



October 6, 2004

Volume 1, Issue 20w

Fair Share Farm CSA Newsletter

This Week's Share:

Full Share:

Broccoli or red cabbage
Kale
French breakfast radishes
Peppers
Leeks
Chinese cabbage

Eggplant

Salad burnet

Partial Share:

Lettuce

Broccoli

Radishes or peppers

Leeks

Salad burnet

Next week: look for more lettuce, broccoli, radishes, and winter squash. New will be cilantro and pears.

Frost comes early

As the local shares know too well, we had a light frost on Saturday morning. Temperatures dipped down to just below 32 degrees Fahrenheit, enough to kill the last of the summer vegetables. From here on out we are in fall crop territory. Be prepared to be eating lots of salads, soups, and roots for the rest of the season.

The main frost victims included: basil, beans, peppers, eggplant, and okra. Our cool season crops fared much better with little or no damage to the broccoli, cauliflower, cabbage, leeks, carrots, and beets. A third category mainly comprised of the leafy greens had superficial damage that they should be able to bounce back from. Fortunately, most of the fall lettuce was under cover to protect it from the deer and was not hurt at all.

This is very early for a frost in our area. The average first frost is around the end of October, a full month from now. While there were some rumblings that this might happen, we were hoping against it.

Nevertheless, Saturday morning we awoke to frost everywhere. Slush covered our boots as we walked through the fields surveying the damage. With the frost still covering most plants they looked suspiciously happy, frozen in time. But once the sun's heat began to melt the ice-encrusted plants, we could see the extent of the damage. All the tender leaves of the summer crops turned brown and shriveled. Mostly unfazed by the freeze were the members of the brassica family, (broccoli, cabbage, etc.) Brassicas have an internal chemistry that protects them from frost, allowing the plants structure to thaw out unharmed. A light frost actually sweetens these vegetables, turning a pungent kale into a sweet treat.

So while we embrace a light frost, a hard frost of 28 degrees or so is not welcome on our farm until the end of October. A hard frost would kill even

the hardier plants including most of the brassicas. Kale and leeks are about the only vegetable crops that can truly survive a zone 5 winter. While some farmers we know have been looking forward to an early frost so that they can rest, we are hoping the hard freeze will hold off for the last 3 weeks of the CSA season.

Speaking about the chilly weather. Rebecca (that would be me) caught a nasty cold whilst at the Crossroads Harvest Festival on Friday night. After two years of health, a bug got me good. I've been in bed for the last 3 days trying to fight off the nasty beast. Finally today I worked outside out of frustration with not getting things done. Tom has been making some yummy soups and roasts to bring me back to health. It is definitely soup weather and there's nothing better than a warm bowl of soup to cure your ills.

Calendar

October 13th — CSA Distribution, Crossroads Market

October 16th — CSA Distribution, Fair Share Farm

COME AS YOU ARE

Included with the newsletter this week is the official invitation for the Fair Share Farm CSA Harvest Dinner. It's a time for us all to celebrate what we've accomplished this year. Hope you all can come! A special thank you goes out to Elaine Reynolds who created the lovely invite during her own bout with a cold.

Recipes

Radish and Arugula Salad

Two things that actually go well together, especially with an Asian style dressing.

- ◇ 1 bunch arugula, chopped
- ◇ 1 bunch radish, cut into half-rounds
- ◇ 1/4 cup chives, chopped
- ◇ 1/3 cup sesame oil
- ◇ 3 tbsp balsamic vinegar
- ◇ Salt & pepper to taste

Mix the salad ingredients. Mix dressing ingredients, pour over salad and toss.

Sauerkraut (adapted from *Stocking Up*, by Carol Huppung Stoner)

Take a quart canning jar and place it and its lid in boiling water. Grate or cut enough cabbage to fit into a quart jar. Pack and press the cabbage into the jar leaving 1 inch of headspace. Add 1 teaspoon of salt and 1/2 teaspoon of honey. Fill slowly with boiling water. Insert a knife along the inside of the jar to eliminate air bubbles. Leave about 1/2 inch of space at the top, put on the lid and screw it down tight.

Wipe the jars and set them in a dishpan in a cool place (65-70°F) and out of smelling range. Inspect the jars every day. Don't be alarmed if the lid bulges, that shows the kraut is fermenting

properly. If juice runs out of the jar, wipe it off and tighten the lid some more. Never, under any circumstances, loosen the lid.

After about 6 weeks the kraut will be cured and ready to eat. Keep it in the refrigerator and use it within a month.

Mashed White Roots

This dish is especially good right now. You can modify the proportions of root vegetables to suit your own tastes.

- ◇ 2 large potatoes, diced
- ◇ 2 medium turnips, diced
- ◇ 1 large celeriac, diced
- ◇ 4 whole clove of garlic, crushed
- ◇ 1/4 cup butter
- ◇ 1/4 cup sour cream
- ◇ Milk, as needed
- ◇ 1/3 cup chives, chopped
- ◇ Salt & pepper to taste

Place the diced vegetables in a pot with 1/2 inch of water in the bottom. Cook/steam vegetables for about 25 minutes, or until very tender. Add butter and mash the veges with a potato masher until smooth and lumps are gone. Add sour cream and milk to desired consistency. Keep mixing and mashing to thicken the potatoes.

Add chives, salt and pepper. Serve while still hot.

Your Share Items

PRIME TIME

One thing about vegetables, is that when they are in season, they are at their prime. This refers especially to root vegetables. The turnips have been great lately—a strong aroma but a mellow taste. They are at their best right now, when they are fresh, not 3 months old.

Garlic is very similar. There was an article recently on the NY Times web page that talked about how the NYC restaurants were showing off the state's garlic right now. This is the time when it has cured for about 2 months, and is at its best. The over 240 garlic farms in NY only plant on average about an acre of garlic each, and tend to it by hand. In fact, the hardneck garlic you've been getting is separated by 1 farm from Rose Valley Farm in Sodus, NY, the farm of David Stern, founder of the Garlic Seed Foundation.

What that means is only so much. There are only 6 different types of garlic—most variation is due to conditions on the farm, not the variety. So a garlic with purple streaking may be perfectly white when grown here. Regardless, we are happy to have such nice garlic stock to begin acclimating to the farm.

Salad Burnet

While I'm willing to bet that less than 1% of the CSA has ever had salad burnet, I think it is a good item for at least one week's share. An herb found in the garden of early American settlers, it was used as a garnish for beer and wine, and to flavor vegetables, fish, salads, breads and cakes. Try it and you'll see it has a slight cucumber taste, which goes well in salads.

Medicinally, it was believed to slow the flow of blood, and was drunk before battles by soldiers to keep them from bleeding to death.

Cabbage

People have know for centuries, that if you put cabbage in a crock with a little salt, it ferments and turns into sauerkraut (see recipe.) This lactic acid fermentation has many health benefits, including eliminating bad and introducing good digestive bacteria. It also can boost your metabolism, improve sleep patters, lower blood pressure, and strengthen the heart.

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