



# The Weekly (Com)Post

A newsletter for the Live Earth Farm CSA Community

23<sup>rd</sup> Harvest Week

August 16<sup>th</sup> – 22<sup>nd</sup>, 2004

Season 9

## What's in the standard share:

Fruit:

Cantaloupe

Veggies and herbs:

Basil

Carrots

Cherry tomatoes

Eggplant

Green beans

Kale or chard

Lettuce

Potatoes

Radicchio (loose leaf) –

[see picture on website]

Summer squash

Tomatoes (lots!)

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

Strawberries, raspberries or blackberries, and apples

(over for more)

Not a day goes by without being bombarded with news and information about political, environmental, social, and economic realities affecting our lives and the well being of our planet. Especially during an election year, it is easy to give in to cynicism or despair, wondering how as individuals we can make a difference. History shows that ordinary people like you and I have won the most unpromising and unequal of battles. Although farmers only comprise less than 2% of the population and organic farmers don't even exist, statistically speaking, I am optimistic that as a community of growers and consumers one way to make a difference is to take charge of what we put into our mouths. Although I am preaching to the choir, it is a good thing to be reminded of the positive differences we make as a community. Buying locally grown food and participating in a Community Supported Agriculture (CSA) program is a big step towards improving the health of our own bodies and of our local communities. CSA farms are emerging across the country. Roughly 3000 currently exist and are maturing, and as Robyn Van En (a pioneer in the CSA movement) once said, "CSA is a viable contender to the reckless and unsustainable food system to which we have grown accustomed. CSA strives to be socially and economically responsible, to educate and empower, while providing good food, one of the basic necessities of life... It is a participatory means to securing your food supply for today and future generations."

*"In the presence of nature a man of feeling is not suffered to lose sight of the instant creation. Nature is an Eternal Now."*

- Ralph Waldo Emerson

The language of food is universal; the impulse to feed is common to all cultures, rich or poor. Community and food are intimately related, yet in our 'modern' world this relationship has become a marginal one at best. Growing, procuring and consuming food are one of the most vital and intimate activities in any society. They nourish not only our bodies but our minds and spirits as well. With our diet we can take a stand for a more compassionate and sustainable world. – Tom

## Crop News

The pear harvest has started, and the first McIntosh Apples are off the trees. In the extra fruit share you will have a sample of both. The pears are not the well known Warren Pears you will get sometime in early September, but another early variety from Michigan called "Harvest Queen." The first peppers – the "Hungarian Yellow Wax" – will be in your shares next week, and this week you will find melons (which to my taste could be a bit sweeter. Due to the cool weather we've been having they didn't develop enough sugars). [I had a cantaloupe from the farm last week and it was absolutely delicious! - Debbie's two cents] Lots of tomatoes this week... maybe add some of the basil, a little fresh mozzarella, hmmm, life is good!!! 🌱

## Free Range Chickens and Eggs!

Hi folks, it's Debbie – I have found a good source for wonderfully cared-for, organically fed, range-raised poultry, and wanted to pass the information on to our membership. Mountain Meadows Farm, owned and operated by Brenda Ostrom, raises and sells chickens and eggs at the Los Gatos Farmers Market, which is Sundays, 8am to

## 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

Noon (though it often runs until 1pm, but unofficially only). She is there every other week (she'll be there this Sunday Aug 21<sup>st</sup>, then again on Sept. 4<sup>th</sup>, etc.). Brenda's stand is only a few spots down from Live Earth Farm's stand. Her farm is located in Mariposa, on the way to Yosemite. She has 5 acres at 3000' elevation, and raises both egg layers and broilers. These chickens are *seriously* free range – they get to run around and hunt and peck just like the egg layers. Her meat chickens (broilers) are Cornish-cross, a commercial breed, but she purchases the slowest growing ones she can find, NOT the genetically modified ones designed to grow huge breasts which they can't even support, and which rocket to butchering weight in a mere 6 to 8 weeks. Her chickens mature in 10 to 14 weeks, which equates to better tasting meat, as the older the chickens get, the more varied their diets. I can vouch for the flavor and texture as I purchased chickens from her a couple weeks ago. It actually has a wonderful flavor, and a really nice 'tooth' – not chewy or stringy (like some might imagine from a chicken that gets to run around), but also not mushy and bland like commercial chicken either. It tastes like, well, *real chicken*, something I haven't had in years! In addition to the bugs and goodies they find on their own, they get veggie scraps (right now they're getting tomatoes) plus she feeds them a custom formulated (less than 10% soy) organic grain diet, which she gets from Black Rock Milling in Le Grande (certified organic by Oregon Tilth). Her egg-layers are Rhode Island Reds, Isa Browns, and Black Australorps. The layers get their own custom feed formulation (different than the broilers), but they boogie around even more than the layers! Sometimes they don't lay eggs in the henhouse where they're supposed to – she calls them 'renegade nests' – so instead of fighting this, she just sets up a nesting box at the new location. She usually raises turkeys too, but is taking a break this year because she is in the process of moving and building a house on the farm itself (she used to live 15 minutes away). So keep her in mind for turkeys NEXT year. Okay, the nitty gritty: if you want to purchase chickens (and/or eggs) from her, you will want to call her ahead of time (no later than Wednesday in order to get chickens on a Sunday) and place your order. She butchers on Thursdays/Fridays, and the chickens are sold fresh, not frozen, so you'll want to bring a cooler with some ice for transporting them home. Yes, you will need to drive to the Los Gatos market to pick them up. She does not deliver elsewhere (except the Ferry Plaza market in San Francisco, and I doubt any of our members want to drive up there!), but you can order several at once and freeze them, and I would say it is well worth the trip. Although technically you could just show up at the farmers market to buy chickens from her, they are sold on a first-come first-served basis, so unless you have a reserved order, she may not have any for you (she sells out regularly). The chickens are sold whole, and are between \$3.75 and \$4 per pound (each bird is plus-or-minus 4 lbs.). Remember to bring your checkbook (or cash) as she does not take credit cards. Eggs are \$4.50/dozen (price recently raised because of transportation costs). You can also purchase giblets (gizzard, liver, heart) and chicken feet (excellent for making stock), but they are sold separately. You can reach Brenda by phone at (209) 966-8432 or email [bostrom@sti.net](mailto:bostrom@sti.net) to place an order. 🐔

## 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.

*Tom says we're getting LOTS of tomatoes, so I thought this first recipe would be appropriate. – Debbie*

### Tomato Glut Sauce

from "This Organic Life, confessions of a suburban homesteader" by Joan Dye Gussow  
Makes 2 quarts

5 lbs. tomatoes, cored and quartered  
1 1/2 C coarsely chopped carrots (optional)  
1 1/2 C coarsely chopped celery (optional)  
1 1/2 C coarsely chopped onions  
9 cloves garlic, coarsely chopped  
6 tbsp. balsamic vinegar  
1 bay leaf  
1 1/2 tbsp. each of fresh thyme, oregano, basil, parsley  
1 1/2 tsp. salt (or less)  
1 tbsp. freshly ground black pepper

Preheat oven to 400 degrees. Put all ingredients together in a large roasting pan and roast for 45 minutes or until vegetables are soft. Process briefly to leave slightly chunky, and freeze in 2-cup portions. The author says, "You should know that this recipe is more forgiving than your favorite aunt. The ingredients, other than the tomatoes, garlic, and balsamic vinegar, are pretty much up to you, depending on what you have too much of. I have put in a lot of cut-up peppers, eggplant and zucchini in

place of the carrots. And since I never grow celery, only celery leaf, I use this. The secret seems to lie in the balsamic vinegar and the roasting process itself."

### Green Beans with Toasted Hazelnuts

from an undated Bon Appetit clipping  
serves 6

2/3 C hazelnuts (~ 3 oz.), coarsely chopped  
1 1/2 lbs. green beans, trimmed  
1/4 C (1/2 stick) butter, room temperature  
2 tsp. unseasoned rice vinegar

Place nuts in small nonstick skillet. Stir over medium heat until lightly toasted, about 8 minutes. Sprinkle with salt and set aside. Cook beans in a large pot of boiling salted water until crisp-tender, about 4 minutes. Drain. Melt butter in same pot over medium high heat. Add beans and vinegar; toss to coat and heat through, about 2 minutes. Season with salt and pepper. Transfer to serving bowl. Sprinkle with hazelnuts.

### Forrest Gingold's Involtino di Melanzane [it is an eggplant dish!]

from an (old) undated SJ Merc clipping which I saved 'cause it sounds so good!  
Serves 4

1 large eggplant [or equivalent small]  
Olive oil

3 tbsp. sultanas (golden raisins)  
1/2 C marsala  
3 tbsp. pine nuts  
1 tbsp. chopped parsley  
3/4 C bread crumbs

### Pomodoro sauce:

1 clove garlic, chopped  
Olive oil  
1 tsp. fresh oregano, chopped  
1 C ground tomatoes in puree [or you can make your own folks!]  
Salt, pepper and sugar to taste

Slice the eggplant(s) the long way into 3/4" thick slices. Brush them with olive oil and roast on a cookie sheet for 30 minutes at 300 degrees. Soak the sultanas in the marsala until they are plump and soft. Add the pine nuts, parsley and bread crumbs; mix lightly. Place a small amount of the mixture at the bottom end of the eggplant slices and roll up.

Make the pomodoro sauce by lightly sautéing the garlic in a small amount of olive oil until golden. Add oregano and tomatoes and heat until just warmed through. Add salt, pepper and sugar to taste. Cover the bottom of a casserole dish with the pomodoro sauce. Arrange the eggplant rolls on top of the sauce. Bake for 30 minutes at 350 degrees. Remove from oven and sprinkle with chopped parsley.