



Live Earth Farm (Com)Post

A weekly newsletter for the Live Earth Farm CSA Community

27th Harvest Week Sept. 25th – Oct. 1st, 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

Broccoli +

Carrots or beets

Cucumbers

Green beans +

Lettuce

Mustard greens

Hot peppers (in bag w/tomatoes)

Sweet peppers

Potatoes

Tomatoes

Mystery item (farmer choice)

Small Share:

Arugula

Broccoli

Carrots or beets

Cucumbers

Green beans

Lettuce

Mustard greens

Hot peppers (in bag w/tomatoes)

Potatoes

Tomatoes

Extra Fruit Option:

Berries (1 bskt), bag of pears, bag of apples, bskt. of cherry tomatoes

Happy Beginning of Fall. I believe in magic when I see it! During Saturday's Equinox celebration, a young girl handed me a bright yellow marigold flower as we stood on top of the hill, bathed in the rich, late afternoon sunlight, enjoying the view of the Pajaro Valley, listening to the Banana Slug String Band playing music, and eating freshly picked peppers. Our traditional farm walk started by sliding fresh bread dough into the hot belly of our cob-oven, "Toastie." From there our walk turned into an easy, unstructured flow that spread out across the farm. The landscape was dotted with harvesters curious to discover what the fields had to offer. Hand-carried baskets quickly filled with corn, squash, runner-beans, basil, ground cherries, flowers, blackberries, peppers, strawberries... even a few Cinderella pumpkins, the first in the pumpkin patch orange enough for picking. Ivy, our mama goat, was patient enough to endure a many-handed milking process, kids never stopped pressing apples into fresh cider, and the Banana Slugs inspired us to dance and sing all along the walk, until finally we returned to the bread-oven where the warm loaves were ready to eat. As we gathered in a circle to give thanks for the food so many brought to share, I was touched by this wonderful expression of community celebrating this nourishing connection with the land and each other. As the bonfire lit up and darkness started to settle, I was reminded that in the dark there is always a seed of light, and in the light always a seed of darkness. When both balance each other in peace, the seeds of hope will sprout into an abundant harvest of generosity. - Tom

"Magic allows us to transform the self so as to recognize and respond to the limitless opportunities to grow, which are always offered to us."

- John Muir

From our Members

The *E. coli*-in-spinach outbreak prompted one of our members to write to us:

"This recent *E. coli* incident is very sad, but it is also fodder for sarcasm. I can see it now: Monsanto will soon announce a special antibiotic that can be sprayed on all crops to kill off *E. coli* and all other harmful bacteria. Homeland security will declare an Orange alert, Monsanto will meet with administration officials, and the current incarnation of the FDA will quickly modify the "Organic" rules to require this spray. Oh wait! This substance may adversely impact many plants, so Live Earth will have to buy Monsanto's genetically engineered seeds that have engineered resistance to this disinfectant. This spray also kills off too many beneficial bacteria in the soil, so we'll need to buy engineered bacteria from Monsanto as well. Then the world will be safe again and we can all go back to pouring pesticide and herbicide into our soil and live happily ever after. Sorry, had to get that off my chest.

"I grew up on a farm that produced foods (poultry, vegetables and fruits) using thousand year old techniques. I believe we were already "certified" organic then, before organic was even a word. We used an almost closed-loop sustainable system, where human urine and poultry wastes were cured and used judiciously as amendments. Mulching, composting, and hand picking pests and weeds were standard daily activities for us. We did not even use DDT when it burst onto the scene at the time. As far as I can recall, there was *not one incident* of *E. coli*-related death in the history of my family. We had heart attack and cancer deaths and strokes, but not one case of anyone in our farm family falling ill and dying suddenly. In fact, because we all ate more or less the same food, we all would have been poisoned and likely died as a result. Many of

Live Earth Farm 2006 Calendar

(see calendar on website for more info)

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>
Nov. 29	<u>First Winter Share delivery</u>

our elders lived and worked on the farm well into their eighties. A few could have reached nineties and died peacefully if they had not contracted lung cancer due to smoking.

“Science and technology have done wonders to improve certain aspects of agriculture, but they cannot automatically replace farming knowledge finely honed over thousands of years. So far, the report is that organic spinach is likely safe. Before the news broke, my family must have consumed at least five pounds of organic spinach which we’d purchased from Happy Boy Farm [another organic farm]. The latest batch we ate was from last Saturday. Some we cooked, the rest we ate as salad. So far, we are still healthy and functioning.” 🍀

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).

Ah, the Equinox Celebration was great fun. I enjoyed meeting more of you, and also seeing members I'd met at the farm before. Still haven't made it to the farm yet? There's the Pumpkin Palooza coming up in October (c'mon out and carve pumpkins with me!) and this Saturday is Amy's seed-saving workshop (do remember to RSVP to Amy if you are coming - see calendar). Meanwhile, how about some recipes? I've received yet more from members on ways to use kale, but since we don't have it this week (I know, I can hear a few of you out there cheering, but I LOVE the stuff!), I'll have to save them for another time. - Debbie

Green Bean Hummus

by member Cara Wilson

Cara brought this to the Equinox Celebration and it was indeed delicious, and a beautiful green color to boot! Cara concocted it, she said, to try to get through her backlog of green beans. It was an adaptation of a recipe she'd made last spring when trying to salvage some fava beans she'd overcooked.

Chop beans into small pieces and cook for 5 minutes (steam, boil, microwave*; you don't have to worry about overcooking the beans). Puree them in a food processor, adding water and/or olive oil to get desired consistency. Add salt, cumin and garlic to taste.

The dish is a lovely bright green color that, unlike guacamole, won't turn brown with exposure to air.

**there is some controversy over the use of a microwave for cooking; certainly the choice is yours. - Debbie*

Speaking of hummus, here is a version made with potatoes!

Potato Hummus

source lost, but I think it is from “The Potato Cookbook.” As usual, modified :-)

1 lb. potatoes (~3 medium), peeled and cut into 1-inch cubes
3 large cloves garlic

¼ C roasted sesame tahini
¼ C fresh lemon juice
2 tbsp. olive oil
approximately 2/3 C water
½ tsp. ground cumin
¼ tsp. cayenne pepper
1 to 1 ½ tsp. salt

Cook potatoes and garlic in boiling, salted water until tender, approximately 15 minutes. Drain thoroughly and pass through a ricer or food mill into a bowl. [I don't have either of these, so would probably use a potato masher or a hand mixer. Just don't use a food processor – you'll get potato glue! – Debbie] Add tahini, lemon juice and oil and blend thoroughly. Gradually stir in water until the mixture is the proper consistency for dipping. Add cumin and cayenne, then season to taste with salt.

Apple, Potato and Onion Gratin

from Bon Appetit, Feb. 2005

serves 8 [but you could easily reduce quantities proportionally without harming the outcome I think – Debbie]

12 tbsp. butter, divided
2 lbs. onions, sliced
2 tbsp. (packed) chopped fresh thyme [or 2 tsp. dried]
4 tsp. salt, divided
2/3 C water
2/3 C dry white wine
4 tsp. sugar
2 ½ lbs. potatoes, cut into ¼” thick slices
2 lbs. tart apples, peeled, halved, cored and cut into ¼” thick slices

Preheat oven to 400 degrees. Butter 13x9x2-inch glass or ceramic baking dish. Melt 6 tbsp. butter in a large skillet over medium heat. Add onions, thyme and 2 tsp. salt; sauté until onions are translucent, about 10 minutes. Increase heat to medium-high and sauté until onions are tender and begin to color, about 8 more minutes. Remove from heat and add remaining 6 tbsp. butter, the water, wine and sugar and stir/swirl to combine. Bring to a boil, then cool to lukewarm.

Combine potatoes, apples, remaining 2 tsp. salt and onion mixture in a large bowl;

toss gently to blend. Transfer to prepared baking dish, spreading evenly. Cover dish with parchment paper, then cover with foil. Bake until potatoes are tender, about 55 minutes. Uncover and bake until top browns and juices bubble thickly, about 20 minutes longer. Let stand 15 minutes before serving.

Lastly, here's something I made up this January – liked it enough that I wrote it down! – Debbie

Broccoli, Beet and Feta Pasta

There are no real measured quantities here. This recipe is not that picky!

broccoli or broccolini, cut into bite-sized pieces
a few beets, topped, tailed, peeled, sliced, then cut crosswise into strips
penne pasta
onion, garlic, olive oil
toasted walnuts (optional)
feta cheese
salt and pepper

Cook beet strips in a saucepan of boiling salted water about 10 minutes or until tender. Boil your penne pasta according to package directions, adding the cut up broccoli for the last 2 to 3 minutes of cooking time so it will be done when the pasta is done. Meanwhile, in a large skillet, sauté onions and garlic in olive oil until translucent or even longer, if you like them a little caramelized. When the pasta/broccoli is done, drain well then add to skillet and stir/toss to combine. Add crumbled feta cheese to mixture and stir/heat until feta melts and makes it all creamy. Add salt to taste, and I like to add a generous amount of fresh ground black pepper. Drain and add beets last, stirring just to mix (so the beets' color doesn't overpower it all). Stir in optional toasted walnuts and serve.

Variation: I made up this recipe in January, when fresh tomatoes were not in the pantry, but since we have lots of them now, I bet it would be good to add diced fresh tomato (or halved cherry tomatoes), or substitute tomatoes for the cooked beets if you don't like beets.