



The Weekly (Com)Post

A newsletter for the Live Earth Farm CSA Community

18th Harvest Week

July 12th – 18th, 2004

Season 9

What's in the standard share:

Fruit:

Strawberries

Veggies and herbs:

Beets

Broccoli or summer squash

Carrots

Green beans

Onions

Parsley or thyme

Peas (English or sugar snap)

Potatoes

Spinach

Tomatoes!

and if you have an extra-fruit option:

Plums, apricots, peaches, blackberries and raspberries

(over for more)

Wow, can you believe that we are actually halfway through the CSA season already?? Hi everyone, it's Debbie – I get to write this week's newsletter in its entirety, as Tom is out of town and our 'guest' writer seems to have forgotten he was going to write something for me! Needless to say that means I can leave as much room for recipes as I like, but there's more to CSA than just the food, right?

There was a marvelous story by Barbara Kingsolver in the latest (July/August) issue of UTNE magazine. As a writer (with whom many of you, I'm sure, are familiar) who grew up in rural tobacco-farming Kentucky, Barbara sought to return to her agrarian roots in her forties, and talked about some of her conflicted experiences amongst peers and contemporaries. She writes, "In my professional life I've learned that as long as I write novels and nonfiction books about strictly human conventions and constructions, I'm taken seriously. But when my writing strays into that muddy territory where humans are forced to own up to our dependence on the land, I'm apt to be declared quaintly irrelevant by the small, acutely urban clique that decides in this country what will be called worthy literature. (That clique does not, fortunately, hold sway over what people actually read.) I understand their purview, I think. I realize I'm beholden to people working in urban centers for many things I love: They publish books,

"Slow Food extols the joys that come with taking the time to prepare healthy food well. More than an organization, Slow Food is an attitude of defiance that finds more flavor in the fresh surprises each season brings than in the convenience of having everything trucked in all year long from all over the planet."

Andy Griffin, Mariquita Farm

invent theater, produce films and music. But if I had not been raised such a polite Southern girl, I'd offer these critics a blunt proposition: I'll go a week without attending a movie or concert, you go a week without eating food, and at the end of it we'll sit down together and renegotiate 'quaintly irrelevant.'"

I know that I'm preaching to the choir here, and that none of you would ever think that what Tom and Live Earth Farm are doing is 'quaintly irrelevant,' but we need to keep in mind that we are still something of a minority. We all need to continually impress upon others the importance of local, sustainable agriculture and organic farming; we need to manifest it in the hearts and minds of everyone around us, especially children. I heartily encourage you, at every opportunity, to raise the issue with people you talk to... managers of restaurants and grocery stores are great places to start, but conversations in churches, in schools – wherever people gather, are just as important. Andy Griffin of Mariquita Farm (see quote) eloquently distills the essence of one organization – Slow Food – that is very much behind the kind of thing we do. As you can see, there are many ways to 'spread the word,' so feel free to promote/support sustainable agriculture however you wish. I do it by working part time for a small organic CSA farm out in Watsonville...

Live Earth Farm 2004 Calendar

(see calendar on website for more detailed info)

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|-----------------------|---|
| July 30, 31, Aug 1 | <u>Children's Mini Camp</u> (sold out!) Friday evening to noon Sunday |
| Sat. Sept. 25 | <u>Fall Equinox Celebration</u> 3 – 9 pm with <i>The Banana Slug String Band!</i> |
| Sat. Oct 23 | <u>Halloween Pumpkin Palooza</u> |

Member Request

Ever wonder how other people go about using everything in their share each week? Last year I asked members to consider keeping a diary on what they did with their box during a particular week, and then submitting it to me so I could publish it in the newsletter. It was particularly enlightening to learn how creative people got when it came to getting their children to eat the veggies. It was lots of fun and we all learned something new. So I'm putting the request out to you all again this year. Anyone up for the task? Don't be shy!! Just keep notes (recipes for particular items are welcome too!), and email it to me: deb@writerguy.com. Thanks! 🐾

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.

Tomatoes, tomatoes... woo-hoo! The last few weeks on the farm I've had the privilege wandering the fields in my rare free moments, and to my delight was able to pick some of the very first ripened tomatoes. There were only a few red ones amongst a sea of green, and would otherwise go to waste, I rationalized, as I squirreled my treasures home to enjoy. Like the English peas, the first farm tomatoes to come into my possession never make it past being eaten straight out of hand, unadorned, except for a little salt. As this is the first week I don't know how many we'll all get, so I'll save tomato recipes for until we get 'em in force. – Debbie

Drying fresh basil - update

Before I forget, the basil-in-a-colander thing from last week needs some more qualification. The colander needs to be a screen-variety, for maximum air circulation. And my first try did not give me confidence, as after several days it was still not all dry, and I was worried that things weren't going right. But remember, the air temperature was still cool, so that was one strike against me. I spoke with the person who gave me this tip and she said, "Oh no, it can take up to a week or two or more to completely dry!" Now she tells me! So I'm trying again. I put more fresh basil in my screen colander, then covered the top with cheesecloth and a rubber band. The air outside is warmer now, and I give the container a flip and a toss whenever I walk by it. It is already looking more promising than last week's!

Greek Oven Fries

modified from an undated magazine clipping
serves 4

2 medium-large potatoes, unpeeled
olive oil
dried whole oregano
salt and pepper
malt vinegar

Preheat oven to 400 degrees F. Scrub

potatoes; cut each lengthwise into 8 wedges. Place wedges in a bowl and cover with cold water. Let stand 30 minutes, then drain and pat dry. Coat wedges with olive oil, sprinkle with oregano, salt and pepper. Place skin-side down on a baking sheet and bake in preheated oven for 50 minutes or until potatoes are tender and browned. Remove from oven and sprinkle with vinegar. Serve hot.

Buttered Sugar Snap Peas with Fresh Mint

serves 6

1 lb. sugar snap peas, stems and strings removed
2 tbsp. butter
1/2 tsp. salt
freshly ground pepper
1/4 C coarsely chopped fresh mint

Blanch peas 1 minute in a pot of boiling salted water. In a large skillet over medium-high heat, melt the butter. Add peas and stir until bright green and crisp-tender, about 3 minutes (do not over cook! You want that crunch). Season with salt and pepper to taste, toss with mint, and serve hot.

Green Beans with Mustard and Thyme

modified from an undated Bon Appetit clipping
originally designed to serve 16!
serves 4

1 lb. green beans, trimmed
2 tbsp. butter
2 1/2 tsp. chopped fresh thyme
1/2 tbsp. Dijon mustard
1/2 tsp. salt
1 clove garlic, crushed
a few tbsp. slivered almonds for garnish

Cook green beans in a large pot of boiling salted water until just crisp-tender, about 5 minutes. When the beans are about done, melt the butter in a large skillet and add garlic, 2 tbsp. of the thyme, the mustard and the salt. Sizzle for a moment. Drain the beans and add to the skillet, stirring and tossing until evenly coated. Season to taste

with pepper, and sprinkle with remaining 1/2 tsp. fresh thyme and slivered almonds.

Fresh Strawberry Bread

from a recent SJ Mercury News clipping
makes 2 8-by-4 loaves

3 tbsp. soft butter
3 C all-purpose flour
2 C sugar, divided
2 tsp. baking soda
1/2 tsp. baking powder
Grated zest of 1 large orange
1 tsp. salt
1 1/2 to 2 pints baskets of fresh strawberries, rinsed, hulled, and cut into quarters or sixths, depending on size
1/2 C finely chopped walnuts or pecans
4 lg. eggs
1 1/4 C vegetable oil

Grease two 8-by-4-inch loaf pans with all of the butter; set aside. Set oven rack to lower third position and preheat oven to 350 degrees.

In a large bowl, combine flour, 1/2 C sugar, baking soda, baking powder, orange zest and salt. Place strawberries in another bowl and sprinkle with a quarter of this flour mixture. Add the nuts to the remaining flour mixture.

In food processor, process eggs until foamy. With motor running, pour in oil in a slow, steady stream; mixture will be thick. Pour in remaining 1 1/2 C sugar and process until mixed. Pour egg mixture onto flour-nut mixture and add strawberries on top. With large spatula, gently fold ingredients together until all flour is moistened and berries evenly distributed.

Divide batter equally between pans, filling each no more than 3/4 full. Bake 60 to 75 minutes, or until cake tester [aka a toothpick!] inserted into center comes out clean. Let stand 30 minutes in pans to firm up. Loosen sides with a knife before turning loaves out onto rack to cool completely. Wrap tightly in plastic wrap to store; refrigerate up to 3 days or freeze up to 1 month. Slice thickly to serve.