



July 28, 2004

Volume 1, Issue 10w

Fair Share Farm CSA Newsletter

This Week's Share:

Full Share:

Sweet Corn
Tomatoes
Passport Melon
Purple Viking potatoes
Tequila peppers or Eggplant
Summer squash mix
Bulb fennel
Baby leeks
Thyme

Partial Share:

Sweet Corn
Tomatoes
Passport melon
Purple Viking potatoes
Tequila peppers or Eggplant
Thyme

Next week: look for more tomatoes, melons, and basil. New will be paste tomatoes.

Visitors

On Tuesday, we had a visit from a group of inner city kids from age 8—12. Many of them live in a subsidized housing complex where the street is their playground. They participate in a program that engages city youth in gardening projects. A friend and frequent volunteer at the farm, Bill McKelvey, runs the gardening project with the kids where they learn about where their food comes from and have even made canned salsa as a fundraiser. We had a great time touring the farm, smelling herbs, digging carrots and potatoes, and eating some sweet corn. Actually, the frogs which have been in abundance this wet season were the highlight of the day.

While their visit did take us away from working in the fields

for a few hours, the inspiration we received more than made up for it. It was great to see such enthusiasm for learning about the natural world.

The natural world is lush and green at the farm which means the weeds continue to grow ... well, like weeds. As does the grass in the walkways between each bed. So, Monday we did nothing

but weed and mow all day. Last week we did get a lot of fall crops started. Carrots, turnips, wax beans, rutabagas, broccoli raab, collards, and kale were seeded in the fields and the first fall lettuces were started in the greenhouse. If you are wondering, it takes six weeks for a sprouted lettuce seed to make a head of lettuce.

Member News

Attached to your newsletter this week is the mid-season member survey. Please fill it out and return it to us when you pick up your share next time. It should only take a few minutes to complete and will help us to see how the CSA is going for everyone. It is completely anonymous, so please give us your honest answers.

We got a lot done, and had a good time doing it, at the core group meeting last Saturday. The farmers gave reports on the season so far. We went over the survey and got some good suggestions. Most of the time was spent planning the End of the Season Dinner. The dinner will be a great time to celebrate the first season of the Fair Share Farm CSA, get to know one another, and have some fun. It will be on a Saturday evening in October. We are currently inquiring at several churches, union halls, community centers, etc. to find a good location. The dinner will be potluck and plans are in the works for entertainment of various kinds. Watch the newsletter for more details including the date and time.

Calendar

August 4th — CSA Distribution, Crossroads Market

August 7th— CSA Distribution, Fair Share Farm

A Year Ago This Week . . .

Core Group member, Mark Flynn, recommended an occasional section in the newsletter for looking back to yesteryear.

July 25, 2003: we began the stretch of 90 degree plus weather with no rainfall that would last until the end of August. Thirty-six days of 90s and 100s with only one day in the 80s.

Recipes

Cucumber, Fennel and Carrot Salad

A simple salad, and a good way to try out your bulb fennel. Also a dish that can use some of those cukes and carrots in your fridge.

- ◆ 2 cucumbers
- ◆ 1 bulb fennel
- ◆ 2 medium carrots, grated
- ◆ 1 clove garlic, minced
- ◆ 4 tbsp plain whole milk yogurt
- ◆ 2 tbsp olive oil
- ◆ Juice of 1/2 lemon
- ◆ Salt and pepper to taste

Cut cucumber in half lengthwise and scoop out the seeds. Cut into slices into a bowl. Add grated carrots. Cut tops off fennel, pull bulb apart, rinse out any dirt, cut into small slices. Add remaining ingredients and mix. Let sit for 1/2 hour or so at room temperature and serve.

Braised Baby Leeks

Leeks are a wonderful vegetable. In the fall (and next spring) you will be getting full grown leeks. These baby leeks are more tender.

- ◆ 1 bunch baby leeks
- ◆ 1 tbsp butter
- ◆ Salt and pepper to taste
- ◆ 1/4 cup water

Leeks can have dirt between their layers, so you need to wash them well. Trim the tops and ends, cut the leeks lengthwise, and then wash well under running water.

Your Share Items

Catching Up

As this is our first year of writing the newsletter, we didn't realize how hard it would be to describe the new items in your share every week. If we had thought through it though, and realized that we grow about 45 different vegetables for the CSA, and a total of over 220 different varieties, we would have seen the difficulty of explaining it all in 22 newsletters. So don't be afraid to ask if you have a question about something in your share, as answering them is part of our job as CSA farmers. So, in this issue, we will try to get caught up on a few things, hoping we will have room to provide more detail in future issues.

Melons

Last week the full shares on Saturday got Passport melons. It is what is known as a tropical melon, and is extremely fragrant and delicious. It is best a little on the green side, so don't let it sit around too long. Right now the watermelons and cantaloupe are ripening, so expect to see them in your shares over the next few weeks. We planted 12 varieties of melons, though some have succumbed to

Cut the leeks into small pieces and place in a saucepan with the butter and water. Cook on high until water boils, then turn down to medium heat and let cook until almost all the water is evaporated. Add salt and pepper, and more butter to taste. Serve warm and enjoy

plant diseases and may not make it to your table.

Baby Leeks

Leeks are one of my favorite vegetables. While they look like a green onion, they are milder and not quite as tender raw. Use them in cooking anywhere you would use onions.

Bulb Fennel

You received herb fennel in your shares earlier in the season; this is the bulb type, used as a vegetable. It has a feathery top, and is another vegetable you may not have had before. A native of southern Europe, it is in the same family as carrots, dill and parsley. It has a licorice taste and the crunchiness of celery, that goes especially well in salads (see Recipes.)

Lemon Cucumbers

Another item that some of you may have already gotten in your share, lemon cucumbers are our attempt to give you a little variety for those veges you get a lot of. We pick them at various stages of ripeness, but generally they are somewhat cube shaped and white, with striking yellow markings at maturity. Treat them like any other cuke and tell us what you think.

Potatoes

We are happy to finally be able to give you some potatoes. As we've told you, we planted a lot (over 1,600 row feet), but most were underwater for the entire spring and did not develop. The variety you are getting is called Purple Viking. The unusual skin is a superficial sign of the potato's struggle to grow in adverse

conditions, and doesn't affect its "eatability." The potatoes remaining in the field are doing OK, with some of them putting on new growth. Since you usually don't dig potatoes until they are completely died back, we are planning on leaving them in the ground and see what develops from this new growth. Two weeks ago we weeded them and gave them some organic fertilizer to help them along. It may be working.

Thyme

Thyme is one herb that you should have in your kitchen all year long. Be sure to dry any you don't use immediately and store it for later use. There are lots of thymes out there (lemon, woolly, creeping.) The one you are getting is French thyme, the best for culinary use.

The book *Culinary Artistry* matches thyme with: beef, carrots, chicken, figs, fish, goat cheese, lamb, lentils, onions, peas, pork, potatoes, soups, tomatoes and venison. Knowing these combinations is a good ability to have when cooking.

You can see if the book is right and improve your culinary fundamentals by cooking some potatoes in water, and then seasoning them with only salt, pepper, butter and thyme. I think it's the best way to have the first potatoes of the season.

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