



June 12, 2004

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Fair Share Farm CSA Newsletter

This Week's Share:

Full Share:

2 Lettuce heads
Bok choy
Beets
Kohlrabi
Scallions or Green Garlic
Summer squash mix
Arugula
Mint

Partial Share:

1 Lettuce head
Beets
Broccoli
Kohlrabi
Carrots
Mint or Arugula

Next week: look for more lettuce, summer squash, and scallions. New will be Chinese cabbage, French Breakfast radishes, and basil.

Calendar

June 23rd — CSA Distribution, Crossroads Market

June 26th — CSA Distribution, Fair Share Farm

Staying connected

After more thunderstorms and more rain, we are not only very muddy out here (as last Saturday's CSA workers can attest) but have also had sporadic phone and electricity service for the past few days. If any of you have been trying to reach us by phone or email, we apologize for being out of touch.

As is often the case when something that is taken for granted disappears, it reminds us how dependent we are on things beyond our control. We have a commitment to reducing our dependence on non-renewable energy. We designed our greenhouse to be passive solar. It requires only minimal supplemental heating in the early Spring months. The water for our seedlings is rainwater collected off the home roof and gravity fed down to the greenhouse. When our electricity coop, Platte-Clay Electric, offered the option to buy wind power, we jumped

at the chance. Now the farm and our household electricity bills pay for renewable energy.

Yet, when the electricity grid goes down, we still feel the pinch. One of the biggest issues for us is cooling. Our 5' x5' walk-in cooler keeps your veggies cool and crisp until they are in your hands. The greenhouse has an exhaust fan that is crucial on hot, sunny days. One of the smallest power usages on the farm, but also one of the most critical, is a little fan that blows air between the plastic sheets that

Farm report

Well, what can we say. Its still raining ... a lot. The rain subsided just long enough for us to drag out all the irrigation equipment and then it started back up. Don't get us wrong, we are not complaining. How could one possibly complain about rain after last summer. Our pond is one inch away from full—another inch and excess water will spill over the spillway. This is a very good thing—if it ever stops raining we'll be prepared!

Some of you are getting the first taste of summer this week. The summer squash mix is a collection of zucchini, crookneck, and pattypan squash. Next week Tom will tell you all about them on the back page. Until then, enjoy. Summer squash is great sautéed, over pasta, stuffed, or grilled.

You also got some broccoli either last week or this week. Best as a fall crop, Spring broccoli is a challenge. The hot weather of summer tends to make smaller heads. Cabbage worms are also much worse in the Spring. Those pesky green worms love broccoli and hide from us within the florets. Inspect your broccoli before eating, or soak in salt water for a few minutes.

form the southern face of the greenhouse. Without that little blower, the plastic deflates and the slack whips dangerously in the wind.

In the future, we hope to create our own renewable energy right here on the farm. With all our Midwestern sunshine and wind we could easily power all of the farm's needs. Although costly, solar panels and a wind turbine would more than pay for themselves over time. And, of course, next time the electricity grid goes down our veggies would stay cool.

Recipes

Carrot Ginger Salad

While the carrots you are getting in your share are great cooked, they don't get a whole lot fresher, and it's good to take advantage of that with a carrot salad. You can add a dash of cayenne to spice this up and/or sugar/honey to sweeten it.

Salad

3 cups grated carrots
1 scallion, chopped
1 garlic scape or 1/2 garlic green, chopped
2 tbsp sesame seeds, lightly toasted

Sauce

4 tbsp sesame oil
2 tbsp sake/rice vinegar
juice of 1 lime

You can toast the sesame seeds in a toaster oven at 400°F for about 5 minutes, or in a skillet. Pour the sauce over the salad and toss.

Caramelized Beets with Dill

This recipe takes a little time, but is well worth it.

12 small beets
2 tbsp butter

1 tbsp sugar
1 tbsp olive oil
1 tbsp chopped dill
salt and pepper to taste

Cook beets as described in the next column. Cut cooled beets into bite size pieces. Add olive oil and 1 tbsp butter to skillet. Cook beets and sugar over medium to medium-high heat until the outsides are glazed and crispy, but not burned. Top with 1 tbsp butter and the dill. Sour cream or yogurt on top is also good.

Beet Salad with Lime and Dills

As the previous recipe showed, beets are a vegetable whose flavor requires very little extra for enhancement.

10 to 12 small beets
juice of 1 lime
2 tbsp olive oil
1 tbsp chopped dill
1/2 tsp salt
1/2 tsp pepper

Cook beets as described in the next column. Cut cooled beets in half or smaller, depending on preference. Dress with lime juice, olive oil, dill, salt and pepper, and toss.

Your Share Items

Carrots

When we moved to the farm we were afraid that the soil was going to be too stiff to grow good carrots. As you will see this year, we were wrong. We have found one variety (Bolero) that germinates and grows especially well and are testing out several others for taste and "growability."

It is believed that carrots originated in Afghanistan. They are an excellent source of beta-carotene (an antioxidant), Vitamin A (good for the eyes) and potassium. Cut the green tops off before storing and compost them (no culinary use for them that we know of). Carrots keep well in the crisper bin of your fridge.

Beets

Beets may be one of the vegetables that you haven't had much. We hope that your CSA experience can change that and your appreciation for this flavorful root grows. They are high in many vitamins, nutrients and minerals.

Good fresh or raw, they are especially good baked/roasted. We like to do this in the coals of a campfire, along with some onions, carrots and potatoes. To cook beets, cut off the leaf tops but leave about 1 inch of stem, as well as the root. This keeps the "bleeding" down (the colored water that results from cooking is great for egg dyeing or other fun stuff).

Boil or steam until tender, cool in cold water, cut off the tops and root, and then rub off the skins (easiest underwater). You can then put them in salads, pickle them, or heat them on the stove (see recipes).

Mint

Mint is both a medicinal and culinary herb. A cup of mint tea does a great job of soothing an upset stomach. Mint goes well with zucchini, fruits, lamb, and in sun tea.

If you don't use it right away, hang it in your kitchen to dry and then store the leaves in an airtight jar. You'll have many uses for it during the year.

We are growing 5 types—spearmint, mint julep, apple mint, orange mint and chocolate mint.

Local Gardening and Farming History

We are lucky for a lot of reasons, but one is that the farm is only a mile from Watkins Mill State Park. The park is the site of a former woolen mill run by the Watkins family. Part plantation, part factory, part commune, the park includes the Watkins' restored house, woolen mill, ice house, smokehouse, church and school, as well as a great visitor's center.

Throughout the year costumed staff and volunteers present life in rural 1870's Mis-

souri. Of particular interest to us is the heirloom garden and farmyard menagerie of turkeys, chickens and sheep. The garden is run using 1870's methods and saved heirloom seed varieties (many for sale at the visitor's center). We plan on experimenting with many of their seeds in the future, helping to keep our local history alive.

There are several very nice events held at the farm each year including the 4th An-

nual Music Fest and Back Porch Jam (Sept. 18), Fall on the Farm (Oct. 9) and Christmas on the Farm (Dec.4).

The park also includes a swim beach (which we use regularly during the 100° days of summer), bike trails, hiking trails and campsites. Make a day out of your next trip to Fair Share Farm.

You can find more about Watkins Mill at www.mostatoparks.com/wmmill.

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