



Live Earth Farm (Com)Post

A weekly newsletter for the Live Earth Farm CSA Community

32nd Harvest Week October 30th – Nov 5th, 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
Arugula
Broccolini
Cilantro
Green beans
Kale
Lettuce +
Sweet peppers
French breakfast radishes
Scallions
Summer squash or cucumbers
Tomatoes +
Winter squash +

Small Share:

Avocados
Arugula
Broccolini
Green beans
Kale
Lettuce
French breakfast radishes
Scallions
Summer squash or cucumbers
Tomatoes
Winter squash

Extra Fruit Option:

Apples, pears, and strawberries

One aspect of growing plants that never ceases to fascinate me is seeds. If we consider the miracle of a broccoli seed, for example, in just 60-70 days one tiny seed weighing no more than 1/250th of a gram matures into a 4-6 inch head of broccoli weighing close to a pound. That's a several thousand-fold increase, something a stock broker can only dream of. Last week when I sat in a circle with a class of children I cut open a pumpkin to point out how much we get in return from planting just one small pumpkin seed. When we carve a pumpkin we often forget about the slimy mess of seeds even though it's the most important part of the plant, at least botanically speaking. Every seed stores the energy and information on how to grow another pumpkin plant and many thousand new seeds.

"Plant a Seed so your Heart will Grow."

- Hafeez

Fall is the time when all flowering plants die and place their energies into their seeds to over-winter, and so I likewise am starting to think of what 'seeds' the 2006 season holds that I would like to see germinate once again in the spring of 2007. In a nutshell, I would like 2006 to repeat itself, but want to nourish some aspects about this year that never got enough attention. I would like to grow more eggplant, Armenian cucumbers, a few more culinary herbs such as rosemary, thyme and oregano, and dry beans; I'd like to increase the production of husk cherries and onions, as well as our plantings of spinach. I want to explore the possibility of diversifying our fruit share by coordinating with other fruit growers in the area to include more stone fruit, citrus, and grapes. I want to collaborate more directly with Jim Dunlop to ensure a more reliable production of pastured eggs, as well as experiment with a pastured chicken system here on our own farm. We are already establishing a half-acre irrigated pasture, and just received a batch of 100 chicks to increase our flock. We will be planting 200 more pear trees over the next two years, establishing a block of kiwis, and increasing our acreage of persimmons. With Amy's inspirational work this year I am excited about developing a more consistent plan for saving seeds, as well as increasing the quantity and variety of heirloom and open-pollinated varieties that lend themselves to seed saving. One thing I have learned about farming is that the opportunities to explore new ways of dancing with the land are infinite, and like a mistress, the farm is always tempting and demanding more of my time and energy. However there is one other being in my life at the moment that can instantly get my full and unconditional attention, and that is our two-year-old daughter, Elisa.

On a sadder note, our almost 20-year-old pony, Peanut, is dying and will most likely not make it through another winter. He has carried many children on his back over the years, and has kept the goats faithful company. He has been increasingly plagued with founder though, a fairly common illness of the hoof among ponies. It's a poorly understood disease, and we've been able to treat it with varying success, but lately he's not been able to get out of it. The signs are easy to recognize: when Peanut has founder his front feet are sore and as a result his steps shorten and he becomes slower, making him look stiff. At rest, he will prop his front feet out in front of him while leaning back on his rear legs to help decrease the weight on the front. However, the pain is becoming more chronic and he's starting to lie down a lot. He was the first animal we got when we started farming here 11 years ago. We'll surely miss him! – Tom

Live Earth Farm 2006 Calendar

(see calendar on website for more info)

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

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

Nov. 29 First Winter Share delivery

2007 Season – last call for the share combination of your choice

Oh my; it isn't easy to follow up sad news like that. But as any farmer will tell you, death is a natural part of the cycle of life. It is usually the topic most often glossed over or avoided, so I think it is fair and honest of Tom to share this truth with us. There is no easy way for me to segue from a subject as weighty as death to as banal as 'signups,' but since it is my job to keep the 'cycle of life' of our CSA running as healthily as possible... I will simply lurch into it.

Okay; signups for next season have been brisk, and so **this will be my last announcement to existing members to say that, if you want to get the share combination of your choice next year (especially if you want to get the Extra Fruit option), you should early register this week.** Come Friday Nov. 3rd, (that's this Friday!) early registration will be opened up to the 200+ people on our waiting list. A \$200 deposit is required to secure your registration, however if cash flow is a concern, you have the option of post-dating your check any time between now and Dec. 31st. Or, you may split up your deposit into two checks for \$100 each, and space out the payments (more details about this are provided on the early registration webpage). – Debbie 🍷

To early register, go to: <http://www.liveearthfarm.com/2007EarlyReg.html> -- remember, you must type in the full URL (or click on this link in the electronic version of this newsletter) because you will not find this if you simply go to our website.

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).

Here's one recipe I made up, and another I got at a 'pot-luck' winery event. - Debbie

Debbie's Winter Squash, Sunchoke and Pear 'Lasagna'

I looked around my kitchen this week to see what items I had lots of, and proceeded to concoct this recipe to use 'em! This recipe is certainly flexible, so don't take my quantities as gospel so much as approximate. If you used up your sunchoke already, you could probably substitute an equivalent amount of potatoes.

3 largish delicata squash, or equivalent
½ to 1 bag of sunchoke
3 medium to 4 small pears
1 medium onion
3 tbsp. butter, melted
2 tbsp. olive oil
1 to 1 ½ tsp sea salt
about 1 tsp. rubbed sage (or 1 ½ tsp. minced fresh sage leaves)
½ lb. ricotta (I used Lynn's goat milk ricotta)
2 large eggs
½ to ¾ C minced fresh parsley, divided
¼ tsp. nutmeg
1 ½ C grated sharp cheddar cheese
½ to ¾ C bread crumbs
1 tbsp. flour

You'll need a large bowl or pot, plus a large baking pan.

Cut off stem and tail ends of squash and peel (this can be kinda hard if the squash have deep ridges; do the best you can!). Slice in half lengthwise and scoop out and discard seeds. Cut halves in half cross-wise so they'll fit into a food processor. Using a thin slicing blade (1 mm), slice all the squash and dump into a large bowl (or pot). The reason for the thin slices is so that they will bake through at the same

rate as the other ingredients; if you don't have a food processor, slice them as thin as you can by hand. Scrub sunchoke to remove any dirt, cut away any funky parts, and cut into roughly 1/8th inch slices (I like to leave the skin on; ditto for potatoes). Add to bowl with squash. Peel, quarter and slice onion (using food processor again, if you have it, for nice thin slices) and add to squash/sunchokes. Peel, quarter, core and slice pears and add likewise.

Combine melted butter and olive oil, and toss sliced veggies with this. Combine salt and sage (I used a mortar and pestle, since my dried sage leaves were whole), and sprinkle over veggies, toss/stir to incorporate.

Preheat oven to 375 degrees.

Now make your filling: combine ricotta, eggs, nutmeg, and half the parsley and mix well.

Now make the topping: combine cheddar, breadcrumbs, flour, and rest of parsley.

Grease bottom and sides of your baking pan. Distribute half the squash mixture in the pan, patting down a bit to lay flat. Spread the filling over this, then layer with the rest of the squash mixture. Cover pan with foil and bake for 1 hour or so. Remove from oven, remove foil, and spread cheddar mixture evenly on top. Turn oven down a bit (to 325 – 350) and bake, uncovered, another 20 minutes or so, until cheddar topping is browned.

Serve alongside a nice green veggie (kale, a la "hot salad" – see recipe database – would be good, as would steamed green beans or broccoli. If you're an omnivore, a

side of chicken, lamb chops, pork chops, or even some kind of nice sausage would go well too.

Cucumber Radish Canapés

This recipe I eked out of its creator when I saw the beautiful tray of appetizers she brought to share at a potluck. I got someone else to take a picture so that I could put it with the recipe online, because once you see them, you'll see why I wanted the recipe! I don't know quantities, but you can use your judgment and taste!

Fresh cucumber, unpeeled, cut into 1/8" slices

Radishes, also sliced into thin rounds

Cream cheese
a little finely minced scallion

fresh lemon juice and zest
fresh mint leaves (be sure to save the tiny top leaves of the mint sprigs for garnish)

Make a spread by combining cream cheese, lemon juice, a little scallion and finely minced mint, as well as some minced lemon zest.

Spread a dab of the cream cheese mixture onto a slice of cucumber. Place a slice of radish on top of this. Top with another small dab of cream cheese mixture (if you have any fun frosting-type funnels for making shapes, this would be an opportunity to use them, however just putting a little spoonful on top is just fine too). Then finally, garnish with a small strand of lemon zest and a tiny mint leaf. They're ready to eat at this point, but you could easily chill them as needed for a few hours (cover with plastic wrap if they are going to be refrigerated for longer than that).