



# Live Earth Farm (Com)Post

A weekly newsletter for the Live Earth Farm CSA Community

29th Harvest Week

October 9<sup>th</sup> – 15<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:**

Apples  
Basil  
Broccolini  
Cilantro  
Dandelion greens  
Fennel +  
Green beans +  
Kale or chard  
Sweet peppers +  
Tomatoes  
Winter squash (butternut and sweet dumpling) +

**Small Share:**

Avocados  
Broccolini  
Cilantro  
Dandelion greens  
Fennel  
Green beans  
Kale or chard  
Sweet peppers  
Tomatoes  
Winter squash (butternut and sweet dumpling)

**Extra Fruit Option:**

Apples, berries, and either concord grapes or pineapple guavas

Get your Pumpkins at the Farm! On Saturday October 21st we invite you to come to the farm and pick up your Halloween pumpkin. We don't deliver pumpkins to your pick-up site, as there is just not enough room in the truck for all the share boxes AND a bunch of big pumpkins! This is how our 'pumpkin day' at the farm originally came about. I intend to have less of a "Palooza" and more of a day-long, "Come-When-You-Can/Pick-Your-Pumpkin" day. Every CSA member gets a FREE pumpkin of choice, and if you would like to get more there are plenty to choose from. Depending on their size, prices will range between \$2 and \$5. We have beautiful orange Cinderella pumpkins, as well as Jack-O-Lanterns. The farm will be open all day that Saturday between 10am and 6pm. Different ongoing activities will take place throughout the afternoon such as pressing apples into fresh cider, sowing cover crop seeds, pumpkin carving, farm walks, and tractor rides. If you are interested in worm composting, seed saving, the use of solar and renewable energy, solar drying, or would simply like to relax and enjoy a few hours on the farm, mark your calendar and then come join us for this season's last community gathering! – Tom

*"...Nature, lying all around, with such beauty and such affection for her children; and yet we are so early weaned from her breast to society, to that culture which is exclusively an interaction of man on man."*

- Henry David Thoreau

## What's Up on the Farm

Farming bugs to grow food. Last weekend we hosted an Agroecology class from UC Berkeley. One of their primary interests was to understand how we manage our soils and how we manage insect pests in our crops. As we walked through our flowering buckwheat, professor Miguel Altieri of UC Berkeley (well known in the field of Agroecology) explained the dynamic relationships between beneficial insects and pest insects, and how as farmers we can enhance our ability to control insect pests by attracting beneficial predatory insects such as ladybugs, lacewings, mites, flies, and certain wasps by simply increasing their habitat. In this case, we could see how the flowering buckwheat was teeming with them. So one way we combat pest insects is by trying to establish a resident population of beneficial insects by planting flowering buckwheat, growing perennial hedgerows of different flowering plants right next to our fields, and by growing rows of alfalfa and clover among the rows of strawberries.

We also sometimes combat pest insects by introducing beneficial insects directly into the fields, i.e. by purchasing them and releasing them ourselves. Last week we released approximately 60,000 ladybugs into a field of cucumbers and summer squash to control an outbreak of black aphids. We released them at dusk (best time to do so, to avoid their flying away) by sprinkling them over the plants. By the time we were done, they were crawling all over us and we looked like a bunch of lunatics running through the fields in the dark, shaking and brushing ourselves clear of ladybugs.

Yet another way of controlling certain insect pests is by confusing them in their mating cycle by releasing pheromones into the air. This is commonly done to control codling moths in apples and pears. All we have to do is hang these little plastic twistie things in our orchards, every third tree or so. The twisties contain the pheromones and release them into the air, confusing the males because they are attracted to the scent but then can't find

## Live Earth Farm 2006 Calendar

(see calendar on website for more info)

All of Oct. Members Only Early Registration  
[www.liveearthfarm.com/2007EarlyReg.html](http://www.liveearthfarm.com/2007EarlyReg.html)

Sat. Oct 21 Halloween Pumpkin Palooza

Nov. 15/16 Last 'regular season' shares!

Nov. 29 First Winter Share delivery

any females to mate with. The trick is in knowing exactly when the moths are flying to lay their eggs, and timing the release of these pheromones accordingly.

We never stop learning from nature, whether it is through the world of insects, the sprouting of a seed unfolding into a delicate seedling, or simply by watching this weekend's full moon rising over the Santa Cruz Mountains. Nature's book is a fascinating read and, best of all, we are all in 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).

*Well, I acted on my intuition last week and tried making a soup with the sweet dumpling squash and tomatoes... and it came out great! So I'll give you my recipe for that, because everyone is getting more of both this week. Also, I received a request from a member: someone brought homemade pakoras to the potluck for the Equinox Celebration, and she said they were so wonderful, she was hoping that whoever brought them might share his/her recipe. So if you read this message and you made those pakoras, and are willing to share the recipe, please email me and I'll put it in a future newsletter. - Debbie*

### Maple-curry Sweet Dumpling squash

by member Kirsten Nelson

Kirsten says, "Here's another of my non-recipes (it's too simple to call a recipe)." Cut (carefully, they're hard to cut) the squash in half and remove seeds. Cut each half into 4-6 pieces. Drizzle a little maple syrup over the squash and shake on a little curry (we used mild) powder. Bake at 350 until soft (40 minutes-ish).

### A different "Crispy Kale"

submitted by member Odile Wolf

Odile says, "this arcane recipe was passed along to me by someone in my moms' playgroup. It sounded very cool..." [I call it 'different' because we ran a recipe earlier this year for a 'crispy kale' which is made in the oven, not in a dehydrator, which this recipe calls for. - Debbie]

Wash and tear leaves from 1 bunch kale into large pieces (they shrink in the dehydrator). Drain well or blot dry. In a large bowl, combine the juice of 4 limes, ¼ C wheat-free tamari [or soy sauce], and about 1 tbsp. cold-pressed olive oil. Add kale to mixture and massage with hands thoroughly. Put a heavy plate or something on top of the kale to 'squish' it into the marinade and let sit for 4 hours. Remove plate and massage kale/marinade mixture again to squeeze out excess liquid, then spread leaves out onto teflex sheets for drying in a dehydrator (Teflex sheets are often sold with dehydrators; they're a flexible, reusable, non-stick sheet that is safe to heat). Dehydrate at 105 degrees for 5 hours or so then remove from Teflex

sheets and dehydrate another 5 hours or so until crispy and delicious. [I imagine the taste would be something like toasted nori.] "Don't worry about the amount of time in the dehydrator; you can't 'overcook' it. It's foolproof," Odile says.

### Pineapple Guavas

This is not so much a recipe as info about these yummy fruit! Some of you may be getting them in your fruit share this week. This fruit is more-or-less egg sized and shaped, and dark green (see pictures in recipe database). Some of the ones you receive may yet need a bit more ripening before they're ready to eat. Just let them sit out in a fruit basket or bowl. They are ripe and ready when they are slightly soft to the touch, and perfumey (they have a very distinct, wonderful fragrance). To eat them, I use Tom's technique: just roll them between your fingers to soften a bit, then break the skin slightly with a thumbnail and break the fruit in half, opening like you would a cracked egg. Then eat the fruit, skin and all, only tossing the stem (flower?) end. They are very delicious and packed with vitamin C!

### Deb's Sweet Dumpling Tomato Soup

makes about 7 to 8 cups of soup

2 Sweet Dumpling squash

about 10 small-to-medium tomatoes

1 large onion, peeled and chopped

1½ C chicken stock (homemade is best)

Really good olive oil, or some plain yogurt

Sea salt

Halve squash (like Kirsten says, be careful as they're pretty hard), remove seeds, and place cut-side down on an oiled baking dish (I used glass). Bake in a moderate oven (350 – 375 degrees) until soft, 30 to 40 minutes. While the squash is baking, peel your tomatoes: cut an X in the bottom of each tomato then drop into a pot of boiling water for 10 to 30 seconds or so, until the skin splits. Transfer with a slotted spoon to a bowl of ice water. The skin will now come off easily. Core and chop peeled tomatoes and set aside. When the squash is done, spoon the pulp out of the skin and discard skin (you should end up with 2½ to 3 C pulp). In the pot you plan to cook the soup in, sauté onion in some

butter and olive oil until translucent. Add stock, tomatoes and squash pulp, stirring to kind of mix everything. Bring to a boil then cook over medium heat until tomatoes fall apart (about 10 minutes). Cool enough so you can purée in a blender without it exploding all over the place (that's what hot stuff in a blender will do; I know from experience!). Purée in batches, then transfer back to the pot and heat through. Serve hot, with a drizzle of flavorful olive oil and some coarse sea salt scattered on top (the hot soup makes the olive oil really fragrant and wonderful! Randy, are you listening??). [Randy is Randy Robinson, owner of Vino Locale, a wonderful restaurant and wine bar in Palo Alto that focuses entirely on local wines and food made from local ingredients; they get many of their ingredients from Live Earth Farm! But Randy is also an olive oil enthusiast (that's putting it mildly!) and last time I was there I bought a bottle of this really fine olive oil from him – and it was absolutely exquisite on the soup!] Alternatively, you could serve with a dollop of plain yogurt on top (and salt to taste).

Of course an alternative way to make this soup would be to halve, seed, peel and cut up the squash, then cook it in the pot with the sautéed onion, stock, and tomatoes until tender (instead of baking the squash separately). Just remember to cook it until the squash is soft, probably (again) 30 to 40 minutes. Then purée, etc. as above.

### What about that fennel?

Oooohhh, I love fennel! With its delicate, anise flavor and fragrance, it can be used so many ways! I have several recipes in the database for this, but I've always wanted to try the 'shaved' technique, i.e. with a mandoline (if you have one), shave fennel crosswise into paper thin slices (I don't have one, so I'd use a sharp knife and just slice it as thin as I could). Then serve it any number of ways: how about with some shaved Parmigiano-Romano cheese, some kalamata olives, some bite-sized pieces of fresh orange and a drizzle of olive oil? Maybe some slivered mint? In the SJ Merc a recipe suggested making a lemon-Dijon vinaigrette, tossing the fennel with this, then serving topped with some smoked salmon. Yum!