



Live Earth Farm (Com)Post

A weekly newsletter for the Live Earth Farm CSA Community

13th Harvest Week June 25th – July 1st, 2007

Season 12

**** Next Wednesday, the 4th of July, will be a normal Wednesday delivery! ****

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:

Asian greens (Mizuna or Tatsoi)

Basil
Baby carrots
Broccoli (Lakeside) +
Chard or kale
Garlic
Green beans +
Lettuce (red oakleaf and butter) +
Onion
Radishes
Spinach
Summer squash +
Strawberries (2 bsks)

Small Share:

Basil
Broccoli (Lakeside)
Chard
Garlic
Green beans
Lettuce (red oakleaf or butter)
Onion
Radishes
Spinach
Summer squash
Strawberries (only 1 bskt)

Extra Fruit Option:

3 bsks. of strawberries and 1 bskt of either blackberries or raspberries

"Strawberry Bounty:"

4 baskets of strawberries!

Celebration is an important element of the seasonal dance, and rewards farmers and their community with a wonderful connection to the Earth. Over the last 12 years, celebrating the beginning of Summer around the Solstice has become an important community event, one which always transforms the farm into a place filled with joy and moments of magic and wonder. Last Saturday was no different. It was a textbook-beautiful day; warm but not hot, breezy but not windy, clear blue skies... with more children than adults, there was no end to the excitement too, as every corner of the farm was explored and treasures were gathered. Thanks to beekeeper extraordinaire, Steve Demkowski from Willow Glen, we got to experience first hand how honey is extracted from frames of honeycomb. He collected the combs from his hives (the ones residing right here on the farm) with the help of my son David and friend Noah. Besides picking strawberries – and for some lucky ones, getting to dip them into chocolate ganache donated by the Buttery – extracting honey was one of the most popular afternoon activities. Steve's passion for bees inspired many who attended. Several walked away with a small jar of freshly extracted honey elixir; I brought a jar of it over so people could dip warm, freshly baked focaccia bread into it. Toastie – our wood-fired cob oven, now 6 years old – is still gasping along despite signs of his imminent demise, and he couldn't bake the focaccia bread fast enough to feed the many hungry mouths passing by. Although it is hard to compete with the popularity of honey, Bernadette had a strong following of interested helpers who got to learn about the entire 'teat-to-table' goat cheese making process. And while blackberries were being picked in one corner of the farm, Brian introduced the Mataganza Garden Sanctuary to interested members in the other corner, teaching them about permaculture principles and sustainable farming and gardening applications. As we approached 6pm, Kuzanga's wonderful marimba music called us to gather around the fire circle, where five long tables covered with wonderful homemade dishes of food awaited us. Thank you to all who contributed to such an abundant potluck! Before lining up to eat, we always form a blessing circle to welcome and give thanks. Twelve years ago it started with 15 people. This year, the circle just kept growing and growing winding in all directions – so big (300 or more people?) that it was hard to be heard from one side to the other. The children, as always, had an absolute blast climbing all over the newly-erected straw bale structure, and of course they quickly gathered around the fire circle when it came time to light this year's bonfire. Then as darkness slowly settled in, our friend Pamela, her partner, and even our son David firedanced for us all (accompanied by Kuzanga, who managed to play in near darkness!) Firedancing never ceases to amaze me, in how this powerful element in nature can be transformed into a graceful art form. I wish you all a wonderful summer season, and many thanks to all who participated in making this another wonderful Celebration.

– Tom

"We have not merely escaped from something but also into something... we have joined the greatest of all communities, which is not that of man alone but of everything which shares with us the great adventure of being alive."

- Joseph Wood Krutch, from 'Last Child in the Woods' by Richard Louv

Live Earth Farm 2007 Calendar

(see calendar on website for more info)

Aug 24-26 Children's Mini-Camp
(this is sold out)

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)

Field Notes

With the start of Summer we are going to see a gradual shift into more heat loving crops. This year we had an early start with green beans and summer squash. Basil is going to be a regular addition starting this week. The aroma of basil automatically makes me think of tomatoes, and this year they are earlier than ever before. In a "normal" season we can expect tomatoes by the end of July; this year we'll start picking our toe-curling, lip-smacking "Sungold" cherry tomatoes in 7-10 days. Cucumbers are a little slower in making their appearance (we're growing the long, thin skinned Armenian cukes); my crystal ball tells me they should be in your shares in another 3 weeks. Potatoes will be in your shares every other week, and next week they'll come together with leeks and Italian parsley. The wonderful thing about coastal farming is that we can grow tomatoes and turnips at the same time. We sowed a turnip patch 7 weeks ago and they are sizing up nicely. They'll be smallish in size and fairly mild, with nice tops. Expect to see them next week. Strawberries are slowing down, but raspberries and blackberries are just coming into production. Expect more of both (in the Extra Fruit share only) in the coming weeks. And for all you beet lovers, we have a beautiful patch of both Golden and Red coming into production, as well as some Chioggia [key-OH-ghia] beets, which are beautiful when sliced crosswise: white and magenta concentric rings. 🍷

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).

First, a few recipes from the Solstice Celebration which members were kind enough to give me, followed by a mish-mash of recipes from my clip-pings file (I notice I neglected to provide any green bean recipes last week! What was I thinking?? I'll make up for it this week) - Debbie

Tortellini with Spinach-Walnut Pesto

"Makes enough for 8-10 servings--easily halved!" says member Jennifer Black.

4 oz. chopped walnuts
Salt and freshly ground black pepper
2 18 or 20 ounce packages of cheese tortellini or ravioli
1 C chicken or vegetable broth
10 oz. spinach, stems removed, washed and dried (I used mostly spinach and a little arugula)
2 cloves garlic (I used more--about 4 cloves of the fresh garlic)
2/3 C grated Parmesan cheese
1/4 tsp. ground nutmeg
1/4 C olive oil

Toast walnuts in a small skillet over low heat or in a 300 degree oven. Cook pasta according to package directions and drain. Heat the broth to a boil. In a food processor, grind spinach with nuts, broth, and garlic. Stir in cheese, nutmeg, olive oil, and salt and pepper to taste. Toss the hot pasta with the sauce.

Zucchini Walnut Loaf

This is another recipe handed to me at the Solstice potluck; alas I can't give credit because the member didn't write her name on it (and the name of the cookbook is not visible in the margin of the copy)... so thank you, anonymous donors! :-)

3 eggs
1 1/2 C brown sugar, firmly packed
1 C oil (any oil except peanut or olive)
1 C walnut pieces
1 1/2 C whole wheat flour
1 1/2 C white flour
3/4 tsp. salt + 3/4 tsp. baking powder

1 1/2 C coarsely grated zucchini

Combine eggs, sugar & oil in electric mixer or food processor, mix or process until mixture is changed in color; this takes only a short time. Stir in walnuts and zucchini, then sifted flours, returning husks from sifter [??] to mixture [probably referring to any parts of the wheat flour that didn't go through]. Spread mixture into well-greased loaf pan. Bake in moderate oven approximately 1 hour. Let stand a few minutes, then turn onto wire rack to cool.

Green Bean and Radish Salad

modified from a Bon Appetit magazine clipping serves 4 - 6

1 lb. green beans, trimmed
15 large red radishes [any farm radish will do!], trimmed, cut into 1/4" thick slices
6 tbsp. olive oil
2 shallots, chopped
2 tbsp. red wine vinegar
2 tbsp. fresh lemon juice

Cook green beans in a large pot of boiling salted water until crisp-tender, about 3 minutes. Add radishes and cook 30 seconds longer. Drain beans and radishes. Rinse with cold water; drain well. combine all ingredients in a large bowl and toss to coat. Let marinate 1 hour at room temperature, tossing occasionally. Season to taste with salt and pepper and serve.

Green Bean, Orange & Green Olive Salad

yet another Bon Appetit clipping serves 6

2 tbsp. olive oil
1 tbsp. red wine vinegar
1 tsp. honey [how about some of that Live Earth Farm honey y'all brought home from the Solstice Celebration?]
12 oz. [or thereabouts] small slender green beans, trimmed
2 oranges, all peel and white pith cut away
1/2 C small green olives (such as picholine)
1/2 C fresh Italian parsley leaves

Whisk first 3 ingredients in a small bowl. Season with salt and pepper. Cook beans in a large pot of boiling salted water until crisp-tender, about 3 minutes; drain, rinse and pat dry. Cut oranges in half, then crosswise into 1/3-inch thick slices; place in large bowl. Mix in olives, parsley, beans and dressing. Transfer to a shallow dish and serve. [I think I'd cut the orange up into bite-size pieces; it'd be kinda hard to toss whole orange slices with the green beans, I think, without breaking them up a bit anyway.]

Mizuna or Tatsoi in Coconut oil with Soy and Garlic

[this one I made up!]

I discovered coconut oil for cooking; this healthy saturated tropical vegetable oil contains large quantities of lauric acid (which is also found in mother's milk; strong antifungal and antimicrobial properties) and is stable and can be kept at room temperature for many months without becoming rancid. [For more information about this, and lots of other good information, I recommend a book called "Nourishing Traditions - the cookbook that challenges politically correct nutrition and the diet dictocrats" by Sally Fallon.] Anyway, the other thing I like about it other than its healthy qualities, is the fragrance and flavor it adds to stir-fried veggies!

So, have your mizuna or tatsoi washed and standing by (a little water still clinging is good). Melt a spoonful of coconut oil in a large skillet or wok over medium-high heat (it smells great!); crush a clove of garlic into the fat and stir/sizzle a few moments, then add the greens and stir-fry until they have mostly wilted. Splash in some soy sauce and stir-fry until wilted to your liking. Turn off heat and hold until you're ready to eat. This is so good!

more recipes in e-newsletter!