



Live Earth Farm (Com)Post

A weekly newsletter for the Live Earth Farm CSA Community

28th Harvest Week

October 15th – 21st, 2003

Season 8

What's in the standard share:

Fruit:

Warren pears

Veggies and herbs:

Broccoli or cauliflower

Red carrots (loose)

Chard

Cilantro

Green beans

Dinosaur kale

Peppers

Potatoes

Radicchio

Scallions

Spinach

Summer squash

Winter squash

maybe tomatoes?

and if you have an extra-fruit option:

Strawberries, apples

and pears

(over for more!)

A time to pause. Right now is the time of year when the sun rises and the harvest moon sets on opposite horizons. Take a moment and stand still, maybe you have a favorite spot in the garden or somewhere else outdoors, and wait for the day's arrival. Standing, aware of both of these celestial bodies, I am reminded what a gift it is to be given this earth in the first place. Sometimes we need to realize that our ancestors probably performed this ritual for millions of years, standing barefooted, literally connecting with the earth, probably singing a prayer for the day's arrival. We must remember that our current lifestyle – bombarded with activities, schedules, obligations and responsibilities – is but a fraction of a second in our short history as human beings on this planet. Not always did we wake before dawn and commute a great distance to a busy office, where lunch is a hurried affair in a cubicle, at a crowded sandwich place, or in the car en route to our next appointment. I hope, no matter how busy we are, there is time to pause to let our gratitude announce itself to the earth. "Both mind and body need to engage with the processes of nature that permeate all life forms," says ecologist Joseph Meeker. When somebody asks me whether I talk to my plants in the field I feel a bit embarrassed to admit that I do. But at the same time I want to say how exciting this conversation is, since it has little to do with talking, but rather (like in any dialogue) it requires attention – listening to the messages sent ceaselessly by one's own body and by the other life forms that we share this planet with. – Tom

"Only human beings have come to a point where they no longer know why they exist. They ... have forgotten the secret knowledge of their bodies, their senses, their dreams."

- Lam Deer, quoted by David Suzuki in "The Sacred Balance - rediscovering our place in nature"

What's Up on the Farm

Local Schools are visiting. October is really busy: eight school groups will be coming to visit the farm. They will be pressing apples into cider, collecting seeds, planting garlic and onions for early spring harvest, sowing cover crops in freshly plowed fields, composting, and building scarecrows. Opening the farm to local schools is evolving into an important aspect of our operation, and this year we have worked closely with a non-profit organization, Community Alliance with Family Farmers (CAFF), to support their local farm-to-school program.

Drying fruit. Over the last few weeks we have made good use of our solar tunnel drier by drying pears and tomatoes, and soon we'll be drying apples. We hope to offer these in the winter and early spring, both at the farmers' markets and in our early CSA shares.

Apples. You may wonder what type of apples you have been receiving in your shares over the last few weeks. Most of them come from Billy Bob's Orchard. Billy Peixote is a longtime and passionate farmer who grows some of the most delicious varieties of apples here in the Pajaro Valley. He picks his apples at the peak of their ripeness and flavor. Over the last few weeks the three varieties we received from him are Jonagold – a nice yellow/red mottled apple, Gala, with a red and lightly green striped pattern, Empire, which has a dark red color, and Pippins which are all green.

Winter squash. The variety you'll see in your boxes this week (and which we have most of) are Delicata and/or Sweet Dumplings. Both have blue-ish dark stripes, but Delicata is more oblong in shape, and Sweet Dumplings are more round with an indented top. Both are sweet and have a wonderful nutty flavor. 🍂

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!

Early Registration and Gift Certificates

If you did not receive our 2004 Early Registration flyer (the green two-sided one we put in your share box last week) and *would like to receive this info*, please contact us. We can either email you a pdf of the form, or print out and pop one in the mail to you (if you do not use the internet). We are offering a \$50 discount to anyone who signs up for next season before the end of December 2003, so if you plan on continuing with us next year, take advantage of this great option!

CSA Gift Certificates – we're still working on 'em, but they will soon be a reality. We have decided to offer certificates in 1, 2, 3 and 4-week 'denominations' (to suit everyone's budget), and each beautiful color certificate will come with a little gift pack of our very own organic sun-dried tomatoes. These will make a perfect Christmas or holiday gift for a friend or loved one, and what a wonderful way to introduce someone new to CSA! Info about our gift certificates will be in your share boxes soon, so keep an eye out! 🐾

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 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 (contact info below).

Member Carol Magnoli submitted the first recipe, and says it is by Dorothy of 'Dorothy McNett's Place' in Hollister, Carol's favorite cookware and kitchen specialty store. She has made this before, and loves it. Also I found a great blurb on Sweet Dumpling Squash on the internet. Hope you like! - Debbie

Radicchio, Spinach & Shrimp Salad

by Dorothy McNett, Hollister

1/2 to 1 small head radicchio
4 - 5 C fresh spinach
1/4 C balsamic vinegar
1/3 C dry white wine
1/4 - 1/2 tsp. sea salt (coarse is nice here)
1/3 C extra virgin olive oil
1 - 2 C cooked baby shrimp
freshly ground white peppercorns

Cut the radicchio into thin julienne. Tear the spinach and toss the greens together in a bowl. Whisk together in a glass measuring cup the balsamic, wine and salt. In a large sauté pan, heat the oil and add the shrimp to warm them and to coat with the oil. Put the shrimp on the greens. Add the balsamic mixture to the oil and cook and stir over high heat until the liquid has reduced about by half. Pour over the greens and toss, adding pepper to taste. (Although the recipe doesn't call for it, Carol likes to crumble just a tiny bit of gorgonzola into the salad for a few little bursts of flavor!)

Sweet Dumpling Squash – a tidy bundle of yummy carotene

(excerpted from a 1999 internet posting by Betsy Kline of the Post Gazette)

"Squash. People love it or hate it. But how can you hate a little green-and-cream-colored orb called a Sweet Dumpling? This tiny squash – they often weigh in at less than a pound – is true to its name: It's so sweet that it needs no seasoning, unless you prefer a shake of salt and pepper. Butter? Who needs it? This little gem is buttery by itself. One small squash is a perfect 2-serving size. And it's a snap in the microwave. We like to serve it as is, in the skin, as a side dish with chicken or fish. The flesh is a bright orange. Just take a spoon and dig in. Or scoop it out and mash it with a little salt and pepper. It doesn't get any simpler than this. Nutritionally, it's a bundle of vitamin C, a range of B vitamins and beta carotene. It's also popular as an ornamental, grouped with other tiny squash, gourds and pumpkins. We usually find them plentiful in markets in late fall, then they disappear. Stock up – they keep for 3 to 4 months in a cool, dry place."

Sweet Dumpling Squash (the recipe!)

1 Sweet Dumpling squash
Salt and pepper, to taste

Microwave: The squash can be microwaved whole. Just pierce the skin with a fork a few times, put it on a paper towel in the microwave and zap for 6 to 10 minutes on high. Once cooked, slice and remove seeds, taking care because it will be extremely hot.

Or slice in half top to bottom, scoop out seeds and place cut sides down in a microwave-safe dish with about a 1/2-inch of water. Depending on the size, it might take

5 to 8 minutes on High. Test with a fork. It should be tender but not mushy. Season to taste with salt and pepper.

Conventional oven: Preheat oven to 350 degrees. Bake whole or sliced in half, cut sides down on a cookie sheet. Bake for 35 to 45 minutes until tests tender with a fork.

Variation: For those with an insatiable sweet tooth, serve with a sprinkle of brown sugar and chopped pecans.

Green Salad... without Greens?

from Debbie's own kitchen

Hankering for a nice 'green' salad with fresh tomatoes to go with dinner the other night, but at a loss because we're not getting lettuce right now (and I'd used up all my spinach already), I came up with this idea. A few nights before I had pre-cooked a bunch of green beans (topped and tailed them, cooked them in boiling salted water 6 or 7 minutes until tender, then drained and rinsed them in cold water to hold the color, then refrigerated) because I figured they'd be handy for a quick re-heat side dish if needed. But instead of re-heating them, I made a simple vinaigrette, tossed the cold beans with this, placed serving-sized piles on nice white salad plates and scattered small red tomato wedges on top. Looked very Italian, and went great with our pasta dinner. The vinaigrette was just a splash of white wine vinegar, a squeeze of fresh lemon juice, pinch of salt, a bigger pinch of herbs de Provence (rubbed to bring out their flavor), a few grinds of black pepper and some olive oil, whisked together. Easy!