



Live Earth Farm (Com)Post

A weekly newsletter for the Live Earth Farm CSA Community

18th Harvest Week

July 24th – 30th, 2006

Season 11

What's in the box this week: (content differences between Family and Small Shares are underlined/italicized; items with a "+" in Family Shares are more in quantity than in Small)

Family Share:

Strawberries (1 bskt)
Arugula
Basil
Golden beets
Broccolini
Carrots
Chard
Cucumbers +
Fennel
Green beans +
Kale
Summer squash +

Small Share:

Strawberries (1 bskt)
Arugula
Basil
Broccolini
Carrots
Chard
Cucumbers
Fennel
Green beans
Summer squash

Extra Fruit Option:

1 basket of strawberries, 1 basket of blackberries or raspberries, and 1 basket of Sungold cherry tomatoes!

There seems no end to this extreme hot spell; the cool, foggy marine layer which typically hugs our coast this time of year has not materialized in any significant way this season. Just like we need to keep our bodies constantly hydrated, our water pumps are running around the clock to deliver this life giving liquid to all our crops. Watering is the most important task right now. It requires the person responsible to enter into a very intimate relationship with all living organisms on the farm, constantly monitoring and providing on a timely basis the right amount of water. Tanks need to be filled, valves need to be opened or closed, pressure and quantity of water flow are continuously monitored, and supply lines are always repaired to avoid any loss and delay of water to our crops. It is during extreme heat periods that we become conscious of the importance of water and how adapted our food systems are to specific niches in the environment. We are all becoming aware of the dangers and impact of global warming, and farming and food production in general will change as the climatic conditions shift. Small, diversified farming systems will most likely be more resilient, because they are more quickly able to change their cropping patterns. Personally I am convinced we need to be creative and experiment with new technologies that mimic nature's techniques for adapting to the ever increasing extremes in our environment. We can't change the weather, so as daunting as the task seems, we all need to do our part. All over the world, new and effective initiatives are springing up that offer industries, corporations and individuals the capacity to radically scale back their net contributions to global warming. This means changing one's transportation habits, planting more trees, reducing the amount of tillage... the list goes on. Our small acts of defiance against the intransigence of institutional climate change may not win the war against global warming by themselves, but they can and will make a difference. They always do!! - Tom

"Alliance, like all forms of family and community, needs to be as constant as the faithful stars."

- Eric Alan, from
'Nature as a Spiritual Path'

Field Notes from Farmer Tom

The potatoes will be ready for harvest next week. We decided to leave them in the field a few more weeks so their skins can cure a little more which minimizes damage from peeling and bruising. So next week, everyone will get freshly dug potatoes. The potato's cousins, the tomatoes, are also being harvested. With all this heat, their ripening has been accelerated. Armenian cucumbers, which look like striped English cucumbers, are sizing up and we have a nice and large enough stand to supply everyone with them. 🍆

In this heat...

A note on keeping your veggies fresh: Because of the heat, I recommend picking up your veggies as close to the delivery time as possible, and then cooling them down as fast as you can by refrigeration. [Note from Debbie: you can perk up limp greens – arugula, kale, chard, broccolini – by soaking them in a sink of cold water for a while. Be sure to spin or otherwise drain well, then blot dry or wrap in a cotton towel (or paper towels), place in a plastic bag, and refrigerate.] We

Live Earth Farm 2006 Calendar

(see calendar on website for more info)

Aug 25, 26, and 27 Children's Mini Camp
*** Sold Out***

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

Sat. Oct 21 Halloween Pumpkin Palooza

harvest and then cool your veggies here on the farm, however our delivery truck is not refrigerated, so during these hot days we recommend that you avoid letting them sit outside too long at your respective delivery sites. 🌱

Mini Camp is sold out

Tom's wife, Constance, has asked me to inform everyone that this year's Children's Mini Camp is completely sold out.

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).

Whoa, doggie, it's hot!! This is our umpteenth consecutive day of 90+ degree indoor temperatures at the hottest part of the day (we don't have AC). Needless to say, I've been trying all sorts of ways to minimize using heat in cooking, and to have cool/cold things to eat using what's in the box. I can't do anything to make the heat go away, so here are some insights into how to cope, at least foodwise! - Debbie

Planning ahead

What I've found is that there are lots of 'cold' recipes out there that involve some initial cooking, followed by refrigeration. So plan ahead and do the cooking step early in the morning, or at night, before you go to bed, so that come mealtime, your recipe is nice and satisfyingly cold.

I've been pre-cooking broccoli, green beans, and greens (kale, collards, whatever you have), then running them under cold water to cool quickly, draining away the water well (you can literally squeeze the water from the cooked leafy greens, then chop them for easy later use), then refrigerating them. Combine cooked chilled greens with any number of dressings and treatments. Note that this is somewhat different than many recipes which call for dressing the cooked greens while warm and *then* refrigerating them (like bean salad, for instance), and the latter is better for 'marrying' the flavors, but I find that greens and broccoli go olive-colored when the dressing is acidic. And the former method allows more of the veggie's flavor to come through, rather than just the dressing. No one way is necessarily better than the other, I'm just making you aware of your options!

Quick cooling

If you are cooking something that you need to cool, then refrigerate (like a cold soup, for example), there's a quick way to cool it down so it doesn't radiate any more heat into your kitchen than necessary. Under normal circumstances, simply letting it sit out until it cools to room temp is perfectly fine. But in this heat, I have a better solution. [And by the way, don't put hot things directly into your fridge; not only will it strain to cool them down (and warm other things

in your fridge in the process), but also it will generate a lot more heat in your kitchen as your refrigerator's condenser coils put out heat as they work to cool its contents.] Here's the trick: put 3 to 4 inches of cold water in your sink (maybe even add a few ice cubes) and immediately set your hot pot in this, lid off, stirring. The cold water will conduct the heat away from the pot's contents in a few minutes. It's a great science demonstration for your kids too – show them how cold the water is before you start, then have them feel the water after you've been stirring the contents of the pot for awhile. The water will warm up and the pot will cool down, eventually coming to equilibrium. The cold water conducts the heat away much more quickly than air, and since what we're trying to do here is NOT heat the air any more than we have to... it works great. Then let the warm water down the drain (or if you can recycle it somehow, all the better!), and put your pot in the refrigerator to finish chilling.

Take the heat outside

If you have a grill or outdoor burner, this is the time to use it! Grill those summer squash, grill that fennel! I actually like cold grilled meats and veggies the next day. In this heat, don't bother reheating leftovers – eat 'em cold! (Really!)

Easy Lentil-Veggie Salad

This was something I made up last week, two variations, and it could easily be modified to work with what you have in the box. It's good leftover the next day too. No cooking necessary! It has essentially three parts: the lentils, the veggies, and the dressing.

Canned lentils, rinsed and drained
Feta or chevre (optional)

Veggie options:

grated carrots
grated cucumber (or summer squash)
broccoli nubbins (cut off the very top green parts of broccoli, making tiny tiny florets)
cold cooked chopped greens (see 'planning ahead,' above)
cold cooked green beans, cut crosswise into small (1/4") pieces (ditto)

The dressing, variation 1:
crushed clove of garlic
grated zest of a lemon or lime
juice of same lemon or lime
olive oil
ground cumin
minced fresh cilantro
salt, to taste
optional hot sauce like Tabasco or such

The dressing, variation 2:
crushed clove of garlic
grated zest of a lemon
juice of same lemon
olive oil
a bunch of chopped fresh basil
salt, to taste (or use some soy sauce)

Combine all parts – lentils, veggies, dressing – and eat (or refrigerate and eat later). I served this either on a bed of lettuce leaves, or with a wedge of cool, crisp green cabbage. Use the lettuce or cabbage as 'scoops' to eat the salad with.

Chilled Curried Carrot Soup

submitted by member Isabelle Magnin, from Bon Appetit magazine originally, she says

2 tbsp. unsalted butter or olive oil
1 lb. carrots, thinly sliced
1 med. onion, chopped
1 lg. shallot, sliced
2 cloves garlic, chopped
1 heaping tbsp. minced fresh ginger (Isabelle used powdered and said this was fine)
1 tsp. ground coriander
3/4 to 1 tsp. curry powder
3 C broth (veggie or chicken)
1/2 C coconut milk
1 tbsp. fresh lime juice
fresh cillantro leaves for garnish
toasted pepitas or pine nuts for garnish

Heat butter or oil in a big pot over medium heat. Add carrots, onions, shallots and cook about 6 minutes, stirring occasionally. Add garlic, ginger, coriander, curry and salt. Cook until fragrant for another minute. Pour in broth, cover partially and bring to a boil. Reduce the heat and simmer gently until veggies are very soft, 25-30 minutes. Cool, then puree. Stir in coconut milk and lime juice. Season to taste with salt and pepper. Let chill, serve with the garnish. You may need to add more liquid if it's too thick.