



# Live Earth Farm (Com)Post

A weekly newsletter for the Live Earth Farm CSA Community

8th Harvest Week

May 15<sup>th</sup> – 21<sup>st</sup>, 2006

Season 11

**What's in the box this week:** (content differences between Family and Small Shares are underlined/italicized)

**Family Share:**

Strawberries  
Avocado  
Loose beets  
Broccoli or cauliflower  
Cilantro  
Fava beans (lots)  
Fennel  
Green garlic  
Leeks  
Lettuce  
Green/young onions  
Sunflower sprouts

**Small Share:**

Strawberries  
Avocado  
Broccoli or cauliflower  
Baby carrots  
Fava beans (lots)  
Green garlic  
Leeks  
Lettuce  
Green/young onions  
Sunflower sprouts

**Extra Fruit:**

3 more baskets of strawberries!

Fellow CSA member Amy Hemmert asked if she could respond to Tom's comment about 'school lunch poison' in last week's newsletter. I remember when I read what Tom wrote, I immediately thought of her – she and her business partner are passionate advocates of waste-free, nutritious school lunches and from their passion sprang the idea of a lunch-box system that makes this easy. See Amy's byline below for more information, but first, here's her thoughtful input. - Debbie

**Antidote to School Lunch Poison: All is not lost!** Live Earth Farm provides a great alternative to those nasty prepackaged lunches that Tom mentioned in last week's newsletter. If you're looking for a way to provide more nutritious lunch options for your family, look no further than this week's CSA share. Here are just a few ideas to get you started:

- fresh strawberries
- fresh or steamed baby carrots
- pasta with olive oil, fresh green garlic, parsley [or cilantro], steamed fava beans and a bit of salt and pepper
- steamed cauliflower/broccoli and kohlrabi (serve with your child's favorite dressing as a dip)
- [or raw broccoli/cauliflower florets and raw kohlrabi sticks with dressing/dip? – Debbie]
- Half an avocado (pack a spoon for easy scooping!)
- steamed beets with dijon vinaigrette (or another) dressing
- green salad with sliced fennel and radishes, dried cranberries, green onions, avocado, salted cashews

*"It's bizarre that the produce manager/farmer is more important to my children than the pediatrician."*

- Meryl Streep

**Will they eat it?** Your children won't trade away their wholesome, locally-grown, organic lunch if they've had a hand in preparing it. If possible, take them with you when you pick up your CSA share. When you get home, encourage them to help you unpack the food and put it away. (Of course to my kids, this means moving the strawberries from bag to mouth!) Even young children can wash fresh fruits and vegetables and place them in their lunch box – and older children can do much more.

**The benefit?** Children who eat well experience less fatigue, have more energy, and have better concentration. They are more fit for sports and other physical activities, and they have a lower obesity rate. Obese children are at higher risk for cardiovascular disease and high blood pressure. They are more likely to suffer from type 2 diabetes, a condition once experienced only by adults. This puts them at greater risk for diabetes-related ailments such as blindness, nerve damage, kidney failure, and cardiovascular disease. Obese children are more likely to have a poor self-image. They tend to prefer sedentary activities over sports, which causes them to burn fewer calories and gain even more weight.

Like us, our children love and thrive on fresh farm produce. Consider your CSA share as an opportunity to provide fewer of those high-calorie, processed lunch foods that tend to be high in fat, sugar, sodium, and other additives. And in the process, eliminate all that single-serving/disposable packaging that generates so much waste. Our families have so much to gain!

Amy Hemmert is a Live Earth CSA member, a teacher, small business owner, and mother of two school-age children. She is the author

## Live Earth Farm 2006 Calendar

(see calendar on website for more info)

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|-----------------------|---|
| Sat. June 17          | <u>Summer Solstice Celebration</u><br>field tours 2 - 5<br>celebrations 5 - 9 |
| Aug 25, 26,<br>and 27 | <u>Children's Mini Camp</u><br>Friday evening to noon Sunday                  |
| Sat. Sept. 23         | <u>Fall Equinox Celebration</u><br>3pm until dark                             |
| Sat. Oct 21           | <u>Halloween Pumpkin Palooza</u>  |

of several books, including *The Laptop Lunch User's Guide: Fresh Ideas for Packing Wholesome, Earth-friendly Lunches Your Kids Will Love* (with Tammy Pelstring), available through local retailers and online at [www.laptoplunches.com](http://www.laptoplunches.com).

## Field Notes from Farmer Tom

This is the time many farmers in the region – especially the ones growing vegetables – have been dreading. Due to our late spring rains our plantings were delayed and there is not much that is mature enough and harvestable right now. Although this is a familiar transition, where lots is being planted for the warm and long days ahead, this year the interruption in our harvest schedule is more pronounced. As nature teaches us, there is strength in diversity, and here in the Pajaro Valley we are blessed by a healthy and growing network of small, organic farmers who together grow a wonderful variety of foods. Such a network is an asset for our community, but especially so this year. I am glad and excited to include some of their products in our weekly share. The sunflower sprouts are delicious on almost anything, as a salad, on your sandwich, or straight up as a snack. Sandra and Ken from Greensward New Natives right here in Corralitos are pioneers in the local organic farming movement, and their wonderful and healthy sprouts are available through many local outlets. Steve Marselisi, a small-scale, local, organic avocado grower lives just down the road from us, and grows both the early Bacon and a main crop of late Haas avocados. Avocados are picked hard and ripened off the tree, just like pears. Since avocados pack and travel better when they're hard, we'll let you ripen them to "perfection."

A quick crop update: this morning we planted melons; in the greenhouse, the green beans have germinated and are now 2 inches tall; and cucumbers, summer squash, peppers, eggplant, and basil are loving the heat after finally being transplanted into the field last week.

There is nothing like the right tool for the job. For years I've been dreaming of acquiring a spading machine, and finally last week my dream came true. If you like to garden you may have heard of the French intensive soil and bed preparation technique known as "double digging." John Jeavons, author of the world-famous gardening book "How to Grow More Vegetables on Less Soil Than You Can Imagine," has researched this technique for years and taught it all over the world. The only problem is that, at a larger scale, using the recommended spade and fork to "double dig" anything more than an acre or two would be backbreaking and impractical. Recognizing the incredible benefit this technique has on the soil, Italian farmers have developed a mechanical tool that is attached to a tractor and basically does the same thing, only with 6 spades working together at about 1/2 mile per hour. One of the main reasons I decided to make this investment (besides the soil improvement benefit) is its fuel-saving potential. With this spader we only have to go over the same piece of ground once or twice, as opposed to the 6 to 7 times necessary with the discs and harrows. That's a lot less "m" when considering the "mpg" of our diesel tractors! So although this is not a small investment for the farm, it is definitely of long-term economical and ecological benefit. And I guess one is never too old to enjoy a new toy, right? (By the way, it's bright red!!!) 🍷

## 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).

### How to tell young onions, leeks and green garlic apart

This still stumps people, and it is easy to see why. They look so similar! Okay, that's an understatement; the leeks and green garlic are undistinguishable visually. The onions are the easiest to tell from the others, as the green part of the stalk is tubular and hollow. The green part of the garlic and leeks both form the same "V" shape when cut crosswise, and the leaves of both have a kind of left-right fan structure, so that's no help either. You have to use your nose. Scratch 'n' sniff. The green garlic will smell like garlic. But take comfort in the fact they are all in the same family (the alliums), so in a lot of cases if you accidentally ended up using 'the wrong one' in a recipe [potato-green garlic soup instead of potato-leek soup, for example], it is not like you will suddenly have something inedible! It may be different, but will taste just fine.

### Cauliflower with Rosemary and Niçoise Olives

Roasted? Steamed? Hot? Cold? I saw this dish on a menu somewhere and made a mental note 'cause I liked the sound of the combined flavors, but haven't had time to experiment yet... but maybe you do!

### Favas and Tuna

Inspired by the juxtaposition of these two ingredients in a Bon Appetit crostini recipe but not in a mood to fuss, I came up with this (tasted better than I thought and my husband loved it!).

Can o' tuna (water packed)  
A bunch of shelled fresh fava beans  
Penne pasta  
Chopped greens (I used kohlrabi greens I had)  
Chopped cilantro (oh, 2 – 3 tbsp.)  
Stalk of green garlic, washed, thinly sliced  
Half a lemon  
Olive oil, salt and pepper

Boil pasta in salted water, adding chopped greens for the last two minutes of cooking time, and favas for the last minute (that way they all are done at the same time!). Drain well and put in a bowl (or back in the pot – any container). Pour a couple tablespoons of olive oil over all and stir to coat. Add tuna, water and all (the warm pasta will absorb the 'tuna juice' and increase the tuna flavor) breaking the tuna up into bits. Stir in cilantro. Sauté green garlic in some olive oil until soft, and add to pasta. Squeeze in lemon juice and add several grindings of black pepper. Taste and adjust for salt if necessary. I served it at room temperature, but it'd be fine hot or cold too. (I'm taking the cold left-overs for lunch tomorrow – heck, this'd make a perfect 'laptop lunch!')

### Roasted Beet Soup w/Crème Fraîche

modified from a Feb 2006 Bon Appetit recipe.  
Serves 2

½ lb. red beets (about 3 medium)  
1 ½ tsp. ea. butter and olive oil  
1 leek, white/pale green part, chopped  
1 young onion, thinly sliced  
1 stalk celery, chopped  
1/8 tsp. ea. ground ginger and allspice  
1/8 tsp. white pepper  
2 C water  
1 sm. bay leaf + sprig of thyme and parsley  
¼ C whipping cream  
2 tbsp. crème fraîche or sour cream

Wrap beets in foil and roast in a 350° oven 'til tender (~1hr.); cool, peel and dice. In a medium saucepan, sauté leek, onion and celery in butter/oil until beginning to brown, stirring often. Stir in ginger, allspice, white pepper and diced beets and cook until veggies begin sticking to pan (5-7 min.). Add water, bay leaf, thyme, parsley and bring to a boil. Reduce heat to low, cover, and simmer until veggies are very tender (~25 min.). Remove bay leaf, thyme and parsley, cool slightly, then purée in batches with the cream. Season to taste w/salt and pepper, and serve warm w/dollop\* of crème fraîche on top. (\*or pipe it out in a pretty design)