



# Live Earth Farm (Com)Post

A weekly newsletter for the Live Earth Farm CSA Community

20th Harvest Week

August 7<sup>th</sup> – 13<sup>th</sup>, 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)  
Broccoli +  
Carrots  
Chard  
Cilantro  
Cucumbers  
Garlic  
Kale  
Hot peppers (loose in box)  
Sweet peppers (bagged w/tomatoes) +  
Potatoes +  
Heirloom and early girl tomatoes +  
Sungold cherry tomatoes

**Small Share:**

Strawberries (1 bskt)  
Broccoli  
Carrots  
Chard  
Dandelion greens  
Kale  
Parsley  
Hot peppers (loose in box)  
Sweet peppers (bagged w/tomatoes)  
Potatoes  
Heirloom and early girl tomatoes

**Extra Fruit Option:**

1 bskt. of strawberries, 1 bskt. of raspberries, and 1 bskt. of cherry tomatoes

[Farmer Tom emailed me from halfway around the world for this week's newsletter! – Debbie] Our daughter Elisa was baptized this last weekend, an occasion that drew the whole family together. Since both Constance's and my family live in Europe, and traveling to California would be too strenuous for both of our parents, we are here in the northeast of Spain to celebrate this moment... a moment of relationship, a moment to acknowledge the differences while recognizing the essential spirit we share; pure, spontaneous and transparent in every child. For me, a young child is a powerful reminder that we have all risen from the same natural soil. However, just as different species coexist in nature, so exist different faiths. When I see our family gathered to honor and proclaim their love and support for a child, I am inspired and hopeful that we can do the same for our planet. How wonderful if all religions could serve both individuals and the earth by harmonizing with the natural systems from which they have risen. The ritual of baptism draws upon the four basic elements in nature: fire represented by a lit candle, water which is used to wash the child's head, oil representing the earth, and the air we breathe to express our prayers and thoughts. As a Buddhist saying reminds us: "...there are many paths up a mountain, and those paths must all respect the mountain." - Tom

*"To make a great garden one must have a great idea or a great opportunity."*

*- quote chosen by my son David, from the book "Zen Gardening" by Veronica Ray*

## Important heads-up regarding email, spam filters and early registration

Hey everyone, this is Debbie. Well I've just experienced a first. Today at the farm we received an email, from *our own email address*, which was complete and total spam! Someone or some company, somehow, has used our email address without our permission to send out spam. This concerns me greatly, because email is my main form of communication to our members and potential members, and lately there have been some signs that emails I've sent to people have not gone through. If you are not getting email from the farm, it is possible that your ISP (Internet Service Provider) or your spam filter may be blocking it because of this illegal use of our address. Many spam filters are customizable, and so I'd like to make a special request: in whatever form your incoming email server or filter or blocker takes, please set it to *always accept* email from "farmers@cruzio.com" – the farm's email address. This fall I will be emailing everyone about early registration for next season, and since we are all sold out and have a waiting list, I want to make sure existing members get first crack at registering for shares for next year before I open it up to the waiting list and then the general public. If your email system is blocking emails from the farm, you won't get this important information, and I'd hate for anyone who wants a share next year to miss out. Just so you know, whenever I send you an email (unless I am replying to an email you sent me) I always start the subject line with "Live Earth CSA –" or "Live Earth Farm CSA –" so that it is clear that the message is coming from the farm. And we NEVER sell or give our members' email addresses out to other parties. ☺

## Farmer Tom Farms the Sun

The idea of harnessing the sun's energy is one of the first and most vital of Nature's inventions. It has allowed for all life forms, including ourselves, to evolve out of the murky depths of our planet's early primordial stew. We are just now starting to pay more attention, to focus our innovative minds and attempt to mimic the process of photosynthe-

## Live Earth Farm 2006 Calendar

(see calendar on website for more info)

Aug 25, 26, and 27	<u>Children's Mini Camp</u> *** Sold Out***
Sat. Sept. 23	<u>Fall Equinox Celebration</u> 3pm until dark
Sat. Oct 21	<u>Halloween Pumpkin Palooza</u>

sis by capturing the sun's photons and turning them into electricity. When you think about it, farming is ultimately the turning of sunshine into usable energy in the form of food. Over the last few weeks we have started to also turn sunshine into electricity with a newly installed photovoltaic system. My heart made a small leap of joy when we turned the system on and our PG&E electric meter started slowing down and actually turn backwards in the middle of the day. Our new 15.3 kilowatt ground-mounted solar array is primarily helping to power our large, walk-in cooler and the hard working water pumps for our wells. Besides the benefit of less carbon dioxide going into the atmosphere, I am very excited to be reducing our monthly electric bill! With the combined benefit of State and Federal incentives and our reduced need for the ever-rising cost of electricity, we expect the system will pay for itself in 5 to 6 years. The solar array sits atop the hill behind our house, and captures the maximum solar radiation that hits the land throughout the day. The entire system was designed and installed by Full Circle Energy Cooperative, based in Santa Cruz. This cooperative has over 60 years of combined experience between its worker-members. If you are interested in solar energy, come visit the farm and check out our new system! Or if you'd like, you can call Claudine, a CSA member and also part the cooperative at (831) 423-5204, or president of Full Circle Energy, Geoff Shuey, at (831) 345-1645, or see their website [www.fullcirclesolar.com](http://www.fullcirclesolar.com). 🌱

## Notes from Debbie's Kitchen

Have a recipe you'd like to share? Contact me at [deb@writerguy.com](mailto: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).

### Dandelion greens, new info

Tom didn't tell me that the dandelion greens we got last week (and which the small share is getting again this week) were so different than we've had before: small, tender and bagged instead of large, long and bunched (beautiful to look at too: slender little green leaves with the dark purple-red stems). So I experimented further with cooking them, and came to some new conclusions. I now believe that they are better, tastier, when prepared *in conjunction with other things*. There's no getting around that these are seriously bitter greens, so all by themselves they are, well, very bitter. But combined with other flavors and textures they add character, the character of 'bitter' as one interesting part of a many-flavored dish, rather than bitter as "yuck! who forgot to rinse the soap out of the cooking pot?" If you use them in a salad, use them sparingly and mixed with lots of other goodies so they are balanced out. My current preference is to use them in a cooked dish, but if we keep getting them, I'll try different things. I would love to hear from other CSA members with stories, recipes or ideas for how *they* like to use them! Meanwhile, here is what I did and liked last week:

### Dandelion greens pasta with mushrooms, tomatoes and toasted garlic breadcrumbs

from Debbie's kitchen

(This served two of us, but you can easily stretch it by adding more pasta and other ingredients; you needn't necessarily double the quantity of dandelion greens.)

1 bag of dandelion greens  
2 slices of bacon  
12 – 15 medium-sized mushrooms  
butter and olive oil  
½ to 1 basket of cherry tomatoes (or the equivalent quantity of regular tomatoes)  
¾ C (or so) of bread crumbs  
1 to 2 garlic cloves  
Pasta of your choice

First, prep the greens: wash and spin them to get out any hidden dirt, then cook for 2 minutes in boiling, well-salted water. Drain well (squeeze the water out good), chop, and set aside. Start your water for pasta. Cut bacon crosswise into small (eighth-inch) slices. Halve or quarter cherry tomatoes, or cut up bigger tomatoes into small pieces. While your pasta is cooking, you can do the rest of this. In a small skillet, heat some olive oil and butter, put garlic through a garlic press and add, stirring for a moment, then add breadcrumbs and stir to coat. Continue cooking and stirring until breadcrumbs are golden brown and have a toasty, garlicky aroma. Remove from heat and set aside. In a skillet large enough to hold everything (including the pasta after it is cooked), fry up the bacon, then when most of the fat is rendered add the mushrooms and cook together until bacon is getting crispy and mushrooms browned (splash in a little pasta water if it's getting too dry). Add chopped, cooked dandelion greens and tomatoes, and cook/stir a few minutes more while pasta finishes cooking. Drain pasta, add to greens mixture and toss to combine well. Top each serving generously with garlicky toasted breadcrumbs.

### Sweet Peppers and Cottage Cheese

from Debbie's kitchen

This is something my mom used to make when I was a kid, and I have always liked it. And it is so simple! Just cut your sweet peppers into little "boats" (if they're small, this may mean just cutting in half), removing stem and seeds, and fill with fresh, cool cottage cheese... and eat!

*Here are two recipes sent along to me by member Ursula Syrova:*

### Crispy Kale

Ursula says, "I got the recipe from the book 'The Omnivore's Dilemma' by Michael Pollan. Heat the oven to 400, then cut out the stems from the kale, lay the leaves on an

ungreased cookie sheet, spray briefly with olive oil from a misto-type oil sprayer, sprinkle some salt over the leaves and bake them for about 10 minutes (being watchful so they don't char). They aren't pretty, but they're crispy, and look pretty impressive piled on a plate. I've dubbed it 'crispy kale' and my 5-year-old daughter really likes it too. 'More dried leaves, please!' she says."

### Saag

modified from "Classic Indian Cooking" by Julie Sahni with comments from Ursula

You can use various greens: spinach, mustard, kale, collard, beet greens (fresh or frozen). The recipe called for 1 lb. fresh spinach (or one 10-oz pkg. frozen) plus 1 lb. fresh greens of the other sorts (the rule of thumb being "at least half spinach").

2 lbs greens, fresh or frozen  
1 tsp. cumin seeds  
1 tsp. finely chopped garlic  
1/4 tsp. red pepper (optional)  
1/2 tsp. ginger powder  
3/4 tsp. Kosher salt  
3/4 tsp. garam masala  
ghee, butter or oil

Chop the fresh greens coarsely. Heat a large shallow pan over medium-high heat. Ursula suggests spraying with oil or butter-flavor spray (the original recipe calls for quite a lot of ghee). Add the cumin seeds and stir them until they turn dark (10 seconds or so) then add the garlic and chili/red pepper. Add the greens a bunch at a time as they get limp. Add the ginger powder and salt, stir well. Add 1 1/4 C boiling water, reduce heat and cook for about 20 minutes, then uncover to cook off any excess water. At the end stir in the garam masala and turn off the heat. The original recipe also called for potatoes, but Ursula left these out. Instead she bought paneer cheese from an Indian food store and served that with the saag (for saag paneer) and says it was great, but that the flavor of the saag on its own was great too.