sat. Oct 26 Halloween Pumpkin Palooza
all day the *Banana Slug String Band will play here too!*