



Live Earth Farm (Com)Post

A weekly newsletter for the Live Earth Farm CSA Community

26th Harvest Week

Sept. 19th - 25th, 2005

Season 10

What's in the box this week:

(stuff that's in one size share that's *not* in the other is at the top of its respective list so you can easily see the difference. Remember, small shares will generally have smaller quantities of the duplicate items. – Debbie)

Family Share:

Beets
Kale
Watermelon radishes
Apples
Arugula
Carrots (topped and bagged)
Green beans (for sure this week)
Mustard greens
Peppers (hot and sweet)
Potatoes
Radishes
Spinach
Tomatoes

Small Share:

Apples
Arugula
Carrots (topped and bagged)
Green beans (for sure this week)
Mustard greens
Peppers (hot and sweet)
Potatoes
Radishes
Spinach
Tomatoes

Extra Fruit Option:

Strawberries, Warren pears, and more concord grapes

Last weekend was another cause for celebration! Seems like we do a lot of that here on the farm. Our daughter Elisa celebrated her first birthday; she started walking just a few days earlier, and that in itself is cause for celebrating. The evolution from four-legged to an upright two-legged position in a matter of days is almost miraculous. On a more practical side, this leap in freedom to move about brings a proportional restriction in the amount of parental control. Elisa's newly gained ground speed substantially increases her ability to satisfy her curiosity in exploring the world and, as most parents will know, can quickly overwhelm the parental safety radar. Coincidentally, not only Elisa's newly gained independence was cause for celebration but also Mexico celebrated "their" Independence Day, on the 16th of September. So last Saturday afternoon most of the extended farm family came together to celebrate. On a personal level the degree of how free and/or independent we are varies greatly, as we live within the dynamic world of a living and interconnected community. With almost two-thirds of the season behind us, it feels like we are entering the final stretch – nights are getting noticeable colder, and days considerably shorter. The first pumpkins are donning their colorful orange dresses, and some trees, like our river birches, plums and even the peach trees, are turning colors.

"To those who have not yet learned the secret of true happiness, begin now to study the little things in your own dooryard."

George Washington Carver

Twice a year time is in balance – the days are just as long as the nights. These events are known as Equinoxes, and mark the beginning of Spring and Fall respectively. Although September 22 marks the day of the Fall Equinox, my senses tell me this year we have already started Fall before the marked date. The saying goes that "Summer's nearly over when you see the Naked Ladies." No hallucinations involved here! The Naked Ladies I am referring to are pink flowers, botanically known as "Amaryllis belladonna." These wild lilies which seem to pop out of nowhere towards the end of summer can often be seen along roadsides. It was more than a month ago, along the coast, north of Santa Cruz, near Año Nuevo State Park at Pie Ranch, that I saw a beautiful patch of them. Also here at the farm many of the fields are in their last weeks of harvest, especially the paste tomatoes, peppers and eggplants. It is not by its warmth that we judge our coastal summers but by its fog and "balmy" 58 degrees average daily temperature. This year was no exception, and I am looking forward to some warmer and fogless days as we enter Fall. I never thought of celebrating the Fall Equinox in hopes to extend the season just a little longer! Here along the coast we might get to ignore all the merchandise, decorations and advertising that makes you believe it's time to prepare for winter just a little longer as we hope for an extended "Indian Summer." This just proves that marking the seasons is something arbitrary – not that they don't exist, but that their transitions are subtle and only as real as we allow ourselves to observe and experience them from moment to moment. I hope to see many of you this Saturday the 24th at our Fall Equinox Celebration! I especially invite everyone who enjoys the wonderful music of our fellow members the Banana Slug String Band. Activities with 'the Slugs' will start early, so if you want to be a part of this, be sure to arrive closer to 3pm. Remember, it's from 3 to 9 pm, with lots of fun and activities; bring a dish to share in the potluck, and be prepared for cool weather after sunset. We also welcome and encourage you to bring music instruments, stories to tell, or any other form of artistic contributions you'd like to share with the rest of us. – Tom

Live Earth Farm 2005 Calendar

(see calendar on website for more info)

Sat Sept 24 [Fall Equinox Celebration](#)
3 – 9 pm

Sat Oct 22 [Halloween Pumpkin Palooza](#)

Sat Nov 5 [Permaculture workshop #3](#)
Polycultures & Agroforestry; Food Forest
Design and Installation

Field Notes from Farmer Tom

A tidbit on the Concord grapes you received in your Extra Fruit Share. Did you know that Concord grapes originated in Massachusetts and are native to North America together with cranberries and blueberries? They not only taste good but, according to studies made on their nutrition and health value, also help with blood pressure problems. We should have enough to pick for another 2 to 3 weeks.

The Family Shares will have two types of radishes in their box this week: the regular red radish or French breakfast radish (both of which we've been growing throughout the year), plus a lesser known type called a watermelon radish, which looks more like a turnip: white from the outside, but pink and white on the inside with a wonderful sweet, peppery taste. I have never grown them before, but thanks to Debbie's insistence we tried them out this year, and are excited to hear your comments, to see if this is one to put on future planting lists.

Debbie's addition: I'm so thrilled Tom's finally trying to grow watermelon radishes! If they come out like the ones I've had elsewhere, they are really wonderful. The flavor is pretty much 'radish' but what I love about them is that they are incredibly beautiful when sliced – think 'miniature watermelon,' in that they have a greenish exterior (sometimes just white though), with a white ring and pink middle. Before they're sliced they don't look particularly special, but cut them open and see if you don't agree with me! 🥰

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.)

Boy, right now the box stuff is easy! All kinds of known favorites – spinach, green beans, peppers, tomatoes... probably the only items that those of you new to our CSA may not be familiar with are the mustard greens and the arugula. I'll talk about them a little (for those of you who've heard this before, you can skip over it if you like!) and then fill in with other interesting recipes. There are always interesting recipes! - Debbie

Debbie on Arugula and Mustard Greens

I see we don't have any lettuce this week, but don't despair! Both arugula and mustard greens make wonderful salad greens. I love to mix and match any combo of them with or without lettuce or spinach... just kinda whatever moves me at the moment I'm poking my head into the refrigerator deciding what I want to make for dinner (or lunch or whatever).

The longer you are a member of a CSA, the more you'll get used to how the same veggie listed in your newsletter from one month (or season) to the next may really vary in appearance or presentation. Take arugula, for example. Although the veggie list will simply say 'arugula,' sometimes it's 'wild' (I think Tom calls it 'arugula rustica') with rust-like overtones in color and a more pronounced flavor, and sometimes he'll grow the more domestic kind which is an across-the-board dark green. Sometimes he harvests it young and the leaves haven't had the time to develop the distinct shape they have at maturity. In past years arugula and mustards were tied in a bunch; lately he's been cutting and bagging them. You need to be prepared (or flexible enough!) to work with whatever comes your way!

The key thing is to have fun though; extri-

cate fear and timidity from your culinary vocabulary and replace them with a healthy curiosity. Got a bag of unidentifiable greens? Select a nice vibrant, healthy-looking leaf and chew on it. See what it tastes like. Peppery? Mustardy? Hot? Arugula and mustards are similar yet different.

Whichever I get, my routine is the same: I dump them out into a sinkful of cold water and swish 'em around good to separate them from any dirt they may hold, then pick through them, removing and composting any leaves that don't look up to snuff while tossing the good-looking leaves into my salad spinner. I spin them well, then lay them out on a cotton flour-sack type towel and either let them rest for half an hour to evaporate more moisture then stick 'em in a plastic bag in the fridge, or sometimes I'll just roll 'em up in the towel and stuff the whole thing in a bag in the fridge. Either way, the up-front work is well worth your time, as the greens are now salad-ready! I find I like both types of greens with a fruitier dressing; balsamic is wonderful with arugula and tomatoes. And I just made a salad for dinner tonight with a bunch of torn up mustard greens, some lettuce, sliced carrots and radishes, cut up apple, some feta cheese, and made a dressing with lemon juice, cider vinegar, honey, dijon mustard, a little salt, paprika, roasted walnut oil, and a bunch of slivered fresh mint. Hoo-doggy! Yum!!

Peperonata

from Jane Brody's Good Food Book
6 to 8 servings (can be served hot or cold)

1 tbsp. olive oil
4 tsp. minced garlic (about 4 large cloves)
2 large onions, chopped (about 2 C)
2 fresh chili peppers (red or green), halved lengthwise, seeded and sliced

6 sweet peppers (any color), cut into strips
3 tomatoes, cored and coarsely chopped
¼ tsp. salt, or to taste
freshly ground pepper, to taste

In a large skillet that has a cover, heat the oil for 10 seconds, and add the garlic and then the onions and chili peppers. Sauté the vegetables 1 minute. Add the sweet pepper strips, stir, cover and simmer over low heat, stirring occasionally, for about 10 minutes or until the peppers are soft but not brown. Add the tomatoes, and cook the mixture, stirring often, over moderately low heat, without covering the pan, for another 5 minutes. Season with salt and pepper to taste. Serve hot, chilled, or at room temperature.

Potato Gratin with Garlic

from Gourmet Vegetarian Feasts by Martha Rose Shulman serves 6

2 lbs. potatoes
6 cloves garlic, thinly sliced
2 tbsp. butter
sea salt and freshly ground pepper
1 C grated Gruyere cheese
1 C boiling milk

Preheat oven to 425 degrees. Wash potatoes and slice ½" thick into a bowl of cold water. When all sliced, drain and dry them. Butter a 2" deep 10" flameproof gratin or baking dish. Layer half the potatoes and dot with half the garlic slices, half the butter, some salt and pepper, and half the grated cheese. Repeat layers and pour on boiling milk. Set over medium heat and bring to a simmer. Place in upper third of oven and bake for 30 minutes, or until milk has been absorbed and top is browned. Serve. [I made this once and turned the temp down, let it bake longer (up to an hour) and got a nice yummy brown and crunchy-cheesy crust! – Debbie]