



# The Weekly (Com)Post

A newsletter for the Live Earth Farm CSA Community

13<sup>th</sup> Harvest Week

June 7<sup>th</sup> – June 13<sup>th</sup>, 2004

Season 9

## What's in the standard share:

### Fruit:

Strawberries

### Veggies:

Basil

Broccoli

Carrots

Cucumber

Greens (chard, kale or collard),

Lettuce

Green onions

Red radicchio

Summer squash

Stir-fry mix

## and if you have an extra-fruit option:

1 basket of golden raspberries OR black-berries and 3 baskets of strawberries

(over for more)

Heirlooms and Seed Saving. We typically harvest fruits and vegetables before they complete their lifecycle and produce seeds. The edible parts: roots, shoots, leaves, flowers and fruits are harvested before the plant reaches full maturity. Unfortunately, as a vegetable farmer my focus is on growing vegetables for food, and I end up not saving my own seeds. Every year (mostly in the winter) I look through tons of catalogs to choose my seeds for the upcoming season. For thousands of years our ancestors saved seeds – a critical step in assuring food self-sufficiency. Historically, humans selected and improved a huge diversity of vegetable varieties by the simple act of selecting seeds for replanting.

In this country we are blessed by a cornucopia of vegetable varieties as immigrants brought their cherished vegetable seed with them when they came. Seeds provided them a living reminder of their past and ensured continued enjoyment of foods from the old country. Not until recently though have some of these "family heirloom varieties" been available commercially.

I like to experiment with heirloom vegetables since they carry flavors, colors and shapes not found in commercial hybrids. Although they usually yield less or are more difficult to pick/handle/grow, many heirlooms – especially tomatoes – have become very popular. Over the season you'll find heirlooms in your share such as Magda, a mid-eastern, light green, bottle-shaped, thin-skinned summer squash, or the Italian ribbed type called Romanesco (Debbie has pictures of these in her recipe database), or heirloom varieties of radicchio, peppers, tomatoes, lettuces, broccoli, and potatoes. Alas over the last decade small seed companies have been going out of business due to either consolidation or to multinational companies' interest in controlling the genetic pool of seeds (and replacing them with more profitable hybrids and patented varieties). Like other natural resources we take for granted, we somehow believe that seeds will always be available. Seed saving is another item to add to our already long list of challenges to achieving sustainable farming. In the past, being self-sufficient was a way of life, and saving seeds was part of it. In the future we need to support efforts by organizations dedicated to collecting and distributing heirloom seeds. As farmers we may need to become seed savers to avoid losing important vegetable varieties, and, even more importantly, to continue to have access to an ample and diverse non-genetically modified seed supply. – Tom

*"Every being has at least three rights: the right to exist, the right to habitat, and the right to fulfill its role in the ever-renewing process of nature."*

- Thomas Berry

## Summer Solstice Celebration coming soon!

*Mark Your Calendars: Saturday June 19<sup>th</sup>* we celebrate the solstice, the beginning of summer. Join us on the farm to celebrate with music, food, games, a bonfire and much more for our 9<sup>th</sup> Summer Solstice Celebration. Don't miss it! We will have a lot of surprises and new things to show you and your family. Everyone can run around, pick berries and flowers, and the little ones get to ride Peanut our pony, explore this year's new straw bale castle, check out the baby goats, and help us plant our pumpkin patch! Kuzanga Marimba will again be playing music for us. Bring a dish to share for our traditional potluck (read Debbie's note on this, below), a sweater, maybe a blanket to picnic on, instruments, stories... but most importantly bring yourselves! 🐾

### Live Earth Farm 2004 Calendar

(see calendar on website for more detailed info)

Sat. June 19	<u>Summer Solstice Celebration</u> field tours 2 – 5 pm celebration 5 – 9 pm <i>Kuzanga Marimba returns!</i>
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 <i>with The Banana Slug String Band!</i>
Sat. Oct 23	<u>Halloween Pumpkin Palooza</u>

## Important Potluck Request

Since some members of our CSA community have food allergies and other limitations about the food they eat, it would greatly help if everyone labeled their dishes as to whether they contain wheat (or are gluten free), dairy, nuts or nut oils. A label indicating whether a dish is vegan or vegetarian would also help for our veggie-eating-only members. We will try to have cards and a pen handy so that you can label your dish when you arrive if you didn't do so beforehand. Thanks! - Debbie 🌱

## New pick-up site in Sunnyvale!

Yes folks, it has finally happened! We are starting a new pick-up site on our Wednesday route, due to the request of many in the Los Altos/Cupertino/Sunnyvale/Santa Clara area. The new location is about halfway between 280 and 101, off Saratoga-Sunnyvale Road from 280 (which is Mathilda if you're coming from 101). The first pick-up at this location will be Wednesday June 23<sup>rd</sup> (2 weeks from now). If you wish to switch pick-up locations, please call or email Debbie at the farm. She can make the switch and give you the directions and details. Feel free to tell others about this, and we'll try to update our website with the new info as soon as possible. 🌱

## CSA Cookbooks for sale

We still have 10 copies of the new CSA cookbook (which came out last year) entitled Recipes from America's Small Farms – Fresh Ideas for the Season's Bounty. This book is organized well – it starts with 'basic techniques' and 'basic recipes' followed by chapters sorted by families of produce such as 'luscious leaves,' 'seeds and pods,' 'roots and tubers' etc. and has a comprehensive resource list and index at the end. It includes recipes and stories from several CSAs across the country (including ours!), as well as from farmers and chefs dedicated to cooking with organic and locally grown seasonal fruit and vegetables. If you're interested in getting one of these cookbooks, send a check to Live Earth Farm [address in margin, below] for \$12 (it sells for \$17 at the bookstore!). We'll put it in an envelope with your name on it and deliver it to your pick-up location the following week. Be sure to note on your check that it is for the cookbook. 🌱

## Notes from Debbie's Kitchen

Have a recipe you'd like to share? Contact me at deb@writerguy.com or 408.288.9469.

(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.)

*Don't miss the Summer Solstice Celebration! It is worth the trip, even if you have to drive 'over the hill' from San Jose (like I do!). Okay, let's see... what've I got this week? How 'bout another member-submitted recipe plus a few from my collection? – Debbie*

### Korean Kale

from a recipe member Sumit Sen found in Sunset Magazine "I modified it slightly by adding chile flakes and reducing the soy," says Sumit.

1 bunch kale  
1 tbsp. soy sauce  
1-2 tbsp. Asian sesame oil  
1/2 tsp. chile flakes

Remove stems, chop kale into 1.5 inch strips. Add to boiling water and cook for 4 minutes until just tender but still slightly crunchy. Drain and cool. Squeeze water out of kale and then add remaining ingredients. Mix and serve.

### Sweet-and-Sour Radicchio

from an undated Bon Appetit clipping  
serves 6

2 tbsp. unsalted butter  
2 tbsp. olive oil  
1 lg. onion, thinly sliced [or equivalent in smaller farm onions!]  
2 tbsp. sugar  
1/2 C apple cider vinegar

2 lg. heads radicchio cored, each cut into 8 wedges [just halve the recipe if you only have one head of radicchio]  
1/3 C raisins  
1 1/2 tsp. salt  
1/2 tsp. ground black pepper  
2 tbsp. toasted pine nuts

Melt butter with oil in heavy large skillet over medium-high heat. Add onion and sugar. Sauté until onion is lightly browned, about 7 minutes. Add vinegar; stir to blend. Add radicchio, raisins, salt and pepper. Cook until radicchio is just wilted, about 5 minutes. Transfer to serving dish; sprinkle with pine nuts.

### Chilled zucchini-mint soup

from an undated SJ Merc. News clipping  
serves 6

1 tbsp. butter  
1 C diced onion  
4 C sliced zucchini  
1 C chicken broth, vegetable broth, or water  
1/3 C chopped fresh mint leaves, plus sprigs of mint for garnish  
1/2 tsp. salt  
2 1/2 C buttermilk

In a medium-size saucepan, melt butter over medium-high heat. Add onion and sauté until softened, 3 to 5 minutes. Add zucchini and broth. Cover and simmer 10 to 15 minutes, until zucchini is soft. Remove from heat and cool slightly. Process soup in

a blender or food processor until smooth. [remember: hot stuff in a blender or food processor can 'explode' as the heat expands rapidly, so be sure to cool adequately before doing this!]. Add chopped mint and salt; process to mix. Pour soup into a large bowl; stir in buttermilk. Chill soup, covered, in refrigerator for several hours. Serve chilled, garnished with mint sprigs. Note: the soup must be eaten the day it is prepared or the bright green color will be lost.

### Cucumber Agua Fresca

Bon Appetit, May 2003. 8 servings

4 1/2 C coarsely chopped seeded and peeled cucumbers (about 4 medium)  
4 C cold water  
2 C ice cubes  
1 C sugar  
2/3 C fresh lime juice  
2 large pinches of salt

Combine all ingredients (in 2 batches) in blender and blend until sugar dissolves and mixture is smooth but slushy, about 2 minutes. Serve in tall glasses over ice. [Note: I find sugar doesn't dissolve in cold water well; I recommend bringing 1 C of the water to a boil and dissolving the sugar in that (this way the sugar stays in suspension), and then either cooling it down before blending, or substitute more ice for the remaining water when blending. – Debbie]