



The Weekly (Com)Post

A newsletter for the Live Earth Farm CSA Community

21st Harvest Week

August 2nd – 8th, 2004

Season 9

What's in the standard share:

Fruit:

Strawberries

Veggies and herbs:

Arugula

Basil

Red beets

Carrots

Eggplant

Garlic

Green beans

Kale or chard

Lettuce

Radishes

Cherry tomatoes

Tomatoes (red & heirloom)

Mystery item

and if you have an extra-fruit option:

Strawberries, peaches and raspberries

(over for more)

We had a diverse and international group of about 40 campers live with us on the farm last weekend for our annual Children's Mini-Camp. Like in a salad bowl where lettuce is the principal ingredient, English was spoken predominantly, however the texture and flavor was enhanced as German, Chinese, Spanish and French were mixed in. We all turned into a small community of hunter-gatherers, allowing our exploratory curiosity to run wild. Edible and non-edible treasures were constantly presented to the "chief" (farmer Tom) who led his tribe of eager members on several foraging expeditions. Never was the root digging expedition so bountiful, returning with crates packed with carrots, beets and potatoes.

The goats were milked to make fresh cheese, tomatoes were harvested and turned into a fabulous tomato sauce, basil became pesto, and *voila*, we were ready to fire up "Toastie," our wood-fired oven, to make pizza. Fruit was abundant and with a few additional outside 'necessities' (such as coffee, ice cream, marshmallows, etc.) we were almost self-sufficient. Time

was spent honing the kids' bareback-riding skills, and the next generation of young hunters practiced archery. After a hard days work, everyone jumped into the 'watering hole' (aka our swimming pool) for a swim. At night when the fog rolled in we gathered around the fire to tell stories, roast marshmallows and watched David, the chief's son, twirl his firestaff. Come Sunday when it was time to part, we all felt a closer connection to each other and the land that nourished us. As I mentioned last year after Mini-Camp, it never surprises me how much we have in common as we gather to interact in nature as a community. Children need to stain their faces with peach and berry juice from fruits picked fresh off a tree or vine, feel the earth under their feet, and sometimes even get stung by an insect or pecked by a chicken. Nature is our ultimate classroom, and children are always ready, right now, to learn from it. With only a few things every child can embark on this lifelong apprenticeship: their sense of wonder, the guardianship of an elder, and a little unstructured time. It is my hope that this farm will always serve as a place where every child, even the ones within us adults, can experience a stronger connection with nature and remember, as John Muir observed, that everything is connected to everything else. – Tom

"The more we know of other forms of life, the more we enjoy and respect ourselves. Humanity is exalted not because we are so far above other living creatures, but because knowing them well elevates the very concept of life."

- Edward O. Wilson

Saturday's Broccoli Raab

Those of you who pick up your share on Saturdays may have noticed that there was no broccoli raab in the box – instead you all should have received Red Russian kale. The reason for this is that our current planting of broccoli raab was not quite big enough, and we ended up harvesting it all for the Wednesday delivery. We cleaned the field, so there was nothing remaining to harvest for Saturday. I apologize for anyone who had their face set on

Live Earth Farm 2004 Calendar

(see calendar on website for more detailed info)

Sat. Sept. 25

Fall Equinox Celebration

3 – 9 pm

with *The Banana Slug String Band!*

Sat. Oct 23

Halloween Pumpkin Palooza

getting the raab; these things happen sometimes, and I do my best to substitute something else when we run short or when Mother Nature plays tricks on me. Do not despair though, as there are other plantings of raab on the way. We just won't be seeing it in the next few weeks. So hang onto Debbie's broccoli raab recipes from last week's newsletter as they will come in handy when the new crop comes in! 🌱

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.

Now that tomatoes are arriving in force I can share this tomato soup recipe a neighbor of mine gave me recently. Hope you all enjoy! – Debbie

Creamy Garlicky Tomato Soup

from Judi McComak

serves 4 to 6

Tomatoes cut in half – enough to fill a 7"x10" baking dish

1 small red onion, thinly sliced

8 to 15 cloves garlic, minced

2 tbsp. dried thyme

1 1/4 tbsp. dried basil [I'd julienne or mince up a bunch of our fresh basil, since we have it!]

1 tbsp. salt

2 tsp. pepper

3 tbsp. balsamic vinegar

2 tbsp. olive oil

1 1/2 tbsp. packed brown sugar

1 to 2 C tomato juice

1 C tomato sauce

1 tsp. baking soda

2 1/2 to 3 C heavy cream or half-and-half

Preheat oven to 350 degrees F.

Place cut tomatoes in shallow baking dish, just large enough to hold them in a single layer. Distribute 1st 9 ingredients evenly over tomatoes and cover dish with foil. Roast for 45 minutes, or until veggies are tender. Remove pan from oven and allow to cool. Place veggies in a blender (in batches if necessary), puree, then strain into a large saucepan. Add the tomato juice, tomato sauce and baking soda. Stir well. Slowly add the cream. Bring soup to a boil over medium heat; reduce heat and simmer for 20 minutes to blend flavors and reduce soup. Serve hot, garnished with croutons, or with a side of cheddar-garlic biscuits.

Tomato Tart

from a recent San Jose Merc. clipping

serves 6

For crust:

1 C all-purpose flour

1/2 C yellow cornmeal

1/4 tsp. salt

1/2 C cold, unsalted butter, cut into small pieces

3 tbsp. ice water

Pie weights or dried beans for baking crust

For filling:

1 egg

1/3 C milk

6 oz. pepper Jack cheese, shredded

1 or 2 tomatoes, sliced about 1/2" thick [more if they are Tom's small dry-farmed tomatoes!]

Salt and pepper to taste

To make crust: Whirl together flour, corn-meal and salt in a food processor. Add butter and pulse until mixture resembles a coarse meal. Add ice water and pulse just until mixture forms a ball. Press dough evenly into a 9" round tart pan with removable bottom and prick all over with tines of a fork. Chill crust about 20 minutes.

Preheat oven to 375 degrees F. Line chilled crust with foil and fill with pie weights or dried beans. Bake 10 minutes. Remove foil (and weights) and bake 5 minutes more, or until just dry. Cool crust in pan on a rack while you prepare filling.

To make filling: Whisk together egg and milk. Stir in cheese and season with salt and pepper. Pour mixture into cooled crust. Lay tomato slices on top in a single layer. Bake about 25 minutes or just until custard is set. Cool tart on rack at least 15 minutes. Lift tart out of rim and serve warm or at room temperature.

Bengan Bharta (spicy roasted eggplant with tomatoes and cilantro)

from an undated Bon Appetit clipping

serves 6 as a side dish

2 med. globe eggplants [or more, if you use the small asian type], halved lengthwise

1/3 C vegetable oil

2 lg. onions, coarsely chopped

3 tbsp. finely chopped peeled ginger

1 lb. tomatoes, coarsely chopped

2 tsp. ground cumin

1 1/2 tsp. sweet paprika

1 tsp. ground coriander

1/2 tsp. cayenne pepper

1/3 C chopped fresh cilantro

Preheat oven to 360 degrees F. Oil a rimmed baking sheet; place eggplant

halves, cut side down, on sheet. Roast eggplant until flesh is soft, about 1 hour [probably less if the eggplants are smaller]. Cool slightly. Using spoon, scoop pulp from eggplant halves into a medium bowl; mash. Discard skins. Heat oil in heavy large skillet over medium-high heat. Add onions and sauté until golden brown, about 6 minutes. Add ginger and stir 1 minute. Add tomatoes and next 4 ingredients; sauté 5 minutes to blend flavors. Add eggplant and stir until slightly thickened, about 5 minutes. Remove from heat. Stir in cilantro. Season with salt and pepper. Serve warm.

Here is an unusual and fun little recipe I tried the other day – 'a West Indian side dish well suited to just about anything grilled' says the author. I ate mine with roast chicken and grilled veggies (eggplant, summer squash), but it would go with many other things as well. – Debbie

Peppered Peaches

SJ Mercury News clipping, 6/16/04

modified to serve 6 (instead of 12)

3 large peaches, relatively ripe but not soft (should be firm but yield to gentle pressure)

1 1/2 tbsp. fresh lemon juice

1 tbsp. sugar

1/2 tsp. kosher salt

1/4 tsp. coarsely ground black pepper, or more to taste

1/8 tsp. cayenne pepper, or more to taste

Halve peaches (remove and discard pit) and peel by immersing each half into a pot of boiling water with a slotted spoon for a few seconds to loosen skin (should slip or peel off easily; like peeling tomatoes). Drain peaches in a colander, then place, cut-side down, on paper towels to dry. Place peach halves cut-side up on a platter. Combine sugar and salt in a small dish. Coat surface of peaches with lemon juice and sprinkle with sugar-salt mixture. Sprinkle lightly with black pepper and cayenne. Peaches can be left at room temperature for 2 hours before serving. Do not refrigerate.