



Live Earth Farm (Com)Post

A weekly newsletter for the Live Earth Farm CSA Community

24th Harvest Week September 4th – 10th, 2006

Season 11

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

Family Share:

Strawberries (1 bskt)

Broccolini +

Carrots

Chard

Cucumbers

Green beans +

Lettuce +

Mustard greens

Sweet peppers (Corno di Toro and Hungarian yellow wax)

Green onions

Tomatoes (heirloom and early girl)

Small Share:

Broccolini

Carrots

Chard

Cucumbers or Summer

squash

Green beans

Lettuce

Sweet peppers (Corno di Toro and Hungarian yellow wax)

Green onions

Tomatoes (heirloom and early girl)

Extra Fruit Option:

Strawberries (1 bskt), bag of avocados, basket of cherry tomatoes

Wendell Berry's quote is a wonderful reminder that the choices we make (our food growing and food buying choices) can significantly reduce the accelerating degradation of human and environmental conditions in the world. And it is happening. Community Supported Agriculture farms have grown from just a few hundred in the US to now several thousand; Farmer's Markets have sprung up in even larger numbers, and organic food is becoming more accessible in the conventional, larger retail stores such as Safeway, Costco, Trader Joe's and Wal-Mart. In the Bay Area, large institutions such as UC Santa Cruz, Stanford, and Kaiser Permanente are changing their traditional food procurement patterns, increasing food choices on their menus to include organic and locally grown produce. It is truly an exciting time to be a small organic farm, to realize that what used to be a small fringe movement has now exploded into the mainstream, making significant contributions to the health of our food system and the environment as a whole.

"How we eat determines to a considerable extent how the world is used."

- Wendell Berry

As we increasingly feed ourselves from locally grown foods, farms play a key role. They revitalize that connection to where our food comes from, and help us to reestablish a more intimate relationship with nature. For me, growing the food is equally as important as making this farm accessible so people can have the opportunity to explore and experience this relationship with nature themselves. I also find it rewarding to get to know the people who receive the food we grow; it just makes farming more vital. But the farm's accessibility to nature goes beyond the cultivated rows of food crops. The longer I farm, the more important the areas I *don't* farm are becoming. A farm is like its own small ecosystem, and it is becoming increasingly evident to me that we need a balance between "wilderness" and the fields. As farmers we are so caught up in the economics of food production that wilderness is often left out of the equation, or worse – purposefully removed. Last week during the mini-camp we took a stroll through a corner of the farm which is an untouched piece of oak woodland. It was there I realized that we need to acknowledge that the wild and more pristine areas of nature must coexist with our cultivated areas. Farming is my way to reconnect with nature; sometimes I just stand still, in awe, realizing that the farm and wild lands that surround me are a dynamic and ever evolving work of art. They reveal the beauty of nature's infinite and spontaneous creative energy through the rhythm of the four seasons. - Tom

Field Notes from Farmer Tom

Last week we harvested our Warren Pears, about 14,000 pounds; a little less than last year, but still a considerable crop given the wet spring we experienced. This week you won't be getting any potatoes, but we will be harvesting our next crop around the end of the week. These are mostly fingerling potatoes: red French fingerlings (which we are growing for the first time), and our popular yellow-fleshed fingerlings, also known as Russian Bananas. The extra fruit share will be getting Haas avocados from Marsalisi Farms again. Steve Marsalisi is an organic avocado grower right down the road from us. Apples are late this year so don't expect them until mid to late September. 🍏

Winter Share

In case any of you missed last week's newsletter, we are currently accepting sign-ups for our winter share. Nearly 90 members have signed up already (a good sign!), and we hope to fill our 200 'slots' by the end of the month. For all the details including how to sign up, go to www.liveearthfarm.com/WinterShare.html [note: you need to hand type this web address into your browser. There is no direct link to our Winter Share page from our website because it

Live Earth Farm 2006 Calendar

(see calendar on website for more info)

Sat. Sept. 23	<u>Fall Equinox Celebration</u> 3pm until dark
Sat. Sept. 30	<u>Seed-saving Workshop</u> 10am – 12: 30pm
Sat. Oct 21	<u>Halloween Pumpkin Palooza</u>
Nov. 15/16	<u>Last 'regular season' shares!</u>

is not being offered to the general public, only to our existing members. If you are having trouble with this, just go to the electronic version of this newsletter on our website; I'll make this a live link and you can just click on it]. - Debbie 🍷

Share Donating 101

If you ever know you *won't* be able to pick up your share any given week, let me know and I can arrange to redirect it to grateful recipients. (This year we have a single mom with a couple hungry teenagers where this is her only opportunity to get fresh, organic food to her family. And we also have two different transitional housing groups of moms with young kids, one on each side of the hill, and CSA members who take donated shares to them.) All you need to do is call or email the farm [please give me at least 48 hrs. notice!] and tell me the date you won't be picking up, and I will take care of the rest, redirecting your share to where it can be put to good use.

The only reason I bring this up is that there is some confusion about leftover shares at pick-up locations. Some members believe that if they don't pick up their share, it is automatically "donated," but this is not exactly the case. If you miss picking up your share (forget or otherwise), our site hosts are instructed to use it themselves or give it away to whomever they please, just so long as the food does not sit and go to waste. But this is not the same as donating it to someplace where it is genuinely needed. - Debbie 🍷

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).

This week, all about green beans! - Debbie

Syncretic Green Bean Casserole

by member Christa Ansbergs

Christa says, "This recipe drew ideas from four or five different recipes we found online (that's why we call it "syncretic" - my boyfriend is a linguist so he has to come up with words I don't know for things!). The ricotta was a substitution for cottage cheese, mostly because we don't much like cottage cheese and would've had trouble using the rest of the tub, whereas we luhhhhv ricotta. It makes about 6 servings, depending on how hungry you are and whether it's your main course. Can be made vegetarian by leaving out the bacon and using some butter to brown the onions instead of bacon grease."

four strips of bacon, diced
one medium-to-large yellow onion, diced
2 tsp. brown sugar
a couple handfuls of pecans (maybe 6 ounces)
about 1 lb. green beans
a 4 oz. jar of diced pimientos
a 4 oz. log of garlic-herb chevre
3/4 C of ricotta
1/2 C of milk
10 sesame Breton crackers (or any other mild to mildly-nutty tasting cracker)
One 8 oz. package shredded mozzarella and provolone (or just plain mozzarella)

Preheat oven to 375F. Brown and crisp bacon over medium heat, then remove to a paper towel to drain, saving a few spoonfuls of bacon grease in the pan and sauté the onion in this. Add a little water if bits of onion start to burn. Once they start turning slightly brown, toss in the sugar and a little more water and sauté until they become translucent. Meanwhile, chop pecans coarsely, wrap in foil and toast in toaster oven for about 10 minutes at 350

degrees [or if you have your own favorite method for toasting nuts, use that - Debbie]. Remove stems from green beans, cut into 2" lengths and boil about 5 minutes until tender but still slightly crisp; set aside. In a separate bowl, mix ricotta, chevre, milk and about 2/3 of the shredded cheese with a fork until smooth. In another bowl, crush crackers and mix with remaining shredded cheese. Gently toss bacon, onions, pecans, green beans and pimientos in a 2-quart casserole dish. Dump in the cheese mixture and fold through (a couple of spoons works well). Sprinkle the cracker/cheese mixture on top. Cover casserole and bake 20 minutes. Uncover and switch to broil for 1-2 minutes to brown the top (keep an eye on it, at this point). Remove from oven, cover, and allow to cool for 20 minutes. Devour.

Quickie Skillet Green Bean "Fries"

by member Heather Zimmerman

Heather says, "Since we have so many green beans each week I thought some people might like this incredibly quick, easy and really yummy recipe."

Snap off the ends of the green beans and snap in half and put in a frying pan. Add a couple of tablespoons of olive oil and plenty of salt. Cook over medium or medium-high heat stirring frequently until green beans are lightly browned and starting to wrinkle.

[This sounds to me like a skillet version of "Ugly Green Beans," the recipe where you roast green beans in the oven with olive oil, salt and garlic until brown and wrinkly; just goes to prove my point that there are many similar but different ways to cook the same thing! - Debbie]

Here's a more involved but yummy sounding "Skillet Green Beans" recipe I found in

a copy of Cooks Illustrated. The author says, 'why not skip the traditional multi-pot method and cook the beans and sauce together?' Why not indeed! - Debbie

Green beans with orange essence and toasted maple pecans

serves 8 - as usual, modified slightly... :-)

3/4 C pecans, coarsely chopped
3 tbsp. butter
2 tbsp. maple syrup
salt
2 medium shallots, minced (about 1/2 C)
1/2 tsp grated zest plus about 1/3 C juice from a large orange
pinch of cayenne
2 tsp. flour
1 1/2 lbs. green beans, stem ends trimmed
2/3 C chicken broth
1 tsp. minced fresh sage leaves
ground black pepper

Toast pecans in a non-stick skillet over medium-high heat, stirring occasionally, until fragrant (about 3 minutes). Off heat, stir in 1 tbsp. butter, maple syrup, and 1/8 tsp. salt. Return skillet to medium heat and cook, stirring constantly, until nuts are dry and glossy, about 45 seconds; transfer to plate and set aside. Wipe out skillet and heat remaining 2 tbsp. butter over medium heat until foaming subsides, add shallots, orange zest, and cayenne and cook, stirring occasionally, until shallots are softened, about 2 minutes. Stir in flour until combined, then toss in green beans. Add chicken broth and orange juice; increase heat to medium-high, cover, and cook until beans are partly tender but still crisp at the center, about 4 minutes. Uncover and cook, stirring occasionally, until beans are tender and sauce has thickened slightly, about 4 minutes. Off heat, adjust seasonings with salt and pepper. Transfer to serving dish, sprinkle with toasted maple pecans, and serve.