



Live Earth Farm (Com)Post

A weekly newsletter for the Live Earth Farm CSA Community

11th Harvest Week

June 11th – 17th, 2007

Season 12

Don't miss our [Summer Solstice Celebration](#) – coming up in less than two weeks! (see below)

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:

Basil
Beets
Broccolini
Chard
Cucumbers
Kale
Lettuce +
Mei qing choi +
Onions
Potatoes +
Summer squash
Mystery item
Strawberries (2 bsks)

Small Share:

Basil
Beets
Broccoli
Chard or Kale
Garlic
Lettuce
Mei qing choi
Onions
Potatoes
Summer squash
Mystery item
Strawberries (2 bsks)

Extra Fruit Option:

5 baskets of strawberries

"Strawberry Bounty:"

5 baskets of strawberries!

You might think I was dreaming: I am sitting in the middle of our fields at a long, white, linen-draped table, enjoying an exquisite dinner prepared mostly with farm grown ingredients. This wonderful experience was no dream, however. Last Saturday, more than a 100 guests, many Live Earth CSA members among them, enjoyed our third hosting of "Outstanding in the Field". Jim Denevan, former Chef of Gabriella's Cafe in Santa Cruz, is the founder of these farm dinners, and together with Katy Oursler, director and organizer, they have succeeded in taking the meaning of local and seasonal cuisine to an inspiring new level. The idea behind Outstanding in the Field is to reconnect diners to the land and the origins of their food, honoring the local farmer and food artisans who cultivate it. As Jim says, "Senses are heightened in the fresh air. And it's not every day you get to sit next to the person who planted the beans, raised the lamb and shaped the cheese on your plate." The wines accompanying the five course meal were made using mostly locally grown grapes, the cheese was made by Bernadette, right here on the farm, who as many of you know milks and cares for our small herd of goats. The fresh whipping cream came from Claravale Dairy just down the road, and you can imagine how delighted Elisa was as she used her finger to savor the desert made of freshly whipped cream and strawberry mousse. I love when people celebrate and food is the principal thread that links us all together. It is what brings meaning to Community Supported Agriculture. – Tom

*"To live is not enough,
we must take part
and celebrate."*

- Pablo Casals

Summer Solstice Celebration!

Spring is almost behind us, and to honor the arrival of summer I want to invite everyone to join us here on the farm to celebrate the change in seasons. For many, especially our children, it means a time to take a vacation; here on the farm, summer solstice represents a moment of hard earned leisure – a short breather between all the hard work already put in and the big harvest months ahead. So mark your calendars and join us for our Summer Solstice Celebration on Saturday, June 23rd.

The day will be filled with activities, from learning about honey bees and extracting honey with Steve Demkowski (Steve has 10 hives right here on the farm), to strawberry and blackberry picking (we'll have chocolate on hand for dipping!), to milking the goats and cheese making with Bernadette, to face painting, to bread baking and pumpkin seed planting. Tom will of course be giving his usual farm tour, Kuzanga Marimba will again color the air around us with their beautiful marimba music, we'll light our traditional bonfire at dusk, and last but not never least, there will be food, lots of food!

Summer Solstice is actually a time of light and of fire, a time to reflect upon the growth of the season: the seeds that have been planted in the earth and those planted in our own lives. Remember to bring a dish to contribute to the potluck. It's a reminder of what nourishes us, and a small offering acknowledging the change of the season. Hope to see you all here at the farm! 🍷

(see back page for celebration particulars)

Live Earth Farm 2007 Calendar

(see calendar on website for more info)

Sat. Jun 23 [Summer Solstice Celebration](#)

Aug 24-26 [Children's Mini-Camp](#)

Sat. Oct 20 [Fall Harvest Celebration](#)

Farm Work Days: 6/29, 7/27, 8/31, 9/28, 10/26
(see Week 10 newsletter for details)

Summer Solstice – the nitty gritty

- How do I get there? (directions to the farm are on our website. Go to the 'Contact Us' page, then follow the link given.)
- ***save gas and the environment and carpool if you can! Try the Friends of LEF Yahoo Group (LEF CSA Friends) for finding carpool buddies if you don't know other members in your area***
- When should I get there? Activities will happen between 2 and 5pm, Kuzanga begins playing around 5, then we break for our traditional potluck around 6pm. After the potluck, Kuzanga continues to play, and then we light the bonfire at dusk.
- Do I need to make a reservation, or let you know I'm coming? No.
- What is the cost? There is no cost; all we ask is that you bring food to share in our potluck.
- What else should I bring? We encourage you to bring your own picnic plates and utensils in order to minimize un-recyclable garbage. We will have a washing station, where you can rinse them when you are through eating. Also, bring a blanket to picnic on, and it gets cool in the evening so don't forget sweaters and jackets.
- Can I bring someone who is not a member of the CSA? Yes, certainly! All friends of the farm are welcome! All we ask is that you bring sufficient food to share in the potluck. 🍷

Return of the Mystery Item!

Mystery Items are those special extra somethings that show up in your share but are not on the veggie list. Why the mystery? Often we don't know how much we'll have of something, or we'll be cleaning fields of different crops, so there's not enough of anything to give everybody the same thing, but enough different things to give everybody something. So, it's not so much a "Mystery" as it is a "Bonus" item!

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).

What I'd do with this week's box:

I'd try to use the basil as soon as possible, while it is still very fresh, but here's what I did last week, and it kept well for a couple days before I got around to using it: I put the basil in a tall drinking glass with about an inch of water in the bottom, much like a vase of flowers (size the glass to your basil bunch; if it is short and squatty, use a shorter glass. Last week mine was tall and leggy, so I used a tall glass). Also like flowers, I snipped off the ends of the stems just before immersing them (so they are more likely to take up a little water and stay fresh). If the bottom few leaves will be submerged, I just remove them (they'd get waterlogged and just be unusable anyway). Unlike flowers though, if there are blooms on the end of the basil, I nip them off with my fingers just above the last pair of leaves (sorta like Morticia Adams and her roses, only I don't invert the stems after deflowering them!). Next, I slip a plastic bag over the basil and it's glass, then secure it to the glass with a rubberband so the air around the basil will hold its humidity (refrigerators tend to dry things out). Then stick this in a door shelf of your refrigerator (Julia of Mariquita Farm taught me this; the door tends to be less cold, and this is good, in this case). Be sure the basil is not wet before you do this; wet leafy things rot quicker. Humidity = good, wet = bad. If you have to, let the basil air dry for awhile before storing it this way.

Okay, that's how I'd store the basil, but how would I *use* it? I think it would be great in a fresh potato salad. I'd boil up some of those potatoes (whole, skin on!)

then while still warm, cut them into pieces, dress them with a simple vinaigrette and toss in slivered basil leaves. (Be sure not to overcook the potatoes or they fall apart.) Instead of celery, I'd slice thinly or dice up some of the mei qing choy and add them. I did that before with both tuna salad and chicken salad, and loved the texture and flavor it added! I expect the results will be similarly delightful in potato salad. The broccoli or broccolini I'd just steam until tender, and then while still warm, drizzle it with good olive oil (the warm veggies release a delicious waft of the olive oil's fragrance) then squeeze on a little lemon juice, and sprinkle with sea salt. And if it gets hot this week (like it's supposed to), I think I'll make a cold cucumber soup. (recipe is in the database). The rest of the box items are covered nicely by the recipes below, sent in by various members, some of which I'll print here (the rest are in the e-newsletter).

Member Christi Carew sent this first recipe, and just in time for our first potatoes!

Cheese, Chard, & Potato Casserole

Christi says, "This is a great recipe for using a lot of greens. Sometimes I just end up having a lot at once and want an easy way to use them all at once. I think you could also layer the greens/egg mixture with the potatoes rather than mixing it all together, but I haven't had time to try that yet. I've adapted it from a recipe I found online."

1 lb. chard (or other greens - I used kale the first time. Second time I used some kale, spinach, arugula, and mustard

greens)
4 medium potatoes
2-3 tbsp. olive oil
6 eggs, slightly beaten
1/2 C milk
2 or more cloves of garlic, crushed, minced, or finely chopped
salt to taste
1 tsp. each thyme and marjoram
1/2 or more chopped onion
3/4 C grated Parmesan cheese

Wash and dry chard (or greens), and chop into thin strips, 1/4 inch wide or thinner. Wash potatoes and cut into 1/8-inch slices (this should make 6-7 cups). Set aside 1 1/4 cups of potatoes. Add the olive oil to the greens and mix well. In a separate bowl, mix eggs, milk, garlic salt, herbs, onion, and 1/2 cup of the Parmesan cheese. Add egg mixture to greens and mix well. Add the big portion of potatoes (NOT the 1 1/4 cups you set aside) to the greens and mix well. Pour into a greased, 9x13 baking dish. Place remaining potato slices on top. Cover with foil and bake at 350 degrees F until potatoes in center are done (about 50 minutes). Uncover and sprinkle the rest of the cheese on top. Continue baking until cheese is golden, about 10 minutes.

In e-newsletter:

Noah Thompson's Zucchini Fritters

Strawberry Cobbler

Moroccan Vinaigrette
(for beets)