



The Weekly (Com)Post

A newsletter for the Live Earth Farm CSA Community

34th Harvest Week

November 1st – 7th, 2004

Season 9

What's in the standard share:

Fruit:

Apples

Veggies and herbs:

Arugula

Broccoli

Green beans

Lettuce

Onions

Peppers

Radicchio

Winter squash (spaghetti)

Stir-fry mix

Thyme or basil

and if you have an extra-fruit option:

Apples and pears

(over for more)

By the time you receive and read this newsletter we will likely know the election results (I'm writing this Monday morning). Most of us will probably have a slight election hangover given the intensity, with its bombardment of ads which we've had to endure from the media over the last few months. Fortunately we all got a little breather this weekend celebrating Halloween; a reminder that the world has many realities. Halloween is a time when we sense that the barrier between our world and other worlds is especially thin. We acknowledge briefly for one night that politics, science, and economics don't always have to influence and shape our world-view. Stepping out for a moment to experience the magic of Halloween we may see in the "irrational or chaotic" refreshing new possibilities. It seems no matter how different and opposing our beliefs and values are, we have to transcend politics in order to secure an environment that our children and grandchildren can enjoy. For different political parties, the importance of the environment depends on their priorities and their agenda. So like tax rebates, the war on terrorism, servicing the debt or fixing our healthcare system, the environment is subsumed by politics. In my mind, the fundamental importance is that we get to a point in our relationship

"As a tree torn from the soil, as a river separated from its source, the human soul wanes when detached from what is greater than itself. Without the holy, the good turns chaotic; without the good, beauty becomes accidental."

- Abraham Joshua Heschel

with the natural world were we value the environment as something so fundamental to our survival and existence that it transcends politics. So, no matter who our president is, we have to define a bottom line that everyone can support in order to save our environment from destruction. We can't afford any longer to battle over clear-cut logging, chemical pollution and so on, where one side is invariably pitted against the other. In each conflict the beliefs and values held by opposing sides are strikingly different, and under these conditions the choice becomes jobs vs. air pollution control, the environment vs. the economy, etc., and the result is, there is always a loser. The environment, the web of life, the air, the water, soil and sunlight are fundamental elements of life, and to protect and ensure these for future generations we can't afford losers. – Tom

2005 Early Registration

After a bit of discussion with Debbie, I have changed my mind and decided to extend the deadline for the 2005 Early Registration until the end of the *year*, instead of the end of the season. Our objective is to get as many members registered as we can. By committing this year for next season, you will help us rent some additional land to both diversify and increase or production for next year, and, as I mentioned before, help pay our bills through the winter months and offer our workers year-round employment. Thank you for your support! – Tom

The nitty-gritty, from Debbie: **You now have until Dec. 31st, 2004 to sign up and still lock in the equivalent of this year's rates – a \$75 savings** – since next year we will increase the standard share price by \$2 - from \$23 to \$25/week. **Early registration is easy.** Just go to our website and click on '2005 Early Registration' and follow the (simple) instructions. Then mail us your deposit for \$175 (which doubles as your payment for March and April's shares) and you're done! If you don't have internet access, call me at the farm and I'll set you up by phone (keep in mind I'm only on the farm on Tuesdays and Thursdays; mornings are best). Note: the website may still say 'register before Nov. 20th' but it should be updated before the end of the season to reflect Tom's deadline extension. 🌱

Crop Notes

The spaghetti squash in your shares this week is from our neighboring organic farmer, Billy Peixote (pronounced "Pah-shote"). This is the same guy from whom many of you received (and are still receiving!) the wonderful organic apple juice this year. He told me he had a bumper crop of spaghetti squash, and since we have not grown this before, I thought people might enjoy having it in their shares as a nice variation on this year's selection of winter squash. See Debbie's recipes for cooking ideas. 🍷

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.

Spaghetti squash is fun! I'm glad Tom scammed on some for everyone, as I really like it, and if you've never had it before, I think you will too! – Debbie

Spaghetti Squash Info

just me

Spaghetti squash would be the butter-yellow-skinned obloid in your box, about the size of a small football. The unique character of this particular squash is that the flesh, when cooked, separates into spaghetti-like strands when scraped with a fork. Spaghetti squash can be cooked by steaming, boiling whole (!), microwaving, or baking (see below). Once the squash is cooked (like any winter squash – until the flesh gives gently when squeezed, or until it pierces easily with a fork or skewer) and then cool enough to handle, scoop out and remove the seeds (if you haven't already), then drag the tines of a fork crosswise to the 'grain' of the squash to separate the strands of squash from the shell. You can then use this 'spaghetti' in any number of dishes. Very simply, it can be tossed with butter, minced parsley, salt, pepper and parmesan cheese. Or maybe cut some fresh basil into strands and mix in. You can also literally serve it like spaghetti, with your favorite pasta sauce on top. It is very versatile.

To steam (from Jane Brody's Good Food Book): Set squash on a steamer rack in a large pot over a few inches of boiling water. Cover the pot, and steam squash for 35 to 40 minutes, or until tender when pressed or pierced with a fork.

To boil (from Greene on Greens): Place whole squash in a large pot; cover with cold water. Heat to boiling; reduce heat and simmer, covered, until fork-tender, turning once, about 45 minutes.

To microwave (from The All New All Purpose Joy of Cooking): Pierce generously with a knife tip to keep it from exploding, then place on a turntable in a microwave and cook on high until tender when pressed with your fingers or pierced with a thin skewer, about 15 minutes. If you do not have a turntable, rotate the squash every 5 minutes during the cooking time. Let cool 10 minutes before handling.

To bake (from Moosewood Cookbook): Preheat oven to 375 degrees. Halve the squash and scoop out the seeds. Bake face-down on an oiled cookie sheet until it is easily pierced with a fork, about 30 minutes. [are you seeing the pattern here?] Alternatively [this is just Debbie now], you can bake it whole by piercing all over with a knife or fork, setting on a baking sheet (it will ooze a little juice; you don't want this in the bottom of your oven) and baking it until... you know the routine now, I think!

Spaghetti Squash with Clam Sauce

modified from Jane Brody's Good Food Book serves 4

Note: squash and sauce can be prepared as much as a day ahead and reheated separately just before serving. And canned clams are sufficiently salty; don't add more salt before you've tasted the complete dish.

1 med. spaghetti squash (~ 3 to 3 1/2 lbs.)
13 oz. canned minced [or baby] clams
1 tbsp. olive oil
1 lg. onion, minced (about 1 C)
2 tsp. minced garlic
Freshly ground black pepper to taste
1/2 C dry white wine
1/2 tsp. hot red pepper flakes
1/3 C minced fresh parsley
1 tbsp. lemon juice
1 tbsp. butter, if reheating squash (optional)

Cook the squash (per any technique in 'Spaghetti squash info' above). Drain clams, save the juice; set clams aside. Heat oil in a skillet and sauté onion and garlic 3 to 5 minutes, or until soft. Season with pepper, add wine, and cook over moderately high heat to reduce liquid by half. Add reserved clam juice, red pepper flakes, and cook to reduce liquid to about 1/3 C. Add clams, parsley, lemon juice, and more pepper if desired. Split spaghetti squash lengthwise, and scrape out and discard the seeds and dark orange pulp around them. With a fork, "comb" out the pale yellow flesh, working from the cut edges toward the center to produce long spaghetti-like strands. Reheat the squash in the oven or in a covered pan on top of the stove, stirring strands gently with butter. Heat clam sauce, but do not boil. To serve, combine squash and sauce.

Asian-style Spaghetti Squash and Shrimp Salad

excerpted from Mariquita Farm's recipe database serves 6 to 8

4 cloves garlic
2 small red chilies or 1 1/2 tbsp. Vietnamese chili-garlic sauce
1 C warm water
2 tbsp. sugar
3 tbsp. lime juice (about 1 large lime)
1/2 C. fish sauce
1 medium Spaghetti squash (4 - 4.5 lbs.) yields about 9-10 cups cooked squash.
1 cup loosely packed Thai Basil OR Mint
1 1/2 lbs. medium sized shrimp

To make the dressing, cut chilies into small rings. Place chilies, garlic and sugar into a mortar and pound into a coarse, wet paste. (If you don't have a mortar, just chop with a knife.) Transfer to a small bowl and add the warm water, lime juice and fish sauce. Stir to dissolve. Set the dressing aside.

Cook the squash (per any technique in 'Spaghetti squash info' above), cool, cut in half, then scoop out and discard seeds. With fork "comb" out the squash strands.

While squash is cooking, boil the shrimp in lightly salted water. Drain and rinse in some cold water. Peel and butterfly them after they cooled. Chop the basil coarsely. Add both to squash and mix until the shrimp and basil are evenly distributed.

Mix dressing into squash mixture right before serving. Note: There is more dressing here than is needed for a 4 lb. squash. Mix in only as much dressing as needed to your desired taste. The remaining dressing can be used as a condiment for dipping meat, seafood, and vegetables or for drizzling on plain rice. The dressing will keep up to two weeks in the refrigerator.

Spaghetti Squash "Pancakes"

also excerpted from Mariquita Farm's recipe database

Mix cooked spaghetti squash with a little egg and flour. Add fresh minced ginger, white pepper and sliced green onions (but no salt). Fry like a potato pancake and serve with soy sauce. Yum!