



# Live Earth Farm (Com)Post

A weekly newsletter for the Live Earth Farm CSA Community

13th Harvest Week

June 19<sup>th</sup> – 25<sup>th</sup>, 2006

Season 11

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

### Family Share:

Strawberries (1 bskt)

Bok Choi

Cauliflower (Lakeside)

Chard

Dandelion greens (Lakeside)

Green garlic

Lettuce (2)

Mixed bag of mustard greens

Onions

Italian Parsley

Large bag of Spinach

### Small Share:

(no strawberries... see Tom's field notes)

Bok Choi

Cauliflower

Chard

Green garlic

Kohlrabi

Lettuce (1)

Mixed bag of mustard greens

Onions

Small bag of Spinach

### Extra Fruit Option:

3 more baskets of strawberries

The glow of celebration could still be felt all around the farm on Sunday morning as David (our 12 year old) and I woke up next to a still smoldering heap of ashes from the bonfire that lit up our fire circle the night before. The calmness on Sunday morning almost makes Saturday's celebration feel like a dream. The ground I am laying on, curled up in my sleeping bag, is moist from the morning dew, but the memory of dancing and swaying to the sound of Zimbabwean marimba music is still vivid. Once again the farm was transformed as so many of you came to celebrate, engaging with the land by picking berries, baking bread, touring the farm, milking Ivy our mother goat or planting seeds with Amy. When it was time for dinner we were made aware of what bonds our community: it is the sharing and deep care for healthy, tasty, sustainably grown food. Saturday's potluck covered 5 long tables with a diverse, delicious, and abundant assortment of homemade dishes. Seeing food made from farm veggies on everyone's plates is a wonderful encouragement

for any farmer; it represents the greatest appreciation for the work that goes into growing it. It never ceases to amaze me how the land weaves its magic to revitalize and nourish our bodies and spirits during these gatherings, one only had to look at the children with their faces painted or stained from the strawberries they kept dipping into chocolate, their excitement when we lit the bonfire, or the enthusiasm expressed by everyone when four little bats were released by CSA member Monique Smith and her fellow bat rehabilitators. Many, many thanks to all who participated and helped to make this another great celebration. Happy Summer Solstice to all and have a wonderful summer. - Tom

*"...and forget not that the earth delights to feel your bare feet and the wind longs to play with your hair."*

- Kahlil Gibran

## Field Notes from Farmer Tom

Attack of the Killer Spider Mites. Sounds like a scary Hollywood movie! It could be if you were a mite or a strawberry farmer. The Two-Spotted Spider Mites are actually little spider-looking insects interested in only one thing: sucking the juices out of strawberry leaves (no they don't suck blood). They cause what is probably the most serious damage to our berry plants. With the warm weather their populations explode and only the release of an equally voracious mite known as the Red Spider Mite can control them. We released several hundred thousands of these beneficial Red Mites (also known as Persimilliss) earlier in the spring. But somehow the Two Spotted Mites have maintained the upper hand in some parts of our fields, slowing our production until the balance between the two mite populations is reestablished. The good thing is our blackberries and raspberries are starting to ripen, so in 2 weeks the Extra Fruit shares should be seeing more than just strawberries.

On the vegetable front, in this week's Small box you will see Kohlrabi again. We briefly had them earlier in the spring. Next week we'll have more (so everyone can have some), and I am sure it will become more popular after the World Cup Soccer is done, since it is from the German "Kueche" where it got its fame. Kohlrabi belongs to the cabbage family. Debbie calls it the "Sputnik veggie" -- it has long-stemmed leaves which extend out and up like spokes from a distinctly space-ship-shaped corm (that is actually a swollen part of the stem which grows above ground, rather than part of the root which grows in the ground like a beet or carrot). Kohlrabi comes in two colors, purple or pale green. It originated in northern Europe, and is fast growing and more drought

## Live Earth Farm 2006 Calendar

(see calendar on website for more info)

Tues. July 18 Forum on the Farm: Integrating Spirituality with Building Sustainable Food Systems

Aug 25, 26, and 27 Children's Mini Camp  
Friday evening to noon Sunday

Sat. Sept. 23 Fall Equinox Celebration  
3pm until dark

Sat. Oct 21 Halloween Pumpkin Palooza

tolerant than most brassicas. The corms are best eaten young when they are the size of a tennis ball or smaller. They should be peeled before cooking, especially if they are older, as most of the fibers are in the outer parts of the corm. I personally like it grated raw into my salad, a bit like jicama.

No carrots this week; should start up again with a new harvest next week. Green Beans are around the corner, and so are summer squash and cucumbers. Summer is starting to bless us with our favorite veggies. Tomatoes are still green but sizing up! 🍅

## Member to Member Forum

A few seasons back we allocated some space in the newsletter for inter-member communication, and we're thinking of reviving it. So if you wish to communicate something you think would be of value to the rest of the CSA membership, you may use this newsletter as a forum to do so. To submit something to be included here, please contact the editor, Debbie (deb@writerguy.com), by Sunday night to get it into the following week's newsletter. 🍷

## 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).

*Thanks to everyone who put recipes out with their dishes at the Solstice potluck. I have collected them and will use them when their key ingredient is something we get in the box! One recipe I didn't get but really wanted (I saw it when I got my food, but it had disappeared by the time I collected the recipes!) was the one for the beet spread... it was brought to last year's potluck too, I remember. So would whoever made that wonderful stuff please email me with the recipe (or call the farm if you don't use email)? It's a good one, and I'd love to have it to share with everyone! - Debbie*

### Dandelion Greens

Tom's fond of giving us our share of 'edible weeds' during the season, most notably purslane and dandelion greens. Purslane is always from our fields (nobody else I've heard of actually grows it as a crop despite its incredible nutrition value), but this week the dandelion greens are from nearby Lakeside Organic Gardens. I found this next bit of info online, from healthyrecipes.com:

"Dandelion is corrupted French for 'dents de lion' (tooth of the lion), referring to the jagged edge of the leaf.... It is universally considered a noxious weed that destroys lawns.... Just because it grows wild in your yard should not dissuade you from taking advantage of this 'first crop of spring' as a nice salad [only ALWAYS make sure they have not been sprayed with pesticides! – Debbie]. Most people prefer to eat it 'wilted' with vinegar dressing. Dandelion is a member of the sunflower family. Its official name; *Taraxacum officinale*; is derived from the Greek words, 'taraxos' meaning 'disorder', and 'akos', meaning 'remedy', so we understand that dandelion has long been regarded to be a therapeutic herb."

Or, to put it more simply, they're good for you! They can be used as a substitute for spinach or Swiss chard in any number of recipes, from ravioli and lasagna fillings to a simple sauté in olive oil with garlic. Of

course they can simply be used as a salad green too, although unless they're pretty small and tender it's a pretty bitter green, so be sure to use an 'assertive' dressing.

### Garlic Parsley Dandelion Greens

(found online, modified; serves 4)

4 tbsp. butter  
4 tbsp. fresh parsley, finely chopped  
1 green garlic, washed, finely chopped  
salt and pepper to taste [the recipe called for 1 tsp. each; sounded like an awful lot!]  
1 bu. dandelion greens, washed & shredded  
1 tbsp. pimientos, chopped [optional; they're mostly for color I'm sure]

Melt butter in pan. Add parsley, garlic, salt and pepper. Fry gently until garlic softens. Add optional pimientos and cook another few minutes. Add shredded dandelion greens and simmer gently for 5 minutes or until tender. Serve hot ("as a side dish to pork or chicken," the recipe suggests).

### Chard (or Spinach) with Garlic Bread Crumbs

made this one up last week

4 tbsp. bread crumbs (see note)  
1 stalk green garlic, thinly sliced/chopped  
couple o' good blorps of olive oil  
1 bu. chard, washed, ends trimmed off  
salt and pepper  
grated fresh parmesan or romano cheese

Easy way to prep the chard: bring a pot of salted water to a boil. Add your chard whole, stems down (like you were putting 'em in a vase), then after a little bit, take your wooden spoon and push the rest of the greens down into the water. Boil oh, 2-3 minutes, then drain well and chop.

Meanwhile, heat oil in a skillet. Add green garlic and sauté a few minutes until getting soft. Add bread crumbs, salt and pepper and continue to cook until breadcrumbs get toasty and browned. Stir in chopped chard. Serve topped with grated cheese.

Note re: bread crumbs – to make your own, simply take a slice of bread, tear it into pieces, and drop it into your blender or food processor and pulse until you have crumb-sized pieces. Warning: don't do this with old dry bread or you won't get crumbs... you'll get bread dust! (I know, I tried.)

### Bok Choi Miscellaneous

This is a more delicate green that at first glance. You only need just barely cook it, as any residual heat will continue to cook it further. Add it at the last minute to soups and sautés for this very reason, and if you're chopping it up first, add the stems first and the leaves for just barely the last minute, just until wilted. I think it'd be good sliced up and added to miso soup (or just plain chicken broth!) along with some thinly sliced green onion (the stalks of our fresh onions are perfect for this) just before serving. Or, try grilling them! Make sure you've done your best to wash any grit out from in between the leaves, then trim the base (but otherwise leaving the heads whole), and slice in half lengthwise, maybe sprinkling with a little salt and pepper. Grill a minute or so on each side, just enough to wilt-crisp the leaves and make grill marks on the stems! Serve with some nice fish.

### Savory Spinach Pancakes

an amalgam of online recipes

~10 oz. fresh spinach leaves, washed, steam-wilted and finely chopped  
4 eggs + ¼ C milk (or 2 eggs + ¾ C milk)  
¼ C flour  
salt and pepper to taste

Optional additions: bit of nutmeg, grated parmesan, feta cheese, minced onion, diced tomato, diced cooked bacon...

Combine ingredients into a batter and cook on a hot buttered griddle until nicely browned. Serve topped with an optional dollop of sour cream!