



# Live Earth Farm (Com)Post

A weekly newsletter for the Live Earth Farm CSA Community

25<sup>th</sup> Harvest Week

Sept. 24<sup>th</sup> – 30<sup>th</sup>, 2003

Season 8

## What's in the standard share:

### Fruit:

Bag of Warren Pears

### Veggies and herbs:

Arugula

Bok-choi

Carrots

Chard

Green beans

Kale

Onions

Yellow Finn potatoes

Radishes

Stir-fry mix

Summer squash

Tomatoes

Scallions

Mystery item

## and if you have an extra-fruit option:

Strawberries, mixed bag of pears and apples

(over for more!)

**Hello everyone – Welcome to Autumn.** The Fall Equinox, which happens on Tuesday, September 23, is that time of year when night's darkness equals the length of the day. In the more northern parts of the country this is the season of harvest, the fruition of all the growth of spring and summer. Along the Central Coast we get to enjoy a more extended cropping season before the first killer frost, sometime in November, puts an end to summer. The energy in plants is starting to move toward the roots. Leaves are falling as the life force goes within. Some of the trees are already turning color, and summer crops such as tomatoes, summer squash, and the berries are all starting to slow down. On Saturday it was wonderful to celebrate with so many of you the transition into Fall, giving praise for the many gifts that life has to offer. We walked around the farm en masse, accompanied by spontaneous and inspiring songs played by Larry, Doug and Steve from the Banana Slug String Band, and the fields turned into a playground where everyone sang and gathered gifts from the land. In the long rays of the setting sun, the colors in the fields were absolutely brilliant, and all of us enjoyed nature's infinite artistry – most inspiring and revealing. Thank to all for the wonderful food brought to share in our traditional pot-luck; there was enough to fill everyone's plates. Warm loaves of bread almost magically appeared from Toastie, our wood-fired oven, and many hands continuously pressed fresh and sweet apples for cider. Happy start of fall to everyone, and we hope to see many of you during our Pumpkin Palooza, October 25th! – Tom

*"The reason for seasonal eating is to promote the health of our bodies and the Earth."*

*- Elson M. Haas,  
from Staying Healthy with the Seasons*

## Winter Shares Update

Oh boy, this is not easy to explain... but after much pondering I have had a change of heart, and decided not to do a Winter CSA. It took me some time to come to this realization, but the more I started planning a Winter program the more I understood that everyone needed a winter rest, both the land as well as all of us who work here on the farm. I know many of you (we received almost 130 responses!) were excited to continue the program through the winter, and I really appreciate that enthusiasm and support. It was tempting to give more continuity to the program, especially since the farm still has many winter crops growing in the field and in storage. Also, the extra income to support the farm through the financially meager winter months would seem a benefit. However, I realized that the strain of working under much more unpredictable winter conditions, plus the need to get some rest after our regular season, would leave us strained come the start of the new season, in 2004. I hope you all understand, and instead choose to sign up for our Early Season shares, which next year will start the week of March 15th – about a month earlier than usual. We will be sending everyone registration information for next season in the beginning of October. 🌱

## Important Reminder

*We ask that you please be respectful of the pick-up times set by the homeowner or business where you pick up your share. In other words, if you forget to pick up your share, do not come by the next day or expect your pick-up site person to hold it for you unless you have made explicit prior arrangements. They are responsible for seeing that forgotten shares are donated once pick-up time has passed, so that the produce goes to good use while it is still reasonably fresh. So if you forget your share... at least be comforted that it is not wasted! Thanks for your understanding!! 🌱*

## Live Earth Farm Calendar

(see calendar on website for more detailed info)

Sat. Oct 25

Halloween Pumpkin Palooza

all day

with

*the Banana Slug String Band!*

## Notes from the Field

Plantain – A Healing Weed. On Saturday a mother came up to me and asked what plantain looks like, since she heard from my wife how it helps soothe and prevent reactions to poison oak. With all the excitement on Saturday I missed identifying this prolifically growing herb for her. I hope this explanation will help give more clarity, and I welcome anyone who would like a bunch to call us. Much of the information below was taken from a book written by Elson M. Haas titled "Staying healthy with the Seasons." Plantain (*Plantago major*) is an herb that grows throughout the United States and has multiple external and internal uses. The variety that grows commonly on the West Coast is the long or lancet leafed type compared to the more broad leafed one commonly found on the east coast. Both plants are usable. Plantain has much traditional folklore surrounding it, and is also known as "Indian buckwheat" and "nature's band-aid." The tall shoots that grow from the plant contain the seed and flower. When broken apart, the individual seed containers look like tiny buckwheat kernels. The Indians used to mash them with water and make sun-dried patties with them. The therapeutic properties of plantain are as an alternative, diuretic, antiseptic, astringent, styptic and vulnerary. As nature's band-aid, it is particularly healing for external sores, ulcers, burns, and stings from insects or plants (i.e. poison oak). Crush or lightly chew some fresh green leaves, apply this to the wound, cover with several whole leaves, than wrap and tie the long shoot to hold the bandage in place. Plantain's history also shows its use for hemorrhoids, eczema, boils, and carbuncles, diarrhea, and bladder or kidney problems. Used daily it is supposed to promote fertility, and the chewed root may be helpful for toothache. Well, it seems a plant that grows literally under our noses (I bet you all have it in your garden and treated it as a weed) is almost a cure-all and good to know. 🌿

### Ordering Almonds or Goat Cheese

Almonds from *Anderson Almonds* are currently not available through the CSA as they are busy with the fall harvest. See their website [www.andersonalmonds.com](http://www.andersonalmonds.com) for the latest info.

From *Summer Meadows Farm*, just across the Pajaro Valley from Live Earth Farm, you can get *raw goat milk* cheeses, milk and now yogurt! Cheeses are chevre, ricotta, and a queso blanco (made with vegetable rennet). Milk and yogurt are by the quart. Your cheese, milk and/or yogurt orders are left in a cooler under an ice pack at your pick-up location (chevre is

sometimes delivered frozen but this does not affect quality). **Prices:** Chevre and ricotta are \$6 per half-pound. Queso blanco is available in 5" round 'bricks' about a pound each for \$12 (or get a 'half brick' for \$6). A quart of milk is \$3, and a quart of yogurt is \$4 (please remember to return empty jars to the cooler at your pick-up site the following week! Lynn re-uses them). Supply is somewhat limited. **Contact** Lynn Selness at (831) 345-8033 to place an order, then mail a check to Summer Meadows Farm, 405 Webb Road, Watsonville, CA 95076.

## Notes from Debbie's Kitchen

Have a recipe you'd like to share? Contact the newsletter editor.

*With pears in our shares, you know it's fall. Here's a recipe for pearsauce (think applesauce) I made up last year. It's particularly useful if you have a bunch of pears that are ripe all at once and you want to use them up. But first, a small errata statement about last week's pan-seared radicchio recipe! - Debbie*

I left out a small step in last week's recipe; not earthshaking, but important, I think. When you've added the radicchio to the hot oil in the skillet, sprinkle it generously with salt before searing. This helps bring out the flavor. I figure most people salt food to taste anyway, but still, I apologize for the omission! - Debbie

### Pearsauce

from Debbie's own kitchen (quantity flexible)

Tom's sweet and juicy Warren or French Butter pears, peeled, cored and chunked  
a little water  
cinnamon  
fresh lemon juice

Put cut up pears in a pot with just a little water (NOT to cover! Just enough to get fruit simmering, as it has plenty of its own moisture). Cover and bring to a boil, reduce

heat to low and simmer, covered, until fruit is cooked and soft, oh, 20 to 30 minutes. Cool somewhat, add a sprinkling of cinnamon and a squeeze of fresh lemon juice, to taste, puree in a blender or food processor, then refrigerate. It'll be good for at least a week. Eat it straight up, or in a bowl with some plain yogurt, or over ice cream, or if you're a carnivore, it would be a great accompaniment to pork roast or chops (with a side of steamed stir-fry greens and some mashed or pan roasted potatoes!).

### Swiss Chard and Chutney Strudel

from Cucina Italia magazine serves 6

18 oz. frozen puff pastry  
flour for the board  
1 1/4 lbs. Swiss chard, washed  
3 tbsp. unsalted butter, plus extra salt  
10 oz. cranberry chutney (if unavailable, substitute another fruit chutney)  
5 oz. Swiss cheese, cut into strips  
1 egg, beaten

Preheat oven to 350 degrees F. Defrost puff pastry, and roll out slightly thinner on a floured work surface. Chop and sauté the chard in butter for 5 minutes over medium-high heat; add salt. Spread chutney on the dough. Arrange greens on top, and sprinkle

with the cheese strips. Roll up the strudel evenly, and pinch ends to close. Place strudel on a baking sheet lined with lightly buttered foil. Brush the egg over the entire surface of the strudel. Bake for 30 minutes, cut into even slices, and serve warm.

**Stir-fried Tofu with Bok Choi** serves 4  
from "This Can't be Tofu!" by Deborah Madison

1 lg. or 2 sm. bunches bok choy, washed  
1 carton soft or firm tofu, drained  
1 C vegetable stock, chicken stock or water  
2 tbsp. soy sauce  
1 tbsp. oyster sauce  
1 tbsp. roasted peanut oil  
3 garlic cloves, minced  
1/4 tsp. salt  
1 tbsp. cornstarch mixed w/1tbsp. water

Cut bok choy stems into pieces and chop leaves. Cut tofu (gently!) into 1"-ish cubes. Mix together stock, soy sauce and oyster sauce. Heat a wide nonstick skillet, add the oil and when hot, add garlic and bok choy. Sprinkle with salt and stir-fry over high heat for about 2 minutes, until greens are wilted. Add stock, reduce heat to low, add tofu. Cover and simmer until tofu is heated through, 4 to 5 minutes. Add diluted cornstarch and gently stir into the juices without breaking tofu. Serve over rice.