



Live Earth Farm (Com)Post

A weekly newsletter for the Live Earth Farm CSA Community

30th Harvest Week October 16th – 22nd, 2006

Season 11

Don't forget to come to the farm this Saturday October 21st and get your pumpkin! See details in last week's newsletter for more information about this year's Pumpkin Palooza.

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
Broccolini
Collard greens
Fennel
Green beans +
Red Russian kale
Lettuce (romaine) +
Sweet peppers +
Potatoes
Tomatoes
Winter squash +

Small Share:

Apples
Broccolini
Cilantro
Green beans
Red Russian kale
Lettuce (romaine)
Sweet peppers
Potatoes
Tomatoes
Winter squash

Extra Fruit Option:

Apples, pears, and either strawberries or pineapple guavas

Last weekend we hosted another of Brian's permaculture courses (Brian lives on the farm), and I had the opportunity to share some of my thoughts with the group about the evolution of the farm and its Community Supported Agriculture (CSA) Program. Before our meeting I stopped by the barn to look for something that could symbolize what I was going to talk about. My intention was to grab an apple, but instead I spotted a basket of huskcherries (they look like little tomatillos, however they contain a pale yellow fruit you can eat fresh). I picked one out of the basket, and then a misshapen fingerling potato caught my eye, because instead of one finger it had three. It had turned green from sitting outside, and so looked like a gnarled green hand – definitely something the kids would love to see, with Halloween just around the corner. Next, I couldn't help but notice the bright red Early Girl tomatoes which were harvested and neatly stacked in crates for Sunday's Farmer's Market. So I grabbed a tomato too, with plans to eat it later for lunch. It wasn't until I spotted the hot yellow Hungarian pepper sitting on one of our packing tables that I suddenly had a flash of inspiration. I picked up the pepper and looked at what I was now holding in my hands: a husk cherry, a brown-green potato, a yellow hot pepper and a sweet red tomato – all members of the same family called Solanum.

"The sun, with all those planets revolving around it and dependent on it, can still ripen a bunch of grapes as if it had nothing else in the universe to do."

- Galileo

So I showed the permaculture group how what I had collected points to Nature's interconnectedness, and explained how farming, for me, is an on-going lesson of listening to nature, however imperfectly, in order to facilitate and nourish the ever growing diversity of relationships on this farm. It is the complexity of community, human and beyond, which ultimately creates the stability of this farm. A few years ago I reflected on the role of being a farmer and it still rings true today: "...Nature continually tells us what she needs and we enter into a call and response relationship. We add compost and grow green manures (cover crops), and nature turns them back into nurturing soil. Nature brings the winter rains and colder temperatures which allows trees to go dormant and rest their energies. In winter we prune the trees, which keeps them invigorated, and as spring turns the orchard into a sea of white blossoms, both insects and human hands help in the pollination to ensure good fruit set. Every crop has its own specific way of growing. As we listen ever more closely we are taught to dance together with all living and non-living things, and become more deeply aware of respecting rather than exploiting the natural world, of which we are an integral but only modest part. And as we are praised for our work as farmers, I realize that we also have a function through our work to praise nature."

As a farmer I am continuously challenged to practice and learn about stewardship rather than ownership of the land. Decisions need to be based on an ecological ethic; progress cannot be

Live Earth Farm 2006 Calendar

(see calendar on website for more info)

All of Oct. Members Only Early Registration
www.liveearthfarm.com/2007EarlyReg.html

Sat. Oct 21 Halloween Pumpkin Palooza

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

Nov. 29 First Winter Share delivery

viewed as short-term economic return by gobbling up all the goodies for ourselves. Instead we must give a thought for those guests who are to come. In recognizing that we are just guests on this beautiful planet, I understand why traditional cultures' rituals and belief systems consider land and nature to be sacred. In truth we don't own any of it; the crops we grow are but a gift for us to enjoy. Although we get all caught up in buying and selling things we consider our property and thinking that ownership is progress and economic growth is the ultimate indicator of well being, it would seem less stressful and less violent to view ourselves as the ones who belong to the land, instead of living under the delusion that the land belongs to us. – Tom

What's Up on the Farm

The fields are in transition; we're harvesting the last of our peppers, the basil is finished, fields are being cleared and turned over, cover crops sowed, and we're pruning and trellising the blackberries. We will likely be harvesting Jerusalem artichokes next week, and carrots and green onions will be back in the shares again. In preparation for next year we'll be planting our fava beans over the next couple of weeks, and already this weekend we'll be planting next year's strawberries! The tomatoes are still holding steady, and we should have them at least until the end of October, if not until the end of the season – if the weather holds. The kale and collard greens you're getting in your shares now and over the next couple weeks are from a new planting and the crops are beautiful. 🍷

A Must Read

Michael Pollan, author of "The Omnivore's Dilemma" wrote a timely story for the Oct. 15th edition of the New York Times Magazine entitled "The Vegetable-Industrial Complex." I think it is the most lucid writing yet on food safety, industrial vs. local food systems, and the *E. coli* contamination of spinach story. I encourage you to make the time to read this, and to send anyone you can think of to this link to read it as well. Michael is a phenomenal writer. I will post a link to the story in the electronic version of this newsletter, as well as on the "Interesting Stuff" link on our website. – 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).

I don't know how many of you have seen the documentary "The Real Dirt on Farmer John" – it is a story of the dramatic failure of farmer John Peterson's conventional farming operation and its subsequent resurrection into a thriving organic CSA farm known as Angelic Organics. It is an absolutely marvelous film and I highly recommend it if you haven't seen it already. Well, a dear friend just gave me a copy of "Farmer John's Cookbook, the Real Dirt on Vegetables: seasonal recipes and stories from a community supported farm" and I have been having a blast reading it. Anyway, this first recipe is from that book. I was perusing it for ideas and, bingo! Found one that is perfect for this weeks box. - Debbie

Baked Squash with Kale and Pear

from Farmer John's Cookbook (see above), with some really minor modifications and a few added comments [my comments are always in square brackets] serves 6

"The pear really makes this dish shine – its unique sweetness balances the kale's earthy overtones. You can add some cooked sweet Italian sausage in step 4 if you like. This dish is also good made with apple instead of pear." (Quote from one of Angelic Organic's shareholders who submitted the recipe; adapted from McCall's, November 1996.)

butter or oil for greasing the pan

3 acorn squash [you can easily substitute other winter squash like Sweet Dumpling or Delicata]

½ C grated Parmesan cheese, divided
salt and pepper

Olive oil

1 large leek, chopped (about 2 C) [if you don't have a leek, use an onion]

4 C coarsely chopped kale [you could use both kale and collard greens]

1 C vegetable or chicken stock

½ red bell pepper, cored, seeded and diced [dice up a farm sweet pepper]

2 cloves garlic, minced

1 tbsp. butter

1 pear, firm-ripe, peeled, halved, cored, and cut into ½-inch pieces (about 1 C)

Preheat oven to 375 degrees F. Cut each squash in half, scoop out seeds. Place squash cut-side down on a greased baking sheet and bake until tender, 30 to 45 minutes. Turn squash halves over and sprinkle with ¼ C of the Parmesan cheese, plus salt and pepper. Bake for an additional 5 minutes.

Heat oil in a large skillet over medium-high heat. Add the leeks; sauté until soft, about 5 minutes. Add the kale, stock, sweet pepper, garlic, and a little salt and pepper, bring to a boil, cover, and cook for 5 minutes. Remove cover, increase heat and cook, stirring often, until kale is tender and liquid evaporates, about 8 to 10 minutes. Transfer to a bowl and set aside.

Melt the butter in the skillet over medium-high heat and add the pear; sauté until lightly browned and tender but not mushy, 2 to 3 minutes. Add the pear to the kale mixture and stir well. Spoon the kale and pear filling into the squash halves, top with the remaining ¼ C of Parmesan cheese and bake for 10 minutes.

Here's another recipe from the book, this one directly from Angelic Organic's kitchen:

Acorn [Winter] Squash Salad with Cilantro, Ginger and Maple Syrup

serves 4 to 6

2 medium acorn [or other winter] squash

½ C olive oil

1/3 C minced fresh cilantro

6 tbsp. orange or tangerine juice

3 tbsp. maple syrup

2 tbsp. minced candied ginger

½ tsp. salt

1/8 tsp. cayenne pepper

salad greens (one handful per serving), washed, dried, lightly dressed in extra virgin olive oil [romaine, which is the lettuce we have this week, might not be the best for this... but it'll do in a pinch! Stack and cut large leaves lengthwise, then chop.]

Preheat oven to 375 degrees F. Cut squash in half, scoop out seeds, and bake face down on a greased baking sheet 30 to 45 minutes depending on size, until soft. Cool squash completely, scoop out soft flesh and roughly chop. Place squash in a small bowl and set aside.

Combine olive oil, cilantro, orange juice, maple syrup, ginger, salt, and cayenne in a blender or food processor and blend well [I don't think there's enough volume for a food processor – use a blender].

Pour the dressing over the squash and toss gently. Chill for at least an hour to allow the flavors to combine.

Serve on a bed of lightly dressed greens.