



The Weekly (Com)Post

A newsletter for the Live Earth Farm CSA Community

24th Harvest Week

August 23rd – 29th, 2004

Season 9

What's in the standard share:

Fruit:

Cherry tomatoes

Veggies and herbs:

Basil or thyme

Beets

Broccoli

Carrots

Chard or kale

Eggplant

Green beans

Lettuce

Peppers

Potatoes

Radicchio

Summer squash

Heirloom tomatoes

Red slicing tomatoes

and if you have an extra-fruit option:

Raspberries or blackberries, apples and pears (McIntosh), melons

Last week I spent more than my usual amount of time in the office preparing for our annual inspection (in order to renew the farm's organic certification). I ponder the usefulness of maintaining a paper trail of charts, logs, and receipts and the justification of paying \$1,000 annually to keep the government's seal of approval "Certified Organic." It is interesting to observe how, due to the success of organic agriculture, it now is becoming institutionalized, homogenized and gobbled up by larger economic entities which have little to do with the original philosophy and goals of organic farming. Although one can argue the benefits of making organic food available on a larger scale – like seeing organic milk, butter, and vegetables in almost every supermarket across the country – my question is whether this movement towards globalization actually promotes an ecological sensitivity which honors sustainable practices that preserve and restore biodiversity and healthy ecosystems and produces food that is vibrant, nutritious, and flavorful. I just received a phone call from a food broker to whom we sold some of our excess green beans last week. He complained that our beans were starting to show signs of moldiness after one week in their cooler. I explained that the beans were delivered only hours after they were picked, however since we pick them when they are still fairly tender they are meant to be consumed in 2-3 days. He made me understand the standards of the wholesale market and that ultimately I was responsible. So much for trying to compete in a "global" market. – Tom

"Do not cumber yourself with fruitless pains to mend and remedy remote effects; let the soul be erect, and all things will go well."

- Ralph Waldo Emerson

What's Up on the Farm

Oh deer... I was walking the fields this morning and discovered that our seasonal migration of deer passed through during the night, feasting on our beans and butter lettuce. Like gourmet eaters, just the tender bean shoots were nibbled off and the hearts inside the butter lettuce were munched on. Didn't I just talk about how we try to grow food in harmony with nature? Well, we got the harmony with nature part down but we are still figuring out how to accomplish the economic harmony factor.

Meanwhile, the tomatoes are in full production, so get ready to enjoy all our varieties: Sungold cherries, heirlooms, and dry-farmed. This week the cherry tomatoes make up the fruit portion of your standard share, as the strawberries are still in a bit of a lull. Sungold cherry tomatoes are my favorite summer fruit... juicy and sweet, they will not last long in my house if left out on the table for snacking!

The pears, as you may have noticed by now, are still hard when you receive them. They will need to be left on the counter for 5 to 7 days in order to ripen (pears do not ripen on the trees). Try putting them in a brown paper bag with other fruit, like an apple, and this will help speed up the process. 🍌

Chickens and Eggs

If you didn't see last week's newsletter, I talked about a good source for range-raised, organically fed poultry and eggs. But rather than repeat myself here, if you're interested (but didn't get last week's info), just go to our website and look up last week's newsletter. Or if you don't have internet access, call me at the farm and I can give you the details. - Debbie 🍌

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

How I used my box

This week's submission is from member Sunset Nixon, of Scotts Valley:

BREAKFASTS: We ate most of our fruit over cereal and milk or yogurt and granola.

LUNCHES: Goat chevre and basil sandwiches, eggs scrambled with queso blanco, grilled queso blanco sandwiches, and salads. Lunches were often accompanied by sliced fruit, carrot sticks and apple juice.

DINNERS: String beans sautéed with garlic and tofu, spaghetti with summer squash and spinach salad, mashed potatoes accompanied by steamed greens and lentils cooked with various veggies (garlic, onion, summer squash, green beans, and carrots), eggplant parmesan with pasta and homemade tomato sauce.

DESSERTS: berries with whipped cream, strawberries dipped in chocolate, and beet chocolate cake.

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.

More people have sent me recipes! The first is a delicious soup which I had at a friend's house recently, which will help to use up those carrots (if they've been accumulating in your kitchen like they have been in mine!). It is really wonderful because it is thick and rich, yet uses no cream. – Debbie

Carrot Soup with Ginger and Lemon

from Bon Appétit, June 1997

serves 4

1/4 cup (1/2 stick) butter
1 1/2 C chopped onion
1 tbsp. finely chopped peeled fresh ginger
1 1/2 tsp. minced garlic
1 1/4 lbs. carrots, peeled, chopped (~ 3 C)
2 tomatoes, seeded, chopped (~ 1 1/3 C)
1 1/2 tsp. grated lemon peel
3 C (or more) chicken or vegetable stock
2 tbsp. fresh lemon juice
4 tbsp. sour cream (optional, for garnish)

Melt butter in heavy large pot over medium-high heat. Add onion; sauté 4 minutes. Add ginger and garlic; sauté 2 minutes. Add chopped carrots, tomatoes and lemon peel; sauté 1 minute. Add stock and bring to boil. Reduce heat, cover partially and simmer until carrots are very tender, about 20 minutes. Cool slightly.

Puree soup in batches in blender. Return soup to pot. Mix in lemon juice. Season with salt and pepper. (Can be made 1 day ahead. Cover and chill.)

Bring soup to simmer, thinning with more stock, if desired. Ladle into bowls. Top each with a dollop of sour cream.

Member Carmel Weifert submitted this next recipe, which uses summer squash, peppers, tomatoes and corn. Carmel says, "I rarely follow any recipe exactly, and this is no exception. I

generally just tweak it for whatever chilies and squash I have on hand, and it is always yummy."

Vegetarian Santa Fe Calabacitas

serves 8 to 10

According to the author, "In many Santa Fe homes, 'calabacitas' - a traditional dish of the Pueblo Indians of the Southwest - is made as a one-dish casserole by baking it and adding chicken or beef. This adaptation is vegetarian and cooks on top of the stove in 20 minutes."

3-4 tbsp. olive oil
1 C finely chopped onion
2-4 cloves of garlic, minced
2 1/2 C diced summer squash
2 1/2 C diced zucchini
2 C corn kernels, fresh or frozen
6 scallions, chopped (3/4 C)
1/2 C chopped hot green chilies, roasted, with skin removed (wear gloves when handling chilies)
1/2 C chopped mild green chilies, roasted, with skin removed
1 C diced ripe tomatoes
1/2 C firmly packed coarsely chopped fresh cilantro leaves
1/2 C cream or grated Jack cheese (optional)
1/2 tsp. salt

1. Heat 2 tbsp. of the oil in a large skillet and sauté the onion for about 4 minutes over medium-high heat. Add the garlic and sauté 2 minutes longer.
2. Add the squash and zucchini and sauté 5 minutes longer, until softened.
3. Add the remaining 1 to 2 tbsp. of oil with the corn, scallions, and chilies and sauté 3 minutes longer.
4. Stir in the tomatoes, cilantro, and cream (if desired) and heat through, about 5 minutes.
5. Season with salt. Serve hot or warm.

And last but not least, member Farrell Podgorsek sent another zucchini and tomato recipe which she said, "claims to serve 4 but two of us ate it all."

Zucchini & Tomato Gratin

serves 4

3 cloves garlic
2/3 C fresh basil leaves
1 tsp. fresh thyme
2 C whole wheat breadcrumbs
1/2 C finely chopped sweet onion
3 large ripe tomatoes, diced
1 tbsp. vinegar
1/4 tsp. salt
3 tbsp. olive oil
3 medium zucchini or summer squash, sliced 1/4 inch thick
ground black pepper
grated parmesan cheese - optional

Preheat oven to 400 degrees. Grease a 9x13 baking dish or gratin dish with cooking spray.

Mince garlic and herbs. Spread about half the breadcrumbs on bottom of baking dish. Strew onions over crumbs. Distribute half the tomatoes over the onion, then sprinkle with half garlic herb mixture. Sprinkle with vinegar and 1/8 tsp. salt.

Heat 2 tsp. olive oil in a large sauté pan. Add 1/3 of zucchini slices and sauté, turning the pieces once, until golden and not quite tender. When done, use a fork to lay the zucchini slices in the baking dish, overlapping the slices. Repeat with remaining slices. Strew the remaining tomatoes and garlic herb mixture over the zucchini. Season with remaining 1/8 tsp. salt, and the pepper. Toss the remaining 1 C breadcrumbs with 1 tbsp. olive oil and spread over the top.

Bake the gratin until bubbly hot, 20-30 minutes. Remove from heat. Sprinkle with parmesan cheese, if using.