



# Live Earth Farm (Com)Post

A weekly newsletter for the Live Earth Farm CSA Community

26th Harvest Week September 18<sup>th</sup> – 24<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:

Avocados  
Arugula  
Red beets  
Broccolini +  
Napa cabbage  
Cucumbers  
Baby dandelion greens  
Green beans +  
Kale or chard  
Pearl onions  
Fingerling potatoes  
Summer squash  
Tomatoes

### Small Share:

Broccolini  
Carrots  
Cucumbers or summer squash  
Green beans  
Kale or chard  
Lettuce  
Pearl onions  
Fingerling potatoes  
Tomatoes

### Extra Fruit Option:

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

Don't forget our Fall Equinox Celebration is this Saturday, 3pm until dark. Bring a dish to share for our traditional potluck (and your recipes! says Debbie), blankets, jackets/sweaters, and if you have them, your own eating utensils, to cut down on non-recyclable garbage. See you all Saturday!

Are Bacteria our allies? Should you be worried? This time it's not hamburger meat, but spinach that got infected by one nasty strain of *E. coli* bacteria. For the most part, bacteria such as *E. coli* live in the environment and serve an essentially beneficial role in human health. *E. coli* bacteria, for example, are responsible for our source of Vitamin K and B-complex vitamins. However, bacteria are somewhat like humans, in that certain individuals are not very nice. Just like we know that some individual humans are outright dangerous, so too can some individual strains of bacteria indeed be "bad bugs," and the one found in last week's bagged spinach is the well known strain *E. coli* 0157:H7 which releases toxins that damage the intestinal walls and causes bleeding.

You probably wonder if contamination like this can happen to you via the produce you get from Live Earth Farm. I would say no. The biggest difference is scale: the company Natural Selection (which is believed to be the one from which the contaminated spinach originated) bags *millions* of packages of ready-to-eat salad greens, including spinach, every week, and ships them all over the world. Although they probably follow rigorous safety and quality assurance practices, I imagine their size makes it difficult to prevent a "bad apple" from slipping into a bag. We don't grow baby salad greens. And we wash our vegetables under running water, not in a tub, so we don't have the potential for wash water to be contaminated or to spread contamination since the water comes directly from our well and is never reused.

Here are the main practices we use to prevent the possibility of contamination:

1. None of our soil amendments contain cattle manure. We 'fertilize' in many ways: soil is enriched through the use of cover crops and certified organic compost (made from green waste, not manure) and bonemeal; for certain crops we apply a 'pre-planting' certified organic fertilizer made from guano (from seabirds whose only source of food is fish, so no risk of *E. coli* contamination; the guano is carefully processed, pelletized and bagged). All organic soil amendments by law are certified by OMRI (Organic Materials Review Institute). We also dilute and use a liquid form of fish protein called "phytamin" in some of our drip irrigation. We also sometimes fortify our drip irrigation with kelp and "compost tea."

2. We use only groundwater/drinking water to irrigate and wash the produce, never untreated surface water.

3. We have a small group of seasoned, well-trained workers who have access to clean, sanitary facilities, all with a hand wash. All workers are conscious of the importance of hygiene around the produce they grow, harvest and pack. All our workers wear disposable latex gloves for harvesting and packing your vegetables. These are changed regularly during the day.

The main sources of harmful *E. coli* bacteria is cattle manure. We don't have meat or dairy

*"The doctor of the future will give no medicines, but will interest his patients in the care of the human frame, in diet, and in the causes and prevention of disease."*

- Thomas Edison

## 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 -- please RSVP by email: aakaplan@gmail.com
Sat. Oct 21	<u>Halloween Pumpkin Palooza</u>
Nov. 15/16	<u>Last 'regular season' shares!</u>

cattle on any of our farmland, and we never use cattle manure anywhere in our fields. Most of the produce is picked, rinsed, and immediately stored in our cooler the day before it is delivered to your CSA pick-up site. One could argue that produce which is bagged and then transported over long distances has a higher possibility of contamination due to the number of times the product changes hands. Produce originates from several different farms, then goes through a processor, a wholesaler, a distributor, and a retailer before it gets to you. I believe that the safest and healthiest produce will always come from farms that have a direct connection to their local customers, at a scale that is inherently more wholesome. I welcome your feedback and I will do my best to ensure that you receive the healthiest produce our land can provide. - Tom

## Field and Crop Notes from Farmer Tom

This time of year, deer love to visit our lush green fields, since everywhere else it's dry with little to forage on. One crop that attracts deer are green beans, and sure enough, two of our plantings got seriously munched on. You probably feel relieved since green beans have been in your share every week since July. In a couple of weeks you will most likely have no green beans in your share.

New this week are the fingerling potatoes, which are my favorite. I like to just boil them in salty water and eat them with a little bit of butter. The Family Share will get Napa cabbage this week, and next week probably the Small Shares will get it as well. Enjoy the pears and apples, as berry production is still a little low.

A note on the Warren pears: although they are all technically 'ripe,' when you get them they may still be hard. (Pears are picked hard; if you leave them on the tree until they are soft to the touch, they will have a totally mushy core.) Also, the color of the skin has *nothing to do* with its 'ripeness.' So don't go by color to determine if they're ready to eat; use your sense of touch. When the pears have a little 'give' to them, they're ready. The skins will be green for now, but later in the season they will start to turn a little more yellow. If the pears you receive need softening, simply leave them out and check them every so often until they 'feel right.' (If you're in a hurry, put them in a paper bag with a banana to speed up the process.) Our first delivery of pears to you probably needed up to a week to soften to the touch, but as the season progresses, subsequent deliveries will be soft and ready to eat in just a few days. Near the end of the season they'll be arriving ready to eat! By the end of the season you'll all be connoisseurs of the pear 'process!' 🍏

## 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).

*Looking forward to seeing you at the Fall Equinox Celebration! - Debbie*

### French Green Lentil and Goat Cheese Salad

sent in by member Nancy Trissel

adapted from Chez Panisse Menu Cookbook

2 C (1 lb.) dried French Green Lentils (de puy), or other lentils (Nancy says she found de puy in the bulk foods section at Whole Foods Market and thinks they're worth the effort to get)

1 C finely chopped onion (or shallot)

1 C diced carrot

1/2 C diced celery

4 tsp. minced garlic

1/2 tsp. salt

1/4 C extra virgin olive oil

1/4 C red wine vinegar

2/3 C fresh chevre, crumbled

1/3 C thinly sliced green onions, incl. tops

1/3 C chopped Italian parsley

1/3 C chopped fresh basil leaves

Pepper

Sort lentils and discard debris. Rinse, drain, and put into a 4-5 quart pan. Add onion, carrot, celery, garlic, 1/2 tsp. salt and 1 quart water. Bring to a boil over high heat; reduce heat, cover and simmer until lentils are tender to bite, about 30 minutes. Drain liquid from lentils, reserving it in case you want a soupier mix in the end (Nancy says she has yet to ever do this). Pour lentils into a bowl and stir in oil and vinegar. Let stand until cool, 45-50 minutes;

stir occasionally. Add reserved cooking liquid, if desired. (You can refrigerate at this point for up to 2 days.) For presentation, arrange, cheese, green onions, parsley and basil decoratively on top of lentils. To serve, mix and season to taste with salt and pepper. Note: Nancy says she rarely makes this recipe exactly as above. She'll use other vinegars, and whatever veggies are fresh and on hand. She also says sheep's milk feta is fab in it.

### Apple Tart

sent in (and modified) by member Kim Couder  
recipe originally from Francoise Bernard

Crust:

5 heaping soup spoons flour

4-5 tbsp. butter

1/2 tsp. salt

Filling: 2 1/2 lbs. apples  
sugar for sprinkling on top

(You can use a store-bought crust if you don't have time, but the homemade one is much better.) To make crust: In a bowl, mix the flour and salt and butter (cut into small pieces) by smushing it in the palms of your hands and rubbing them together. Add about 4tbsp. water and knead rapidly. Gather into a ball and then flatten it with the palm of your hand. Do this 3 times. Roll out the dough and put it into the bottom of a tart or pie pan (the finished tart looks nicest if you have a tart pan with a removable rim). Preheat the oven to 400-

425. Peel and core the apples and cut them into thin slices. Place them on the dough in a circle, overlapping tightly (as they will shrink back when they cook). Place pan on the middle rack of the oven and bake about 30 minutes. Sprinkle generously with sugar when you remove it from the oven.

### Kale/Tomato/Cheese Sandwich; Kale/Tomato/Cheese Burrito/Taco

I sense that people can always use more ideas for easy ways to use kale. Here are two ways I used it recently. Both start with stripping kale leaves from stems and boiling in salted water about 3 minutes, draining (squeezing well) and chopping. One bunch of kale makes 2 sandwiches or 2 - 4 burritos or even more tacos (depends on size of tortillas). - Debbie

- For the sandwich, toast up some nice grain bread. Grate some cheese (cheddar, jack, whatever melts nicely) and mix it with the cooked/chopped kale. Top toasted bread with this and broil in a toaster oven until cheese melts. Top with a thick slice of heirloom tomato, mayonnaise, and other piece of toast. Eat (careful, it's messy)!

- For the burrito, put cooked/chopped kale in a circular mound on a plate, top with grated cheddar and diced tomato, then sprinkle tomato with salt and cumin. Microwave for about 1 to 1 1/2 minutes, until cheese has melted. Serve with warm soft tortillas. Scoop into tortillas and eat!