



# The Weekly (Com)Post

A newsletter for the Live Earth Farm CSA Community

17<sup>th</sup> Harvest Week

July 5<sup>th</sup> – 11<sup>th</sup>, 2004

Season 9

## What's in the standard share:

### Fruit:

Strawberries

### Veggies and herbs:

"Holey" arugula

Basil

Carrots

Green beans

Lettuce

Onions

English peas

Stir-fry mix

Summer squash

Potatoes next week!

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

Strawberries, peaches, and a bag of apricots and plums

(over for more)

Notes from the field. The sun is setting, I take a last walk around the farm to make sure all the water is shut off, check on the goats and make a mental note that the winter squash is not germinating evenly. I have the suspicion that the blackbirds and field pigeons I have spotted may be the reason; they love to peck on germinating seeds. As I walk down the hill through the golden raspberries, I see the plants are full with green berries. In a couple of weeks we'll start with the main harvest, and everyone should be getting a basket in their share. The peaches and apricots glow orange, red and yellow in the evening light, and like a kid in the candy store I can't resist biting into one more juicy warm peach before day's end. Both the Red and

Crest Haven peaches are peaking in ripeness right now. In another two weeks we'll have white peaches, and in early

*"Run from what's profitable and comfortable  
If you drink those liqueurs, you'll spill  
The spring water of your real life"*

Rumi

August my personal favorites – the O'Henrys - will make their appearance. This year the trees are healthy and thanks to the warm weather in March they set a lot of fruit. The apricots, although they always look a bit rough and freckled, have a wonderful flavor. We grow Blenheims, which are probably the best tasting of all apricots. Their season is short, and growing them near the coast is tricky since they thrive in warmer and drier climates like Gilroy and Hollister. If anyone has time to can or make jam call us: over the next few weeks we'll most likely have left-over boxes of peaches and apricots available for a good price. But where are the tomatoes??? We picked our first three lugs last weekend, and within a couple of weeks there should be a steady supply for everyone! – Tom

## Crop of the Week

A little later than usual, but we are starting to pick green beans this week. 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. Being a legume, green beans are a great rotation crop, as they allow the soil to rest in the summer while at the same time generating an economic return. Although green beans are relatively easy to grow, most farmers in this area avoid growing them because of the high labor cost involved in picking them. Commercially grown green beans (the tougher and more fibrous varieties) are harvested mechanically, and that is why they are cheaper. 🌱

## Live Earth Farm 2004 Calendar

(see calendar on website for more detailed info)

July 30, 31,  
Aug 1

Children's Mini Camp (sold out!)  
Friday evening to noon Sunday

Sat. Sept. 25

Fall Equinox Celebration  
3 – 9 pm

with *The Banana Slug String Band!*

Sat. Oct 23

Halloween Pumpkin Palooza

## Important Pick-up Protocol Announcement! (repeat from last week)

Now that we have a larger diversity of fruit we ask everyone to *please read the pick-up list and **only** take the quantity and type of fruit specified beside your name.* Please refrain from taking more (or something different) than has been indicated, since this causes another member to be short their allotted amount. Your cooperation will keep this wonderfully functioning honor system working for all of us.

– Thank you 🐾

## Membership Drive (repeat from last week)

We can really use your help. CSA shares are still available, and so we would like to increase membership if possible. Please continue to spread the word and let friends, neighbors, co-workers know about our CSA program. We try to always make brochures available in the inside back pocket of your pick-up site binder, so feel free to take a few to give out, or call us and we can send you a flyer to post in your neighborhood's local shop or bulletin board. 🐾

## Notes from Debbie's Kitchen

Have a recipe you'd like to share? Contact me at [deb@writerguy.com](mailto:deb@writerguy.com) or 408.288.9469.

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.

*Inundated with basil? Aside from freezing it or making pesto, there are few dishes that use as much quantity of basil as we've been getting each week (although I sure as heck hope we get it when the fresh tomatoes come in....!) Anyway, I was talking to a neighbor this morning, and she told me how she dries the bounty of basil she gets from her own garden. So I'll pass on that tidbit, plus (of course!) some green bean recipes and more. – Debbie*

### Drying fresh basil

My neighbor, with her own backyard garden, passed on her technique for drying fresh basil (and I am trying it as we speak!): simply pluck the fresh leaves from the stem (make sure they are dry, not wet) and place them very loosely in a colander. Place in a warm dry place, and toss the leaves every day until they're dry, then crumble and store in a jar.

In a book of mine called "Making and Using Dried Foods" by Phyllis Hobson, the author says, "Basil leaves must be dried quickly to prevent mold from forming. To dry outdoors, arrange leaves side by side on trays and place in a well-ventilated place out of direct sunlight. Dry until leaves are brittle enough to crumble, about 1 to 2 days."

I think, armed with the above info you'll be well on your way to drying your own basil!

### Green Beans with sesame-miso dressing (from an undated SJ Merc clipping) serves 4

1 lb. green beans  
2 tbsp. white sesame seeds (with hulls), toasted until fragrant in a dry skillet over medium heat  
4 tbsp. red miso  
1 1/2 tbsp. sugar  
1 tbsp. mirin

Chop or snap beans into 1 3/4" lengths.

Cook, covered, in lightly salted boiling water until barely tender. Rinse in cold water and drain. Make the dressing: Set your mortar on a damp cloth so that it won't move while you work. Pour in sesame seeds and grind with the pestle for a few turns. Don't over-grind; seeds should end up in pieces, not ground to a powder. Add red miso all at once to sesame and mix with the pestle. Add the sugar and mirin and mix with the pestle or rubber spatula. The dressing will be rather coarse in texture. To assemble and serve: In medium bowl, combine beans and sesame-miso dressing and mix until beans are well coated. Serve at room temperature in neat mounds in individual dishes.

### Lemon-Garlic Green Beans

from "Great American Vegetarian"  
serves 4 – 6 as a side dish

Trim 1 pound of green beans and cut or snap them in half. Steam them until tender-crisp. In a large skillet, heat 1 tbsp. of canola or olive oil and sauté 1 or 2 cloves of minced garlic over low heat until golden. Add the steamed beans and sauté, stirring continuously, for just a minute or so. Remove from the heat, squeeze on as much fresh lemon juice as you'd like and add a few grindings of black pepper.

### Ejotes (Piquante Green Beans)

also from "Great American Vegetarian"  
4 to 6 servings

"This nippy preparation of string beans is adapted from the fascinating book on early Mission cooking of the Southwest, Early California Hospitality (1938)."

2 tbsp. olive oil  
1 medium onion, finely chopped  
2 cloves garlic, minced  
1 1/2 lbs. green beans, trimmed and snapped or cut in half  
3 medium ripe juicy tomatoes, chopped [I'd use canned organic tomatoes until the fresh

ones from the farm come in]

1 - 2 jalapeño peppers, seeded and minced  
1/4 C water  
1 tbsp. apple cider vinegar  
Salt and freshly ground black pepper

Heat oil in a large skillet or saucepan. Add onion and sauté over medium-low heat until translucent. Add garlic and green beans and sauté, stirring frequently, for 5 minutes. Add the remaining ingredients and simmer, covered, until the green beans are tender. This will take approximately 10 to 20 minutes, depending on their size and thickness. Serve at once.

### Sticky Ginger Rice with Peas

adapted from an undated Bon Appetit clipping  
serves 6

1 1/2 C uncooked medium-grain white rice  
3 C cold water  
1 tbsp. minced fresh ginger  
1 C fresh shelled peas

Place rice in a strainer. Rinse under cold water until water runs clear. Drain well. Transfer rice to a heavy medium saucepan. Add 3 C cold water. Stir in ginger. Bring to a boil over high heat. Reduce heat to low, cover, and cook until rice is tender, about 12 minutes. Remove from heat. Sprinkle peas over rice (do not stir into rice yet). Replace cover and let rest for 5 minutes or so [this will gently cook the peas, but not too much!]. Gently stir peas into rice. Season rice lightly with salt, transfer to a bowl and serve.

### Plum Fruit Leather

courtesy of Jane Krejci

Puree (in Cuisinart) 5 cups of diced, pitted plums. Add 1/4 C honey. Cover a rimmed cookie sheet with plastic wrap; spread puree thinly. Cover with cheesecloth or screen and dry in the sun (or place on dash in car). When dry, roll up and store. [Can probably use this recipe with other fruit!]