



Live Earth Farm (Com)Post

A weekly newsletter for the Live Earth Farm CSA Community

8th Harvest Week

May 16th – 22nd, 2005

Season 10

What's in the box this week:

Family Share:

Bag of arugula
Beets
Carrots
Cauliflower
Bunch of chard or kale
Green garlic
Bunch of leeks
Lettuce
Bag of red and green mustards
Radishes
Bag of stir-fry mix
Strawberries

Small Share:

Bag of arugula
Broccoli
Carrots
Bunch of collard greens
Green garlic
Bunch of leeks
Lettuce
Radishes
Bag of stir-fry mix
Strawberries

(items in the small share may be less in quantity than in the family share)

Extra Fruit:

More strawberries!

A group of students from Albion College in Michigan visited the farm last week as part of an Environmental Studies tour through California. Their focus was on comparing organic and conventional farming practices, and how a small scale farming operation like ours can stay viable in a global economy. As they were scribbling down my reflections, I couldn't help but ask how many of them were considering farming as a career. Not one raised their hand. Not one! I was stunned. Normally a few shy hands go up. "Unrewarding," "high risk," "dirty" and "low paying" were some of the reasons they gave as I probed deeper. Instead of lecturing them about how science, art, and for that matter the whole of modern civilization depended on agriculture, I had them pick strawberries. Maybe that would sweeten their view of farming. As ecologically minded as these kids were, it was surprising how remote farming had grown from their lives. I guess the statistics don't lie when they say that less than 1.9 percent of Americans are currently entrusted to feed the country. Slowly, it is coming to the attention of more and more people that growing food is not just a convenience but essential to our very existence. As our fearless leader would say, "it's a matter of national security." Not that I expect many of you to read USA Today, the Wall Street Journal or the Gilroy Dispatch, but Community Supported Agriculture was featured prominently by all three papers last week. However small the impact, maybe, just maybe, this represents a turning of the tides, an awakening to the fact that the problems of farming and our relationship with food is changing. Thousands of CSA members and their farms across the country are a testament to this. Let's hope the trend continues. – Tom

"The real universe is always one step beyond logic."

- Frank Herbert

Field Notes from Farmer Tom

This week you will have two similar looking items in your box, because in addition to your regular green garlic I am adding spring leeks. I'd intended to wait on offering the leeks until they sized up a bit more, but some have started to bolt so they needed to be harvested. Because they are so similar in appearance you need to distinguish them by other means. Try holding them to your nose and you will quickly recognize the stronger garlic scent (or as Debbie says, 'do a scratch-and-sniff test.'). Also, the green garlic is getting more mature now, and so it is slightly bulbous at the base. Lastly, this week at least, the green garlic will be loose in your box, whereas the leeks will be bunched.

You will also receive an assortment of different baby greens this week, all of which I love to sauté or stir-fry, eat raw in salads, or simply toss in with pasta or rice. The arugula and mustard greens (which come in separate bags) both have a wonderful peppery taste when eaten raw and only mildly so when cooked. The stir-fry mix has baby Asian greens, some mustard greens and baby kale all mixed together, and there is enough to

Live Earth Farm 2005 Calendar

(see calendar on website for more info)

- Sat. June 4 Permaculture workshop #1
Water mgmt; Swale design/construction
- Sat. June 18 Summer Solstice Celebration
field tours 2 – 5 pm
celebration 5 – 9 pm
- 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

enjoy them in different ways, either raw or cooked.

Farm Volunteer Day

Fridays are now Volunteer Day at the farm, so come on out and enjoy the farm and help us out a little in the process! Last Friday Georgina, Steve Volk plus kids, and Ash came out to help pack the CSA shares and prepare the veggies for Saturday's market. It was lots of fun, and allowed our farmworkers to catch up with important field work. So mark your calendars and come join us for a future Friday afternoon on the farm! Please call Tom on his cell phone (831) 760-0436 if you have any questions. □

Creating an 'Exchange Box' at your pick-up site

Many CSAs have exchange boxes at their pick-up sites. The way it works is that if you do not care for a certain item in your share you can place it in an exchange container so somebody else can take it, and if you like something in the exchange container you are free to take it. Live Earth Farm does not have a formal system in place for this; Tom leaves it up to each site and its participating members to set it up. An empty share box can be used to create a container for this purpose. He suggests that the container be labeled so that it is not confused with the regular share boxes. Please call Tom (831) 760-0436 if you have any questions. □

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.)

This week, another member contribution. Lisa tells me, "Please give our heartfelt thanks to everyone at Live Earth Farm. I've noticed the boxes contain a lot of caring too. That means a lot to Mark and me." - Debbie

What I'd do with this week's box

by Lisa Bautista, Santa Cruz

Every Monday afternoon I check the farm's website to see what we're going to be getting. It's like Christmas every week. So I was delighted to learn the contents of the box even earlier this week and share some ideas with all of you. Mark and I are dedicated foodies and we're enjoying our third season with Live Earth Farm. Because it is just the two of us at home, we only get the small box, but we get double extra fruit.

Mark and I eat a lot of salad, and there's lots to work with this week. Our salad base would be any combination of the lettuce, arugula and stir fry mix. We might top the greens with sliced strawberries, a little thinly sliced green garlic or leek, and toasted pecans. This would be great dressed with a balsamic vinaigrette. Another salad we like is roast beets, goat cheese and toasted pecans dressed with a raspberry (or other fruity) vinaigrette. Sometimes we make an everything-but-the-kitchen-sink salad with cauliflower, broccoli, carrots, fresh beets and radishes topped with a dressing (we love Annie's Naturals "Goddess").

Next I'd probably make some cauliflower soup. I'd sauté some of the leeks and green garlic in oil and then add pieces of cauliflower (raw or roasted) and spices (my two favorite spice combinations are below). Then I'd pour in some veggie or chicken stock and simmer until everything is soft. I usually puree the entire thing for a smooth

consistency but it could be left chunky, if you prefer. The final step is to taste and adjust with seasonings. As I mentioned, I have two ways to take this soup – either to Italy by using thyme and rosemary, or to India by adding some fresh ginger and curry powder, then finishing with some coconut milk and fresh cilantro. One note of caution: if you use roasted cauliflower, the flavor is much more deep, complex and wonderful, but the color is a muddy brown. The appearance can be brightened with some fresh chopped herbs or grated carrot sprinkled on top just before serving.

Speaking of roast veggies, I see lots of ingredients for a beautiful roast veggie platter. The leeks, cauliflower, green garlic, carrots and beets would all work well. Just wash, cut into chunks, toss with some olive oil and spread on a baking tray. Sprinkle with some salt, pepper (maybe some fresh herbs too?) and roast until the outside is brown and the inside is tender. Because veggies roast at different rates, you may want to group items by density – carrots, beets and cauliflower on one tray, leeks and green garlic on another.

There are lots of greens this week too. Many of you have heard of spanakopeta but I also make chardandbeetgreenakopeta! The beet greens and red chard turn the filling a lovely shade of pink. Follow the standard method for sautéing greens (I use the stems too). Once cooked and cooled, squeeze out as much of the moisture as possible, then add some crumbled feta, sautéed onions, a beaten egg and some black pepper. Wrap in phyllo dough (instructions are on the package), brush the tops with melted butter, sprinkle with grated nutmeg and bake. Left-over filling is great in scrambling eggs and served with pita.

I love the kale we get from Live Earth! It has a faint taste of honey. My favorite way to prepare it is to braise it (sauté in olive oil and then add some stock and simmer) and then add some cooked sausage, cooked potatoes and a dash of hot sauce. I'm still a bit unfamiliar with collards and turnip greens but I made a wonderful pot of red beans last year. I simply put about a pound of dry red beans and some veggie stock in the crock pot with some sautéed onions and the greens cut into strips. Cook all day and serve with cornbread.

I've saved the best for last -- the strawberries. Since we get double extra fruit, we've been going through seven to eight baskets per week! I use them to top oatmeal or yogurt in the morning for breakfast, or on top of ice cream or chocolate mousse for dessert. They go in smoothies and just into our mouths because they are so good. We also freeze 'em for winter, plus I make a lot of jam ever since I found this easy microwave jam recipe in a Sunset book: In a 2 qt. microwave container, crush about 3 1/2 C whole strawberries to make 2 C. Add 1 C sugar, 1 1/2 tbsp. fresh lemon juice and let sit (even overnight) until juices form. Add 1/2 tsp. butter (to minimize foaming) and microwave uncovered on high for 16 minutes, stopping to stir every two minutes. After 16 minutes, test consistency by putting a spoonful of jam onto a small plate and refrigerating for 15 minutes. If you like thicker jam, reheat it to boiling and then microwave for two minutes longer. Makes about two cups.

There's one more important thing we do with our veggies. Even the small box is sometimes more than we can use up ourselves, so we share the extras with friends