



# Live Earth Farm (Com)Post

A weekly newsletter for the Live Earth Farm CSA Community

1<sup>st</sup> Harvest Week

March 15<sup>th</sup> – 21<sup>st</sup>, 2004

Season 9

## What's in the box this week:

### Fruit:

Apples

### Veggies:

Baby beets

Red cabbage

Carrots

Green garlic

Kale/chard stir-fry mix

Lettuce

Young onions

Potatoes

Rutabagas

Spinach

Thyme

Turnips

(Remember, "Extra  
Fruit option" doesn't  
start until May!)

(over for more!)

First a warm welcome to all new members who are joining us for the first time. Cooking and eating in rhythm with the seasons may at first take some getting used to, however the flavors, nutrition and freshness of our harvests we hope will inspire your culinary and eating habits. It is wonderful to see so many returning members who have danced the seasonal cycle with us before. Welcome back! It is in great part due to your commitment and support that we are now starting our 9th farming season. As a farmer, the beginning of every season is a reminder that growing food rests on a foundation of trust. By planting seeds and transplanting little tomato, lettuce and broccoli seedlings into freshly prepared spring soil I realize how much farming rests on a conviction that nature, no matter how unpredictable, provides us with sustaining nourishment. As we begin this season, I hope the food we grow will in a small part contribute to your experiencing a deeper connection with nature and her cycles of creation and renewal, and most of all give you joy as you prepare and eat her nourishing gifts. – Tom

*"Earth, Water, Air and Fire  
combined to make this food.  
Numberless beings gave their  
lives and labor that we may  
eat. May we be nourished that  
we may nourish life."*

- Joan Halifax

## What's Up on the Farm

With all this wonderful warm weather, it almost seems that someone must have had the start of the CSA season marked on their celestial weather calendar. The farm has sprung to life, and walking through the fields is a feast for the senses. The fruit trees have burst into bloom... pink, white, and yellow against the backdrop of a lush, green, winter cover crop and a radiant blue sky. The air is filled with smells of freshly plowed soil, and near the plum trees one is engulfed in an invisible cloud of sweet perfume. The sound of birds fills the air, waking me well before sunrise, and as I inspect the newly planted field of broccoli I am lured by brilliant red dots poking out from underneath the strawberry plants. Spring has truly arrived when I can bite into the first fully ripe juicy strawberry. I can hear the craving as you read these lines. Most of the berries are starting to turn color and many are half green and red, so expect the first strawberries, weather permitting, in the next week or so. We will place them into your shares as soon as we have enough for everyone to get a basket or more. 🍓

## Crop Notes

### Turnips, Rutabaga, and Green Garlic.

Two related root crops that need an introduction are turnips and rutabagas. Both have overwintered in our fields and are flavorful and sweet. They both belong to the mustard family and trace their roots to colder climates in Russia and Scandinavia. Turnips are 2 to 3 inches in diameter, firm, smooth and white with a purple top. Rutabagas also called "Swede Turnips" are larger and have a rougher look. Don't be turned off by their appearance! I like to peel them, cut them into cubes and either bake them or steam and mash them – delicious if combined with potatoes and

## Live Earth Farm 2004 Calendar

(see calendar on website for more detailed info)

Sat. May 15	<u>Open Farm Day</u>
Sat. June 19	<u>Summer Solstice Celebration</u> field tours 2 – 5 pm celebration 5 – 9 pm
July 30, 31, Aug 1	<u>Children's Mini Camp</u> Friday evening to noon Sunday
Sat. Sept. 25	<u>Fall Equinox Celebration</u> 3 – 9 pm
Sat. Oct 23	<u>Halloween Pumpkin Palooza</u>

carrots. Check out Debbie's recipes both in the newsletter and in the recipe database on our website.

Green garlic (not to be confused with leeks!) also known as the 'stinking rose,' is indispensable in any kitchen. The regular bulb garlic you are most familiar with is harvested and dried in about 3 months, at the beginning of summer. Green garlic, on the other hand, is immature garlic which is harvested now through May, when its flavor is more delicate and sweet. Green garlic is almost indistinguishable in appearance from leeks - lots of green stalk with a slightly bulbous white or rose-streaked root end. Over the course of the next two months you will be able to observe the individual cloves maturing among many onion-like layers. Green garlic has a very aromatic, mild, long flavor, blends beautifully with other vegetables, and makes excellent purees, soups, sauces and fillings for pasta. 🌱

## Notes from Debbie's Kitchen

Have a recipe you'd like to share? Contact me at [deb@writerguy.com](mailto:deb@writerguy.com) or 408.288.6469. (Visit the recipes link on our website for a comprehensive list of recipes 'by key ingredient' (pictures too!). Includes recipes from newsletters back to 1998.)

*Aaah, it is good to be back! And earlier than ever this year, although with the current 'heat wave' it feels like June, not March! Tom's only partly right about turnip/rutabaga recipes being on the website... I have some for turnips, but this is the first time he's grown rutabagas. I've done some experimenting as well as 'rooting' about in cookbooks for promising ideas, and am happy to share with you what I've learned. - Debbie*

### Debbie's Rutabaga Info

There is really not a lot of info out there about these babies! Very few recipes and not a lot of variation. Most cookbooks don't even mention them; I suppose these humble roots are just not flashy enough for today's eye-candy cookbooks. Ah well. The good news though is that the rutabagas in your share are way more flavorful than those in the supermarket, because they are fresh harvested, not waxed and stored for months. Just to see what they tasted like all on their own, I peeled, cubed and steamed some. Tasted 'em just like that – nothing else added. I am happy to report to you they have a beautiful yellow color, and a (surprise!) sweet, nutty taste. Not bitter, not harsh. That's why they go so well mashed with carrots and sweet potatoes, as Tom mentioned. Or try cubed, steamed rutabaga together with tender steamed carrots and peas, maybe with a little butter and salt. The colors are lovely. Enjoy the simplicity of it!

Oops, you probably want to know how long it takes to steam rutabagas. In a pressure cooker, half-inch dice took only 4 minutes over high pressure; maybe a minute more if you want to mash them. Or if you don't have a pressure cooker, cover 1" dice with cold water in a pot, bring to a boil, reduce heat and cook about 20 min.

I actually also like rutabagas raw – peel and cut them into finger-sized sticks and dip them in mayonnaise or your favorite veggie dipping sauce.

Those are just my 'simple' ideas. Here's a fancier recipe I used the end of last season, but at the time I focused it on turnips and used original recipe quantities (for serving 8!). What I find interesting is that the cook who submitted this recipe called rutabagas 'savory'... maybe when they're roasted the effect is different than when steamed?

### Roasted Root Vegetables Scented with Apple and Mustard

from "Your Organic Kitchen", by Jesse Cool modified slightly; to serve 2 to 3

1 C apple cider or juice  
1/3 C fruity white wine (like Gewürztraminer)  
2 tsp. smooth Dijon mustard  
1 tbsp. butter  
about 1 1/2 lbs root vegetables, in our case, carrots, turnips and rutabagas, peeled and cut into 1/2" cubes  
Salt and freshly ground black pepper

In a saucepan, reduce the cider, wine and mustard over high heat to 1/2 C. Whisk in the butter and pour over the vegetables, tossing to coat. Season with salt and pepper, and place in a single layer in a roasting pan in a preheated 375 degree oven. Roast 1 hour or so, or until the vegetables are lightly browned and tender. Stir 3 or 4 times during roasting to promote browning on all sides.

### Roasted Potatoes with green garlic and thyme

(this is what I would do anyway!)

Wash and scrub well (but do not peel) a bunch of potatoes. Leave whole if small, or cut into chunks. Finely chop up 1 or more stalks of green garlic (depending on how big they are) – use only the white and light green parts. Strip tiny thyme leaves from a couple sprigs of thyme. Preheat your oven to 375 degrees. Toss potatoes with a little olive oil to coat, spread in one layer in a baking dish, scatter minced green garlic and thyme over all, then sprinkle to taste with salt and pepper. Roast 45 minutes to

1 hour, shaking pan occasionally and checking for doneness.

### Baby Beets

I talked to someone on the phone recently who said beets always tasted like 'dirt' to her. I'm hoping she'll try Tom's baby beets and see if her opinion of them improves!

Trim off greens leaving about 1/2" of stalk attached to root. Wash/scrub well (to get all that dirt off!). In a pressure cooker, these small beets will cook in 10 – 12 minutes over high pressure; boiling will take longer... 20 to 30 minutes. They should pierce easily with a knife when done. Allow to cool enough to handle, then slice off the tops, and slip off the skins (it's real easy; they just sloop right off!) and either leave whole or cut in half. Melt a little butter in a sauce pan, add cooked beets and swirl around to coat, then sprinkle with salt to taste and serve. See if they don't taste good!

### Hot Salad

This may sound less appealing now that the weather is warm, but keep it in mind. The only reason I call it a 'salad' is because I'd make it in the wintertime when I didn't have any lettuce but still wanted a plate of something green, or because it was cold out and I didn't want a cold salad! But this is just as easily served as a side dish rather than a salad. You can call it something else if you like!

This recipe will work well with any number of winter greens, including the 'kale/chard stir-fry mix' in this week's box. Normally you'd wash the greens and strip them from their stems, then chop, but the stir-fry mix, if it is 'baby' enough, probably only needs to be washed (and maybe chopped). The stems are probably tender enough to eat. Anyway, drop greens into boiling salted water for 2 to 3 minutes. Drain well, then place on a (salad) plate, drizzle with olive oil, squeeze on a goodly amount of lemon juice, and top with freshly grated parmesan.