



Live Earth Farm (Com)Post

A weekly newsletter for the Live Earth Farm CSA Community

16th Harvest Week

July 16th – 22nd, 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:

Holey arugula

Basil

Beets (golden or chiodga)

Broccoli (Lakeside or LEF) +

Carrots

Green beans

Lettuce +

Radishes

Spinach +

Summer squash +

Sungold cherry tomatoes

Dry-farmed tomatoes

Strawberries (1 bskt)

Small Share:

Basil

Broccoli (Lakeside or LEF)

Carrots

Green beans

Lettuce

Parsley

Potatoes

Radishes

Spinach

Summer squash

Sungold cherry tomatoes

Strawberries (1 bskt)

Extra Fruit Option:

Blackberries, strawberries, plums, and...

- apricots (Weds) or

- raspberries (Thurs)

"Strawberry Bounty:"

4 baskets of strawberries

BASIL BOUNTY – FREE BASIL!!

At each pick-up site this week there will be a box with loose basil in it, free for the taking. Please take as much as you want! We have a bumper crop of basil right now, and in order to keep the plants healthy and prevent them from bolting, they need to be picked. But rather than throw it on the ground to compost between the rows, we are going to harvest and collect it, and offer it to you. The basil will not be bunched, it will simply be loose, in one of the plastic bag liners, inside a waxed box at your pick-up site. We will leave the box open, but the bag may be closed over the top of the basil to help keep it fresh. Take as much as you like, then close the bag up again to keep it fresh for the next member. Debbie will give you extra recipes and ideas for using it.

Eating locally and seasonally by joining our CSA is, in my eyes, a fairly radical if not revolutionary step – one that affects both eating habits and lifestyle. When you first signed up to join, you took a bold step, choosing to participate in the seasonal journey of *this particular* farm. If it's your first time as a CSA member, it can be difficult to anticipate what you were getting yourself into. By now, for instance, summer is in full swing, and you're probably wondering when you'll be getting tomatoes, cucumbers and peppers; and hoping that the chard, kale, arugula or never ending supply of beets and carrots will slow down.

Getting a box of vegetables every week, all from the same farm, can be challenging. Diversity doesn't appear overnight, but happens gradually over the course of an entire season. Sometimes this requires learning to cook with more unusual vegetables, such as mizuna, Chinese cabbage or fava beans; other times it means coming up with creative culinary

ways to prepare the same vegetable a couple weeks in a row. If you lived here where the farm is – the central Coast, where cauliflower, broccoli, leafy greens and lettuces are year 'round staples – you'd understand that it's our cool foggy summer days that delay the ripening of the popular heat-loving crops. I know that by the time our cucumbers and tomatoes are ripe and in your shares, you've already seen them piled high in stores and at farmers markets for weeks. But the green beans and cherry tomatoes now appearing in your shares are a sign that the summer veggies are imminent.

Each farm is different, defined by its climate, soil conditions, size, market, and most importantly, the people who live on and work the land. Still, the feedback and stories we get from you are also important. Many members have expressed to us over the years that getting a share is like getting a surprise box, or like 'Christmas every week.' On the other hand, last week a member commented about the "holey" arugula, which, with its many little holes, resembled Swiss cheese. Unhappy with its appearance, he threw it out. True, if you went shopping in a store this 'holey' arugula would probably never make it into your shopping basket. But in this case, appearance is deceiving, since the taste is unaffected. And unlike the blemish-free store product, it tells a story... in this case, it is story about the life cycle of a common little beetle, the flea beetle, which loves to munch on mustard greens, and happened to peak at the same time our aru-

"As farmers, we are emotionally involved, personally engaged and spiritually invested... surviving as both art and business... we perform despite limited economic incentives because we offer gifts to the world"

*- David Mas Masumoto
from "Four Seasons in Five Senses"*

Live Earth Farm 2007 Calendar

(see calendar on website for more info)

Aug 10, 17, 24, 31, Sept 7 and 14

Mataganza Garden Sanctuary
Internship Program

(see week 16 newsletter for details)

Aug 24-26

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

Sat. Oct 20

Fall Harvest Celebration

Farm Work Days: 7/27, 8/31, 9/28, 10/26
(see Week 10 newsletter for details)

gula started sprouting. Normally in this situation we like to cover the crop with a light, gauze-like blanket commonly known as 'row cover', to reduce the flea beetle damage. This time, however, we had to leave the blankets off due to the higher temperatures from a couple of short heat waves we experienced in the last three weeks. The veggies you get from us will always have a story to tell, about the complexity, the cycles and character of this farm. As a member, you will not necessarily be eating what is easiest and most convenient for you. Sometimes you are asked to be more flexible, to be open to trying new things and discovering the flavors, textures and characters of food that can be grown at the time and place where you are now. – Tom

Field Notes from Farmer Tom

The seasonal diversity is becoming more apparent with the content of this weeks share. The dry-farmed tomatoes in the Family Share should be in all the shares by next week. Cherry tomatoes will be more abundant in both shares for the next 4 to 5 weeks. Broccoli is back for a couple of weeks, and the arugula – don't be turned off by the holes; they're just the pock-marks of our little jumpy friends the flea beetles – is perfectly tasty tossed in salads, or sautéed. Soon to come are peppers and eggplant. Also, I would say in the next 2-3 weeks we should be getting the delicious Armenian cukes, also known as snake cucumbers. Our biggest challenge right now is aphids which are quite abundant right now, so if you do find them it's because they got past our scanning eyes during harvest. A strong stream of water or a quick boil will get rid of most of them (Debbie has a few suggestions too). 🍷

Other stores in the e-newsletter...

- Mataganza Garden Sanctuary Internship Program

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).

What I'd do with this week's box

[See e-newsletter for story and links to recipes.]

What to do with all that basil??

In addition to making fresh pesto, did you know you can *freeze* pesto, freeze the basil *leaves*, or even *dry* them? I'll talk about each of these in succession. [See e-newsletter for details.]

Fortunately, prescient member Lori Wilkinson Rella sent me this wonderful recipe for basil also, so here's a fun way to use the basil fresh as well. Lori says this is her favorite way to use a bunch:

Basil Shrimp

(originally from barbequerecipe.com; written here how Lori prepares it)

3 lbs. shrimp, peeled and de-veined
 3 tbsp. country-style prepared mustard [I don't know what 'country-style' is, but I imagine most prepared mustards would do]
 ¼ C butter, melted
 3 cloves garlic, minced
 2 ½ tbsp. olive oil
 1 bunch fresh basil, stems removed
 juice of 1 ½ lemons
 salt
 ground white pepper

Add olive oil to melted butter, then add everything but the shrimp. Mix all together. Add shrimp and toss to coat. Cover and refrigerate for 1 hour.

They recommend skewering the shrimp, then grilling over high heat for about 2 minutes per side. We've also used it as a pasta sauce: Boil some water for pasta, and while the pasta is cooking, sauté the shrimp in the marinade until the shrimp are cooked. Then toss the shrimp with the pasta and you're done. It's delicious either way!

Removing aphids from broccoli

Granted we're all happier when they aren't present, but sometimes the little buggers are there, and if they are, there are ways to get rid of them other than throwing out the veggies they're in! This is *not* an excuse for giving you aphid-y broccoli; we will always do our best to weed out the buggy ones, but sometimes they slip by the eyes of the harvesters and into our shares anyway.

Broccoli is the toughest veggie to get 'em out of, because they'll hide up in the florettes. I have a habit of inspecting my broccoli before cooking, so I know if I need to do any 'aphid control'. If they're present, they tend to appear most often inside the topmost florette, the one on the lead or main shaft, as that's the one that's been around longest.

If I see I have some aphids, here's what I do. The idea is to immerse the head upside down in a pot of boiling salted water for a minute or two, so that the aphids dislodge and float to the surface. Use a pair of tongs and be sure your hand is in a protective mitt so you don't get burned by the

steam as you hold it in there. After a minute or two, turn off the heat and, keeping the broccoli immersed, carefully carry the pot and broccoli over to and set down in your sink. Run the hot tap into the pot, still holding the broccoli under, until the water overflows and the aphids floating on top pour over the sides. Shake the broccoli around a bit to see if there are any more still to come out, and overflow/rinse to your satisfaction. Then cut up your broccoli and use as you would normally. It's already partially cooked at this point, so remember to take this into consideration in your recipe.

If the aphids are in broccolini instead of broccoli, I'll hold them under the boiling water with a potato masher or something, anything to keep them below the surface until they give up the ghost and float to the top. Then do the sink/rinse procedure as described above.

Apricot-Plum Pie redux

Well folks I followed through on last week's idea – to modify that apricot pie recipe [check your paper newsletter archive: it's in the Week 9 2001 issue] and make it half apricots, half plums (only it was about two-thirds apricots, one-third plums) – and it was *unbelievably* good!! Still is (we've got half a pie left in the fridge; we love fruit pie for breakfast)! So all I can say is, don't hesitate to try this! No other changes to the recipe, just substitute some plums for some of the apricots.

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