



# Live Earth Farm (Com)Post

A weekly newsletter for the Live Earth Farm CSA Community

25th Harvest Week September 11<sup>th</sup> – 17<sup>th</sup>, 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:**

Blackberries or raspberries

Red beets

Broccolini

Carrots

Cucumbers

Dandelion greens

(bunched)

Red Russian kale

Lettuce

Spring onions (some members will get pearl onions)

Sweet peppers

Purslane

Summer squash

Heirloom and Early Girl

tomatoes

**Small Share:**

Red beets

Carrots

Cucumbers

Lettuce

Spring onions (some members will get pearl onions)

Sweet peppers

Purslane

Summer squash

Heirloom and Early Girl

tomatoes

**Extra Fruit Option:**

Strawberries (1 bskt), bag of pears, bag of apples

An enthusiastic member sent in the drawing below with her payment – we were so charmed by it that we had to share it with everyone! See Debbie's notes, below, for an update on our Winter Share.

Receiving a CSA share every week is a little like getting a surprise box: there are typically one or two items outside the familiar ones. This week, for example, purslane (see description below) and dandelion greens may have you scratching your culinary brain, unless you were raised eating Middle Eastern, Italian, and/or Mexican food. Recently while enjoying a home cooked meal with our good friends Miriam and Harley (who are also CSA members), Miriam mentioned that besides the weekly surprise element, she also appreciates the anticipation of waiting for a particular crop to come into season. So the seasonality of cooking and eating is another essential aspect of being a CSA member: one naturally follows the progression and change of crops that come with the changing of the season, thereby participating in and following the planet's cyclical rhythm.

Join us Saturday September 23<sup>rd</sup> for our Fall Equinox

Celebration. Speaking of the change of the seasons, September 21<sup>st</sup> marks the Autumn Equinox, the official beginning of fall. When our plum and river birch trees show signs of yellowing I know summer is letting up. Nights are a little cooler and days a bit shorter, and once again comes the moment when days are just as long as nights. We invite you to join us in celebrating this transition at our traditional Fall Equinox Celebration, where we will acknowledge the generosity of the land and the many bountiful harvests we received from our plantings. **So mark your calendars: join us on the 23rd, from 3pm until dark, to celebrate the Fall Equinox.** You won't want to miss the fun, creative and spirited farm walk with farmer Tom accompanied by the extemporaneous musical shenanigans of Doug, Larry and Steve from the Banana Slug String Band. We'll also be pressing fresh apple cider with the kids. Bring clippers if you'd like to pick an armload of sunflowers, check out our new ground-mounted solar array, and don't forget to bring a dish for our traditional potluck. We also recommend a blanket to sit on and something warm to wear in the evening. As always, the children will light the bonfire to welcome the new season, and we most likely will have some fun performances around the fire. So, bring your talents to share. Hope to see you all on the 23<sup>rd</sup>! - Tom

## Farmer Tom on "Wild Vegetables"

Last week I saw a car on the side of the road next to one of our fields, and a woman bent over picking something from between the green bean plants. When I came closer she stood up and beamed, holding aloft a handful of fresh, succulent purslane. She said she was going to cook it for dinner with her chicken. That same day, Debbie forwarded me an email from one of our members, who was wondering if we were going to have any more purslane this year. She said she'd gotten hooked when she first received it in her CSA box earlier this season. For those who don't know what I'm talking about, it has become a habit of mine to occasionally introduce our members to a few "wild vegetables"... and purslane is one

Hooray for  
the Winter Share!  
yippee!



## Live Earth Farm 2006 Calendar

(see calendar on website for more info)

- |               |   |
|---------------|---|
| Sat. Sept. 23 | <u>Fall Equinox Celebration</u><br>3pm until dark   |
| Sat. Sept. 30 | <u>Seed-saving Workshop</u><br>10am – 12: 30pm -- please<br>RSVP by email: aakaplan@gmail.com |
| Sat. Oct 21   | <u>Halloween Pumpkin Palooza</u>  |
| Nov. 15/16    | <u>Last 'regular season' shares!</u>  |

of them! I am not trying to convince you to go out into your yard and eat a bunch of weeds, but believe it or not, many of the weeds growing in your garden are edible. In fact, there are over one hundred species of edible weeds in the United States. Now, there is a niche if I've ever heard one: Live Weed Farm! These weeds or "wild vegetables" are among the most nutritious, rich in antioxidants, vitamins, minerals, fibers, and healthful fatty acids. You are probably frowning by now, thinking, 'how will I explain that to my kids who won't even eat broccoli?? Here, try these freshly cooked weeds. Farmer Tom says they're good for us!'. If you like baby lettuce, you have probably already been eating these wild vegetables for a considerable time now. How about arugula, or dandelion? Others you might have heard of, in some fancy restaurant perhaps, are "vegetable amaranth," lamb's quarter, curly dock or plantain. Keep in mind, any of our common vegetables used to be weeds at one time. They were simply improved with breeding to make them larger, more succulent, and more palatable. Purslane, which voluntarily grows among our "other" vegetables, has been eaten in Europe, Mexico and the Middle East for generations, as a treatment for arthritis and to promote general good health. As you have probably heard, studies have shown that people who eat a diet rich in omega-3 fatty acids have lower cholesterol levels and fewer heart problems. Although these acids are also found in seeds, wheat germ, and vegetable oils, among vegetables, purslane has more omega-3 acids than any other, and *six times the vitamin E content of spinach*. Purslane leaves have a mild, nutty (sometimes lemony) flavor and are a popular salad ingredient in Europe. They are eaten extensively in soups and salads throughout the Mediterranean. In Mexico and among our workers, purslane is eaten in omelets, as a side dish, or in soups and stews. Enjoy and don't be shy to try!! 🌱

## Winter Share Update

Although we have now sold out of the eggs, we still have 70 Winter Shares left, so if you were thinking of signing up for one but just hadn't gotten around to it yet, there is still room. Just go to [www.liveearthfarm.com/WinterShare.html](http://www.liveearthfarm.com/WinterShare.html) [note: you need to hand type this exact web address into your browser. There is no direct link to our Winter Share page from our website because it 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 🌱

## Seed-saving workshop reminder

If you are planning on attending Amy's seed-saving workshop, please RSVP to her so she knows how many people will be attending. You can do this by emailing her at [aakaplan@gmail.com](mailto:aakaplan@gmail.com). If you missed mention of this workshop, go to our website, click on 'newsletters' then again on 'Week 22' and you can read about it. 🌱

## 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).

*Okay, time for a mea culpa! I was gently but firmly reprimanded for a bit too much editing on last week's "Syncretic Green Bean Casserole." Auros Harman, member Christa Ansberg's boyfriend and the one who wrote the original recipe in his blog, called this to my attention. So if you would like to see his original, unedited version, please go online to <http://auros.livejournal.com/203097.html>. Meanwhile, frequent contributor Odile Wolf sent me this next recipe, and says it comes originally from a French cookbook called "Les recettes faciles" (translation: easy recipes) by Françoise Bernard, and that her recipes are usually simple AND foolproof. Odile translated it from the French, putting into her own words the way she prepares it, and asked me to edit her English. - Debbie*

### Chicken with Spring Veggies

1 chicken, whole  
green beans, cut into pieces  
pearl onions (or thinly sliced regular onion)  
sweet peas (no peas right now; Odile suggests dicing up some summer squash)  
1 bu. carrots, peeled and sliced into coins  
butter, and a little flour  
parsley, thyme, bay leaf, salt and pepper

Odile says, "pick whatever veggies you want to use, and in what quantities. The onions and carrots are important though, as they impart nice juices in which the

chicken will cook." Select a heavy-bottomed, oven-proof pot big enough to hold a whole chicken with the lid closed. Coat inside of pot with a thick layer of butter. Layer onions and carrots in bottom of pot, set the chicken on top of them, then tuck the other veggies into the spaces between the chicken and the pot. You want the entire pot filled up, with no space. Add salt, pepper and herbs. Put lid on pot (Odile says to use aluminum foil to hold the lid in place if it is not heavy enough on its own). Heat pot on your stovetop over a low flame for about 5 minutes, then transfer to a medium oven (350-375 degrees) and bake for about 1 ½ hrs. Check chicken for done-ness (everybody has their own technique for this; use yours!). When chicken is done, take it out of the pot and transfer to a platter. Strain out the veggies (keep the juice) and arrange them around the chicken. Make a gravy from the pan juices by mixing together a tsp. each of flour and butter, then adding this to the juices and whisking/simmering over a low flame until thickened and bubbling. Enjoy! The result is a very tender, juicy chicken.

### Purslane ideas (mostly a repeat)

I like to pinch off the tenderer end-of-the-stem clusters and toss them into salads. Both leaves and stems can be eaten, raw

or cooked. As with many things, I always recommend simply *tasting* it, raw and plain, just to see what it's like. Let that guide you. If you're going to cook purslane, it doesn't require long cooking (probably akin to fresh spinach in timing). It can be chopped and added to scrambled eggs (sauté it with a little garlic or onion, maybe some herbs or a little cheese thrown in at the end). Add it to stir-frys or quiches or tomato sauces or what have you. Because of its succulent nature though (see picture on website/in recipe database), I wouldn't recommend trying to freeze it for later use unless it were cooked into a dish of some sort.

### Barbie's Kale (and Chard) Tip

Member Barbie Akin has her own way of working with kale. She says she chops the greens first, then soaks them in a tub of water to remove any dirt. After that, scoop them out (leaving any dirt at the bottom) and drop them into boiling salted water until just wilted, 1 to 2 minutes. Strain and drop into cold water to stop the cooking, then squeeze out excess water (or just let it drain), then put in batches into small ziploc bags, squeeze out extra air, and freeze. In winter, simply remove from bags and drop into soups, tomato sauce, anything you can think of!