



# Live Earth Farm (Com)Post

A weekly newsletter for the Live Earth Farm CSA Community

30<sup>th</sup> Harvest Week

October 17<sup>th</sup> – 23<sup>rd</sup>, 2005

Season 10

## What's in the box this week:

(stuff that's in one size share that's *not* in the other is at the top of its respective list so you can easily see the difference. Remember, small shares will generally have smaller quantities of the duplicate items. – Debbie)

### Family Share:

Beets  
Kale or collard greens  
Summer squash  
Apples  
Basil (last of the season)  
Loose baby bok choy  
Carrots  
Cauliflower  
Chard  
Fennel  
Green beans  
Lettuce  
Green onions  
Peppers or tomatoes  
Radishes

### Small Share:

Apples  
Basil (last of the season)  
Loose baby bok choy  
Carrots  
Cauliflower  
Chard  
Fennel  
Green beans  
Lettuce  
Green onions  
Peppers or tomatoes  
Radishes

### Extra Fruit Option:

Bag of pears, bag of apples, plus a basket of either strawberries or raspberries

October is a popular month for local schools to tour the farm. Last week, the Santa Cruz Children School K-6, and Mount Madonna's Kindergarten class came to visit. I keep the talking part to a minimum to maximize time for exploring, playing, and simply enjoying the farm. Young people are bombarded with information, so sometimes not talking at all but just listening, smelling, touching and most importantly tasting can be a valuable and joyful experience of being together in nature. Usually we spend a brief moment in a circle to give everyone an idea what life on the farm is like; I try to talk more from observation and feeling rather than giving some intellectual rap. A young girl was curious to know why farmers were covering some of their fields with plastic (something she observed on her ride over from school). I just wanted to scream, "Methyl Bromide, soil sterilization, ozone depletion, pesticides... we are killing the planet with poisons!" But instead I said to her, "you just caught a farmer trying to

cheat on nature, using dangerous chemicals to grow his food." I picked up a clod of soil, crumbling it between my fingers, and pointed out that as an organic farmer, my job is to honor the million 'creepy crawlies' that keep the soil healthy and strong. Soil is filled with life. In every teaspoonful there are millions of bacteria of numerous species, algae, fungi, viruses, and many microscopic animals. That doesn't even

include all those critters easily detected with the naked eye such as earthworms, larvae of beetles and other insects. The interrelationship of these various soil microorganisms and plants is complex. For example, the green beans we grow have a mutually beneficial relationship with a bacteria that can fix nitrogen, and convert it into a type of amino acid which can be transformed into essential plant proteins and eventually into human proteins. Gardens and farms are great teachers; math, physics, biology and chemistry all come alive through real-life problem solving. Worrying about ozone depletion, global warming and toxic chemicals destroying the environment is all very frightening for a young child; it is their future that is at risk. So instead we picked peppers, paste tomatoes, basil, and eggplant which were transformed into delicious hot slices of pizza inside Toastie's hot belly (aka our outdoor clay oven), pressed apples into sweet cider, and gathered fresh eggs from the chicken coop. All this gave the children a tangible and positive experience with nature and a memory of earth's generosity. "Thank you dirt, thanks a bunch!" we so often sing, together with the Banana Slug String Band, during our farm celebrations. – Tom

*"Kids who have a close connection to their food, who understand where it came from, have an easier time understanding other things as well."*

*- Aaron Ableman (Michael Ableman's son), from "On Good Land"*

## Field Notes from Farmer Tom

First of all, I jumped the gun: there will be no Chinese cabbage this week; the heads are not tight enough. For sure next week. "Why are some of the tomatoes and peppers soft and wrinkly?" some of you have asked. The last several weeks you might have noticed that our summer favorites, tomatoes and peppers, have been softer, some with black spots, and if stored for more than a few days (especially in a plastic bag), you probably had to cull a few. I hope for the most part you will still enjoy the tail end of these summer crops. Make sure you use them as soon as you get your share. The shorter than usual season for tomatoes this year was due to three things: a wet spring giving us a late start, a cooler and foggier-than-usual summer delaying the ripening process, and the intermittent showers in July and August which helped spread the common fungal diseases known as early and late blight. Last Saturday's rain was a welcome relief, though, and a sign that it is time to prepare for winter. We always

## Live Earth Farm 2005 Calendar

(see calendar on website for more info)

Sat Oct 22 [Halloween Pumpkin Palooza](#)

Sat Nov 5 [Permaculture workshop #3](#)  
Polycultures & Agroforestry; Food Forest  
Design and Installation

get nervous at this time of year when the first rains start moving in. Too much of it can ruin the soil moisture conditions critical for preparing and shaping the beds for next year's strawberry and garlic crop. In the next two weeks we will receive over 40,000 strawberry plants, all of which need to be planted by mid-November. This year we are increasing our strawberry acreage, as well as adding a new variety called Albion, which was recently released by UC Extension Service. Albions taste similar to our popular Seascape variety, but carry increased resistance to verticillium wilt, a common soil born fungus that affects the roots of the plant. This week we'll also be harvesting some Jerusalem Artichokes. Most will be saved for seed, however there's probably enough to put some into everybody's share next week (more information about this knobby and funny shaped tuber next week). Enjoy the fennel this week! We had a small planting; it is great with fish, or sautéed with carrots and cauliflower. 🍷

## Pumpkins

It's Pumpkin picking time, so don't forget to come to the farm and pick yours this weekend. We're open all Saturday!!! If you can't make this Saturday but just want to swing by at a later date, I am sure we'll have enough left over for last minute carving or Halloween decoration projects. 🍷

## Early Registration Now Available!

By Wednesday morning October 19<sup>th</sup>, our website should be updated to accept early registration orders for next season. Simply go to [www.liveearthfarm.com](http://www.liveearthfarm.com) and click on "Early Registration for 2006" then follow the instructions. Early registration is a benefit for both the farm and for you. The farm benefits because your deposit payments go towards the purchase of supplies and planting stock for next season (our typical 'up-front' costs), and *you* benefit by saving \$1/week off the cost of next season! Remember, we will have only 350 'extra fruit' options and 550 shares next year (for comparison, this year we sold out of Extra Fruit in May, and we currently have about 520 members), so, first come, first served! We will be accepting early registrations between now and the end of January (i.e. the discount expires Jan. 31<sup>st</sup>). Please note: although only a deposit is necessary to secure your membership for next year, if you have the wherewithal and are willing to pay for the entire season up front, there are additional discounts available. Call or email me at the farm [(831) 763-2448 [farmers@cruzio.com](mailto:farmers@cruzio.com)] and I'll give you the details. - Debbie 🍷

## 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. (Visit the recipes link on our website for a comprehensive list of recipes 'by key ingredient' (pictures too!). Includes recipes from newsletters back to 1998.)

*Got a nice email last week from member P.K. O'Meagher about chard. Also, a fun recipe from member Julie Hill, sent to me earlier this summer. Oh, and by the way, I made that 'savory beet salad with yogurt and caraway' (from the Week 28 newsletter) and it was really good! So if, like me, you have extra beets laying around, you should definitely try it! - Debbie*

### An easy way to understand Chard

by P.K. O'Meagher

"Regarding a remark in the last newsletter about chard, I wanted to add a little hint for your readers. I was introduced to chard when I was in Morocco in the sixties. Being a city girl and pretty much a newlywed, I had never heard of chard, but my friend, who was English, and her husband, who was Palestinian, introduced me to lots of new foods (including how to prepare my own yogurt).

"[What I learned from them is that] chard is kind of like large spinach and small celery. It's bigger and thicker, but you can still treat it just as you would those other two veggies: The leaves can be chiffonaded and added raw to salads, or steamed like spinach leaves. The stems should be stripped from the leaves and chopped like celery, [and can be used] either raw in salads, or lightly sautéed in olive oil (a tasty way to utilize them)."

### "Everything but the Kitchen Sink" Rice Salad

from the kitchen of Julie Hill and Darius Archer

- Cook up a bunch of wild and brown rice (whole wheat rotini pasta also works well, or any other grain you like in cold salads)
- Chop up whatever organic veggies you have on hand; I used the following: 1 red pepper, 1 green pepper, red onion, broccoli, cauliflower, carrots, grape tomatoes, half a red cabbage, and zucchini.
- Finely chop a small handful each of fresh parsley and fresh basil and a smaller bit of fresh dill and toss that in.
- Add some sundried black olives (Whole Foods has them)
- For protein, add some shelled edamame [can get frozen at Trader Joe's] and home-baked tofu (mix juice of one lemon, 1 tsp. freshly grated ginger, 1 tbsp. Bragg's liquid aminos, 1 crushed garlic clove, 1 teaspoon of honey and marinate sliced firm tofu for 1/2 hour, then bake at 350 for 20 minutes or so until it starts to brown). Note: Instead of tofu and edamame, it's also good (especially with pasta) to add cubed salami and provolone cheese.

Toss all ingredients with a dressing made from olive oil and lemon juice with a crushed garlic clove, black pepper, and pinch of salt to taste.

### On Fennel

from Mariquita Farm's website

Popular as a vegetable in Italy, it can be thinly sliced and eaten plain or as part of a vegetable platter. It is often served with just salt and olive oil as a simple appetizer or salad course. It can be chopped up into salad as celery, and indeed used almost anywhere celery is used.

### Fennel Ideas

adapted from the Victory Garden Cookbook

- Sprinkle chopped fennel leaves on hot baked oysters or clams.
- Add cooked fennel to omelets, quiches, stuffings or sauces.
- Add stalks to stocks for their flavor.
- Add sliced sautéed fennel to fish chowders.
- Cook fennel in your favorite tomato sauce.
- Place stalks and leaves on barbecue coals as they do in France. The fennel scent permeates the grilled food.
- Slice steamed or blanched fennel, cover with a vinaigrette and serve chilled.
- Chop raw fennel and add to tuna fish sandwiches.
- Slice fennel thin and layer with raw potatoes, cream and cheese to make a potato au gratin.
- Serve fennel and cheese for dessert: Cut fresh fennel into wedges and serve with slices of a really great cheese such as bleu or goat cheese. Drizzle with your best olive oil, and sprinkle with salt and pepper to taste.