



Live Earth Farm (Com)Post

A weekly newsletter for the Live Earth Farm CSA Community

16th Harvest Week

July 11th – 17th, 2005

Season 10

What's in the box this week:

(stuff in the family share that's *not* in the small share I'll start putting at the top of the family share list so you can easily see the difference. Small shares will generally have smaller quantities of the duplicate items. – Debbie)

Family Share:

Cooking greens (chard, kale, or collards)
Baby mustard greens
Onions
Radicchio

Arugula
Basil
Chiogga beets
Green beans
Lettuce
Yellow Finn potatoes
French breakfast radishes
Summer squash
Strawberries

Small Share:

Arugula
Basil
Chiogga beets
Green beans
Lettuce
Yellow Finn potatoes
French breakfast radishes
Summer squash
Strawberries

Extra Fruit Share:

Strawberries (2 baskets), and then plums or peaches for all who got blackberries last week, and blackberries or raspberries for everyone who got peaches or plums last week.

Summer foraging is one of the great pleasures here on the farm. Right now instead of preparing lunch in the kitchen I walk through the plum orchard where the Satumas are in all different stages of ripeness. With a juicy plum in my mouth, I walk over to the yellow raspberries and pluck a handful. I spit out the plum pit and savor each raspberry one by one. Walking down the rows of raspberries I remember I need to check the ground moisture around the cherry tomatoes, which are just the other side of the raspberry patch. I bend down and dig to assess the soil moisture and detect a ripe, bright orange cluster of tomatoes hanging low to the ground. I pop one into my mouth, realizing I am savoring the season's first tomato. The incredible flavor confirms why Sungold cherry tomatoes have become a standard; they are by far the best of all the cherry tomatoes we've grown. Debbie blames their "toe curling" flavor as one of the reasons she joined our CSA more than 9 years ago. I know you all have been patiently waiting for tomatoes, and let me assure everyone that in a couple of weeks our tomato season will officially start with these "toe curlers." After that, there is no turning back. I am predicting a big tomato crop this year... maybe the largest in Live Earth Farm's history. If you've been waiting to come to the farm and lend a hand, the time is nigh! Choose any day in August or September and I assure you your hands will be bright green from tomato plant residue, and at the end of the day you'll fall into bed exhausted with a smile on your face.

Back foraging for lunch I pick a few dead-ripe strawberries and observe that the Japanese eggplants nearby are sizing up fast, as well as the yellow Hungarian wax peppers beside them. I pick a few peppers for tonight's dinner salad. In a couple more weeks we'll have enough to harvest for the shares. I pick up an empty crate at the side of the field and head up the hill to harvest basil for the afternoon's farmer's market on the Westside of Santa Cruz. I love the smell of fresh basil!!! As I return to the barn with my crate of basil I can't help but stop along the way to pick a couple of peaches and blackberries. When I finally arrive at the barn, Juan comes walking up to me with a smile, holding the first ripe melon in his hands. We both know summer has truly begun as we slice up the melon and savor it together. That juicy melon is a testimony to all the hard work that allows us to enjoy the land's generous gifts. – Tom

Farmer Tom's Field Notes

For the next couple of weeks we will be without carrots, as the weeds in one of our plantings got the better of us. Other carrot plantings are coming along though, so they'll be back in the shares soon. The beets you are currently getting are called Chiogga, named after a town in Italy, near Venice. Sometimes we call them bulls-eye beets since they look like a target when you cut through them crosswise – magnificent pink and white concentric rings. Both root and leaves are good

*"We venerate the Three Treasures
[teachers, the wild, and friends]
And are thankful for this meal
The work of many people
And the sharing of other forms of life."*

*- Buddhist grace from Gary Snyder in
"The Practice of the Wild"*

Live Earth Farm 2005 Calendar

(see calendar on website for more info)

- July 29, 30, and 31 Children's Mini Camp
Friday evening to noon Sunday
- Sat Aug 6 Permaculture workshop #2
Design methods; Ecological observation and Site Mapping
- Sat. Sept. 24 Fall Equinox Celebration
3 – 9 pm
- Sat. Oct 22 Halloween Pumpkin Palooza
- Sat. Oct 29 Permaculture workshop #3
Polycultures & Agroforestry; Food Forest Design and Installation

to cook with (ask Debbie)! Green beans are in full force now, and will be a regular feature for most of the rest of the season. Unlike fibrous commercial beans which are bred for shipping, the beans we grow are a Blue Lake-type: stringless, sweet, tender and crunchy. Green (or 'snap') beans are native to Central America. Native Americans grew them among their corn, and the New World explorers introduced them to Asia, Africa, and Europe. French Huguenot refugees first grew beans in Britain during the 1500s, hence the synonym "French" bean. They called the dried bean "haricots" and the young pods, haricots verts. Because they are long and thin, and typically harvested when quite young, the French bean varieties are also known as "fillet beans." On the summer squash front you will have noticed different types in your shares. One is the light green bottle-shaped Lebanese squash, the long, deeply-ribbed and striped one is an Italian type called "Romanesco." Most recently a yellow squash with a green tip called "Zephyr" is starting to appear in your shares, and has a wonderful crunchy and nutty flavor. 🍷

Beyond Monsanto

Hi folks, Debbie again. Member Shireen Nickel of Monterey had this thoughtful response to my 'tirade' about Monsanto in last week's newsletter, so I wanted to include it here for balance. "'That which you resist persists.' An old saying, but one I've found to be absolutely true. After a lifetime of experiences 'fighting the good fight,' whether it was environmental, political, social or spiritual, I've found that the more energy I put into fighting everything that was a threat to what I believed in, the more exhausted I became, with very little (if any) success in promoting my cause. Then I had an epiphany: I saw how to use *what I used to fight* as a catalyst for finding even more ways to expand what I believed in. In other words, why not use the Monsanto/PBS piece as an incentive to create a PBS piece on CSAs, organic farming, and grassfed beef, etc? Why not email everyone you know asking them if they have made the switch to organic and assist them with info? Have a get-together with friends and neighbors featuring Tom's magnificent summer goodies. All of these actions lead to success, and instead of being exhausted you'll have energy to spare." – Shireen 🍷

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.)

Another extemporaneous 'what I'd do' contribution. Cathy says, "Hope these are useful for you!! I know that publishing recipes each week must be a pain, but it is one of the best things about the Live Earth Farm CSA. Please keep this going!!" I will Cathy, don't worry! – Debbie

What I did with last week's box

by member Cathy Barale of San Jose

How did we use [last] week's box? It's early in the week, so I'll let you know what we've done and what we "plan" to do.

Thursday night we picked up our box. We used lettuce, grated carrots, and onion in a Chinese Chicken salad for dinner. Friday night we made a string bean and chicken salad for dinner that used all the string beans. Sunday we grilled the potatoes in foil packets with the last of our fresh garlic and olive oil. To go with dinner on Sunday we made a zucchini salad (see recipe) and steamed our broccoli, drizzled it with olive oil and sprinkled lemon pepper on it. The strawberries were sliced into a bowl and served with yogurt for dessert.

We plan to use the rest of the carrots in a carrot salad with a cilantro salsa. We'll serve it in radicchio cups with a few olives & sprigs of mint. The rest of the radicchio will go into a bitter greens and smoked salmon salad with horseradish/caper dressing. We have a juicer and like to throw some of the veggies into the juicer as well. Celery, carrots and beets work well for that. Now that we're getting potatoes and hot weather, one of our favorite things to do is to make grilled veggie packets. We cut up potatoes, onion, carrots,

string beans, zucchini or what ever looks interesting in the box. Add chopped garlic, lots of fresh herbs. Toss with olive oil, salt and pepper. Fold into a foil packet. Be sure to use two layers of foil. Grill packets directly over coals for about 40 minutes, turning frequently. Open and enjoy! Another regular dinner for us on weeknights is to make a vegetable frittata. As a base, we sauté onions in a pan, pour in the egg/milk mixture and whatever chopped vegetable we have on hand. Good ones include beet greens, chard, mustard greens, bok choy, etc. We like to add some cheese, maybe a nice goat cheese, on top of the frittata. Quick, easy and good. Here are a few favorite recipes:

Summer Squash Salad

(modified from a recipe by Narsai David, a food guy on KCBS radio)

1 lb. sm. or med, summer squash, sliced into thin rounds
 1 med. onion, thinly sliced
 1 tsp. salt
 4 tbsp. sugar
 ½ C white wine (or similar) vinegar
 ¼ to ½ tsp. crushed red chilies
 2 tbsp. fresh tarragon or dill, chopped
 1 C plain yogurt or sour cream

Combine 1st 6 ingredients in a bowl. Set aside to macerate 2 to 3 hours (or overnight). Drain mixture in a colander and squeeze dry. Stir in herbs and yogurt or sour cream.

Dijon Chicken and String Bean Salad

4 chicken legs, grilled, then meat shredded
 1 lb. fresh green beans
 3 tbsp. hot Dijon mustard
 1 tbsp. red wine vinegar

¾ C olive oil
 1 red onion, minced
 6 grilled green onions, chopped
 2 tbsp. fresh minced tarragon
 20 cherry tomatoes
 juice of one lemon

Cut stems off beans and blanch in boiling, salted water until tender but crisp. Rinse beans briefly and allow to cool. To make the dressing, place mustard and vinegar in a bowl and slowly whisk in the olive oil. Add the herbs and season with lemon juice and freshly ground black pepper. To assemble, toss all the ingredients and garnish with tomatoes.

Chinese Chicken Salad

Combine:

1 bunch cilantro
 1 bunch green onions (or other onion if green onions aren't available)
 1 lg. head lettuce
 grated carrots
 sliced snap peas, if you have them
 4 tbsp. toasted sesame seeds
 cooked chicken meat, shredded

For dressing, whisk together:

4 tbsp. balsamic vinegar
 8 tbsp. sesame oil
 8 tbsp. soy sauce
 1 tbsp. sugar
 2 tbsp. Dijon mustard
 2 tsp. to 2 tbsp. hot chili oil, depending on your taste for spicy food

Toss salad ingredients with dressing and serve!