



# Live Earth Farm (Com)Post

A weekly newsletter for the Live Earth Farm CSA Community

5th Harvest Week

April 30<sup>th</sup> – May 6<sup>th</sup>, 2007

Season 12

## 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:

Arugula (bagged)

Red beets

Carrots

Chard

Fava beans +

Garlic +

Lettuce +

Mei quing choy

Onions +

French breakfast radishes

Spinach (Lakeside)

Strawberries (1 bskt)

### Small Share:

Arugula (bagged)

Broccoli (Lakeside)

Carrots

Chard

Fava beans

Garlic

Lettuce

Onions

French breakfast radishes

Strawberries (1 bskt)

### Extra Fruit Option:

2 baskets of strawberries  
(see Tom's crop notes)

Planting is one of the most fundamental activities that makes us fully human. Planting reflects our ability to have faith, faith in the awesome power of nature that helps sustain us on this planet. Last week during one of our school visits I sat with 20 children on a freshly plowed field; we dug our hands into the soil, planting tomato seedlings and seed potatoes, while all the time discovering that the soil we were planting into was not just a bunch of 'dirt,' but rich in odors and colors, alive with visible creatures such as earthworms, roly-pollies, spiders, and ants. A freshly dug and still open gopher hole was a wonderful opportunity to explore the soils 'underworld.' I stuck my arm elbow deep down the tunnel and pulled out a fistful of rich, smooth, moist soil with a thick, juicy earthworm wriggling in it. Suddenly, many of the first graders were not afraid of sticking their whole arm down into the soil, as if in search of some kind of treasure. In my farmer's mind they had already found the treasure.

*"Even if I knew that tomorrow the world would go to pieces, I would still plant my apple tree."*

- Martin Luther

Now that the danger of frost is officially over (April 15th) we planted our main pepper crop – more than 10,000 plants of 6 different varieties. My favorites are the thick skinned pimento peppers and the popular elongated 'Corno de Toro.' We also planted some bell peppers, some 'Chile Poblanos' which are great for stuffing, and a bunch of different hot peppers such as Serranos and the Hungarian Hot Wax. Right next to the peppers, a block of over 4,000 Armenian cucumber seedlings got planted single row as well as a large block of Genovese basil. Now with tomatoes (the cherry tomatoes are starting to bloom!), Peppers, Cucumbers and Basil planted, it is deceiving to think that soon we'll be enjoying the bounty of summer. We must have a little patience. Plants are wonderfully rewarding in that you can witness their progress almost daily (especially in Spring), but like with any living organism everything has a season, and so we must wait for these plants to mature and render their wonderful gifts. – Tom

## Crop Notes

The "Extra Fruit" option starts this week, however the strawberries are still *just* one or two weeks shy of reaching the kind of harvest quantities we would typically have at this time of year. And it is not just us. Most strawberry growers around here agree that this small delay has to do with the cold February and March weather pattern we had. The plants are really lush though and loaded with flowers and fruit... however most of them are still immature and green. So this week the Extra Fruit shareholders will only get 2 baskets, but they can expect 3 to 4 baskets in a week or two, which will continue until our other fruit, such as the Olallieberries (blackberries), start maturing around the end of May. Then the "Strawberry Bounty" shareholders will start receiving their allotment at that time.

No more Rutabagas until Winter! Many of you must be thinking: "It's about time and good riddance, I don't want to see those gnarly small roots anymore!" I apologize; I should have stopped putting them in your share sooner (I put the last of them unannounced into everyone's share a week or two ago, because we had them, but I was unaware how tough and fibrous they had become). So if you still have them in your fridge, feel free to compost them, or as Debbie suggests, use them to make soup stock, but don't feel guilty about not eating them. I don't want anyone to be turned off

## Live Earth Farm 2007 Calendar

(see calendar on website for more info)

Fri. May 18	<u>Four Fridays Mataganza Garden Internship</u> (5/18, 5/25, 6/1, 6/8)
Sat. Jun 9	<u>"Outstanding in the Field" Dinner</u>
Sat. Jun 23	<u>Summer Solstice Celebration</u>
July 10-14	<u>Teen Adventure Camp</u>
Aug 24-26	<u>Children's Mini-Camp</u>
Sat. Oct 3	<u>Fall Harvest Celebration</u>

by rutabagas; they are a wonderful tasty root... it's just that in our case it was my fault to have harvested them past their prime, when many of the plants had already started to bolt. I hope to correct this oversight toward the end of November when they will be back in season again. (They'll appear in the winter shares, but not again in the regular shares.)

Last year we grew a small patch of what is commonly known as a huskcherry. It looks like a tomatillo, however the fruit inside the husk is yellow and sweet and can be eaten fresh. It is native to the Andes and in Ecuador, and is called Uvilla or small grape. In this country, I have seen them in health food stores sold sundried as "Inca Berries." Last week we transplanted over 1,000 plants in the greenhouse, and hope to have them planted out in the field by end of May. They are very prolific, and we can expect to harvest them sometime in August. - Tom 🍷

## Egg Shares start this week

The long-awaited egg shares are finally here! Although I know I sound like a broken record, please, everyone who is getting eggs: remember that ALL egg shares are in HALF-dozen increments. So next to your name on the checklist it will tell you how many HALF-dozens to take. The eggs will be in a styrofoam cooler at your pick-up site. 🍷

## How to donate your share

If you ever know you're going to be away and unable to pick up your share (and don't have anyone to give it to), if you contact Debbie at the farm a day or two ahead of time, she can arrange for your share to be donated to a needy family. We have a list of eager recipients, plus a few church pantries that welcome the extra fresh produce. 🍷

## A heads-up about beets

So that no one else is unnecessarily alarmed by this [we got a few emails last week], we need to alert everyone – especially anyone who've never eaten beets before – about this: beets color more than your fingers and clothes. The pigment in beets is actually so intense that it survives the gauntlet of your digestive system and will color your urine and feces, in direct proportion to how many beets you have eaten! Although completely harmless, it can be quite disconcerting to see magenta urine in the toilet bowl! But now you are all armed with the truth, so hopefully no one else will make an unnecessary trip to the doctor's office. 🍷

## Outstanding in the Field Dinner!

The rumors are true ... Outstanding in the Field (OitF) returns to Live Earth Farm on Saturday, June 9! Jim Denevan – the OitF founder who conceived the magical idea of taking diners literally out to the farm while he was executive chef at Gabriela Cafe – will create the menu for this five-course meal celebrating springtime's harvest. Reservation links should be up on the OitF website by May 1, so check in then at [www.outstandinginthefield.com](http://www.outstandinginthefield.com) to grab your seats. Hope to see you at the table! 🍷

## 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).

### French Breakfast Radishes

These are beautiful elongated pink radishes with white tips. Radish greens are edible (I only just learned this myself not too long ago), so if the ones attached to your radishes look fresh and good, feel free to cook with them! I don't think I'd eat them raw, as they have a fuzziness to them, but steamed or sautéed like you might other greens would be fine (the fuzziness disappears with cooking). On the other hand, feel free to compost them and just eat the radishes. It is optional; I don't want anyone stressing because they feel guilty about not eating their radish greens! I just want the people who run out of greens before the week is up to know that they can eat their radish greens too!

The radishes are great for just eating! Put a few in a dish at the table at lunch or dinnertime and pass the salt. Pack them into your kid's lunches along with the carrots.

Another very French way to eat them (at breakfast, no less!) is to spread a little sweet cream butter on them [always use

organic butter – I like Straus Organic Creamery butter] and sprinkle with just a touch of sea salt. Delicious!

### Monster Greens

by member Mary Lyn Azar

I wanted to try getting more vegetables into meals other than dinner and keep it kid friendly enough for my 3 and 5 year olds to eat them. So this morning I blanched some chard then sautéed it for about a minute with garlic and butter (I do this as a side at dinner). This time, I spread the greens over the bottom of the omelet pan and made two wells in the greens. I cracked an egg into each well for "eyes," put on the lid and cooked until the eggs were cooked through. While the eggs were cooking, I buttered toast and cut it into triangles. Slid the greens and eggs onto a plate and moved them around a little so I had a round face of greens, 2 egg eyes, and a hole in the greens for the mouth. The toast triangles we "hair" or "spikes" and a bowtie. The kids figured out it was a monster right away, and were enthusiastic about helping me "eat the

monster." We made breakfast sandwiches by heaping greens and half an egg on each toast triangle and topping it with another. Yum! (see photo in e-newsletter!)

### Try Mei Quing choi in tuna salad

I made the most fabulous tuna salad the other day; instead of the usual diced celery and mayonnaise, I took a couple stalks of the Mei Quing choi, diced the stems and finely shredded the leaves and added them all to the tuna instead. The texture is really nice! The choi is more tender than celery, so it is succulent-crunchy! You could just make that substitution (choi for celery) and be done with it and it would be fine, but I had to go a little further: I used tuna in olive oil, drained, added a splash of soy sauce and a squeeze of fresh lemon, then went out into my newly-planted herb garden and snipped some chives and dill, minced them finely, and added them to the mix, with just a little mayo to blend everything together. Yummo!

(lots more recipes in e-newsletter)