



Live Earth Farm (Com)Post

A weekly newsletter for the Live Earth Farm CSA Community

10th Harvest Week May 29th – June 4th, 2006

Season 11

What's in the box this week: (content differences between Family and Small Shares are underlined/italicized)

Family Share:

Strawberries
Artichokes (3)
Avocados
Red cabbage
Carrots
Fava beans
Fennel
Cooking greens (farm choice*)
Green garlic
Lettuce
Onions
French breakfast radishes

Small Share:

Strawberries
Artichokes (3)
Loose beets
Carrots
Fava beans
Cooking greens (farm choice*)
Green garlic
Lettuce
French breakfast radishes

*Chard or bok choy

Extra Fruit:

3 more baskets of strawberries

On the way to drop my son off at school, I often listen to National Public Radio (NPR) to catch up on the latest news. David, my now 12-year-old son, while listening to the latest report on Iraq war casualties, made the comment that all he ever hears in the news is *bad* news. He has been listening to the news with more interest since one of his weekly homework assignments is to write about important current events in the world. His reports have mostly been about war, natural disasters, global warming, or other similar incidences of violence and destruction. Every time I have a chance, we explore and talk about his view of current world affairs; I of course try to give him a more positive perspective, aware that at his age he is starting to search for new references beyond the familiar ones at home.

As he learns more about human history, I am sure he will have a lot of questions about the world he is about to inherit. Like most people he first tries to understand the world in a more anthropocentric way, but at the same time he is also learning something that I never did as a child: he already realizes he is not only a member of his fellow human community, but that his existence is interconnected with all other life forms he shares this planet with. Last week when he forgot to feed the chickens he is currently responsible to care for, he quickly realized the consequences of his actions, as two of his flock of little chicks died as a result. After burying them, it gave us the opportunity to discuss the life cycle of living organisms, and it dawned on him that he was subject to the same rules of nature when he asked, "will I also turn into soil after I die?" This sense of connection with nature's forces does not mean we can avoid certain "catastrophes" from happening, but we hopefully make better choices that allow us to adapt. And this is the good news, as we have proven to be very adaptable, with a tremendous capacity to recover from disaster. On Memorial Day I want to believe that we have the capacity to prepare for the future by remembering our past. In the Greek myth, Pandora's curiosity releases the forces of chaos and suffering on earth but at the same time she also releases the power of Hope. It is Hope in the future which I want children like David to have as they face the uncertainties inherent in today's world and understand that change and evolution is an inevitable continuum. With that in mind, here is a poem from the magazine "YES! - A journal for positive futures" which I thought would be appropriate to share. Happy belated Memorial Day! - Tom

Live Earth Farm 2006 Calendar

(see calendar on website for more info)

Sat. June 17	<u>Summer Solstice Celebration</u> field tours 2 - 5 celebrations 5 - 9
Aug 25, 26, and 27	<u>Children's Mini Camp</u> Friday evening to noon Sunday
Sat. Sept. 23	<u>Fall Equinox Celebration</u> 3pm until dark
Sat. Oct 21	<u>Halloween Pumpkin Palooza</u>

Message from the Hopi Elders

"To my fellow swimmers:

There is a river flowing very fast.

It is so great and swift, that there are those who will be afraid.

They will try to hold on to the shore.

They are being torn apart and will suffer greatly.

Know that the river has its destination.

We must let go of the shore, push off into the river, keep our heads above water.

At this time in our history, we are to take nothing personally, least of all ourselves...

Gather yourselves. Banish the word struggle from your attitude and vocabulary.

All that we do now must be done in a sacred manner and in celebration.

We are the ones we have been waiting for."

Field Notes from Farmer Tom

This week we'll be harvesting the last of our fava beans. The artichokes come from a fellow farmer, Jeff Larkey, whom some of you may have heard of; he runs Route 1 Farm, a pioneering and long-standing organic farm along the north coast of Santa Cruz county. Farming on the coast they have larger plantings of artichokes, and this particular type comes from Spain and has a delicious flavor and good size heart. Looking into the future, in a few more weeks we can expect to see Lacinato or "dinosaur" kale, Italian parsley, mustard greens, cucumbers and summer squash in our shares.

Meanwhile, those of you waiting for the Extra Fruit share to be something other than strawberries: the first blackberries are probably 3 weeks away, and should be ready by the Summer Solstice celebration on the 17th of June. *Where has our Spring gone?* 🍓

Recycle/reuse: what to bring back to (or leave at) your pick-up site

Everyone knows you're not supposed to take the waxed boxes your shares are packed in home with you, but did you realize there are other things we reuse as well? We would welcome getting back the little green plastic baskets the strawberries come in. We can definitely re-use those. Either empty your berries out and leave the baskets behind in the strawberry flat boxes (please don't take those either – we re-use them too), or bring the empties back the following week when you come to pick up your share. Also, if you get eggs, we will re-use the egg cartons as well, so don't put them into your recycling... bring them back to us! Lastly, if you don't want the plastic bags (either the box liners or the individual produce bags), leave them behind and we'll take those back as well, BUT PLEASE make sure the bags are weighted down by something so they don't blow away in the wind and become litter!!! Thanks! 🍓

Notes from Debbie's Kitchen

Have a recipe you'd like to share? Contact me at deb@writerguy.com or 408.288.9469.

Check out my **recipe database** for a comprehensive list of recipes 'by key ingredient' (pictures too!). Go to our website and click on "recipes" (on the left).

"Hot-ziggety-pooch!" my grandfather used to say when he was excited about something. Well I'm excited about getting artichokes, something I've wanted in the CSA boxes since the beginning! Thanks Tom, and thanks Route 1 Farm! - Debbie

Artichokes: basic preparation tips

Artichokes can be steamed, boiled, cooked in a pressure cooker or baked (baking is usually reserved for stuffed artichokes). I like to use a pressure cooker because they cook so quickly (boiling or steaming can take 30 to 45 minutes, whereas medium artichokes are done in about 8 minutes in a pressure cooker).

Store your artichokes in the fridge and don't wash them until you're ready to use 'em.

How to wash them: I usually hold them by the stem and immerse them upside down in a pot or basin of cold water then swish 'em around and plunge 'em up and down vigorously to try to dislodge any bugs or goodies hiding in between the leaves.

I like to have a cut lemon handy when preparing artichokes; any cuts I make I rub briefly with the cut side of a lemon so that the artichoke won't discolor. Peel off and discard (compost) the toughest outermost leaves then trim the stem. Tom says these are a thornless variety, so you needn't trim off the normally-spiny leaf tips, but if this turns out to not be the case, I usually take a sharp knife and cut off the top of the artichoke to essentially trim away several leaf tips at once, then use kitchen scissors to snip off any remaining thorny tips.

Important: don't cook artichokes in an aluminum pot as this will turn the chokes an unattractive grey-green color. Stainless steel, teflon-coated or enamel works best.

Try putting some aromatics in your cooking water: my favorite combo is a piece of celery or celery leaves, a smashed clove or two of garlic (yes you can use a couple chunks of green garlic instead), and the half-a-lemon – squeeze in some of the juice then throw it into the pot rind and all.

Whether boiled, steamed or pressure-cooked, the chokes are done when an inner leaf pulls off with a gentle tug and its flesh can be easily scraped off.

Have a dish of melted butter for dipping, and in case there is anyone out there who hasn't ever eaten artichokes before, remember, you don't eat the whole leaf, you scrape off the soft fleshy part at the leaf's base with your teeth and discard the leaf. Once you get to the tender inner leaves, you can usually heat the whole leaf. When you get to the fuzzy 'choke' in the center, use a spoon to scoop this out (you don't eat this either), then you're at the best part: the heart! Cut the heart (the base of the artichoke) into pieces and dip in butter, pop into your mouth... and savor and enjoy!

Artichokes are also great cold. Cook them ahead of time and refrigerate them, then use any number of things for dipping: mayonnaise with a squeeze of lemon juice and a bit of garlic mixed in is my favorite, but you can also dip them in all kinds of salad dressings or yogurt. Use your imagination!

Cheese and herb stuffed artichokes

from "Your Organic Kitchen" by Jesse Ziff Cool

4 medium artichokes
8 oz. soft goat cheese
2 garlic cloves, minced
2 tbsp. fresh chives
1 tbsp. chopped fresh oregano
salt and pepper
olive oil
juice of 1 large lemon

Place a steamer basket in a large pot with 2" of water. Bring to a boil over high heat.

Using scissors, trim off the sharp tips of the outer leaves of the artichokes. Place in the steamer basket and steam for 25 to 35 minutes, or until tender. Remove and turn upside down on a plate to cool slightly.

Preheat oven to 375 degrees. Gently open the center of the artichokes. Using a teaspoon, remove and discard the inner chokes and thistles.

In a small bowl, combine the cheese, garlic, chives and oregano. Season with salt and pepper. Evenly divide this mixture among the cavities of the artichokes. Press the leaves back together and rub gently with oil. Season with salt and pepper to taste and squeeze the lemon juice over the artichokes.

Place stuffed artichokes in a shallow pan and bake for 15 minutes, or until heated through. Cut each artichoke in half and dip the leaves into the cheese mixture.