

June 23, 2004

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Fair Share Farm CSA Newsletter

This Week's Share:

Full Share:

2 Lettuce heads
Swiss chard
Broccoli
Radishes
Kohlrabi
Green or purple beans
Scallions
3 kinds of basil

Partial Share:

1 Lettuce head
Swiss chard
Summer squash mix
Radishes or Kohlrabi
Green or purple beans
3 kinds of basil

Next week: look for more lettuce, summer squash, and beans. New will be Chinese cabbage, specialty beets and summer savory.

Diversity

The pond is full, the beds are soggy, and we refuse to complain. What follows is not a complaint, but strictly information...

So far, the only casualties of the soggy weather have been the spinach and the earlier than expected demise of the peas. Everything else is flourishing or at least hanging in there depending on its location in the field.

How much lasting damage this wet weather will cause depends on how much longer it will last. Luckily with most things we planted a lot more than we should need, so if yields are lower we should still have enough for the CSA. Our potatoes and tomatoes are in some of the worst beds and they may be the most affected.

Since last year was our first year on the farm, we had no experience of a wet or even average season. Now we are seeing what beds stay wet and which beds dry out

fastest. Next year we will definitely be better prepared with this knowledge and will plan our crop rotation accordingly. Luckily, most of our Spring beds ended up in the area that is the driest. We should have good yields of onions, carrots, beets, beans, eggplant, summer squash and peppers. Wet-loving plants like celery are also perfectly happy in their soggy beds.

So all is not lost. One of the great benefits of a CSA is that it forces us to grow a very wide variety of vegetables. Our desire to provide an interesting and tasty

share each week prods us to grow new and usual veggies like kohlrabi, sunchokes, and mizuna along with all the standard favorites. With all that variety in the fields, there is always something that is thriving, and usually something that is failing. Diversity in the farmer's field, as in nature, is the best safety net. The more our nation's farms embrace monoculture, the more insecure our food supply becomes. CSA's embrace the alternative—diversity, which ensures that there will always be something on the table.

Attached pages

In addition to your newsletter this week you are also receiving a member list and the farm work schedule. Keep these pages as they will be useful to you over the course of the season.

The member list* is available for contacting other members about CSA scheduling, pick-up, etc. We encourage you all to use the list to arrange shared pickups. The Liberty/Northland area seems especially ripe for CSA members who want to take turns coming out to the farm to pickup shares. Save time, gas, \$, and the environment too! *the member list should only be used for CSA related business, please no soliciting, etc. :)

The farm work schedule is also included. Check the dates to make sure you know when you are coming out to work. Kirk Day, the CSA's farm work scheduler, has been doing a great job keeping the schedule. If your work day is coming up, you will be receiving a reminder call from Kirk. We really appreciate not having to keep the schedule ourselves. It frees us up to focus on farming and not on making phone calls. Thanks Kirk!

Calendar

June 30th — CSA Distribution, Crossroads Market

July 3rd— CSA Distribution, Fair Share Farm

Recipes

Grilled Summer Squash with Mint Sauce

Grilled vegetables are a great addition to any backyard barbeque, and squash is perhaps the simplest to use. Cut it about 1/4 inch thick. Round zucchini and patty pan squash should be cut to form nice rounds. Cut the long type squashes/zucchini at an angle (or lengthwise) to form strips that won't slip through the grill.

Marinate 3 to 4 cut squashes in 4 tbsp balsamic vinegar, 1/3 cup olive oil, 1 tsp oregano, salt and pepper to taste.

Grill over coals until well browned

Serve with a sauce of the following:

- ◆ 1/4 cup yogurt
- ◆ 1/4 cup sour cream
- ◆ 3 tbsp mayonnaise
- ◆ 2 tbsp olive oil
- ◆ juice of 1/2 lime
- ◆ 2 tsp chopped fresh mint
- ◆ salt and pepper to taste

Zucchini Fritters

Zucchini used to be known as Italian Vegetable Marrow. This recipe is based on a recollection of the frit-

ters my Italian father used to make.

- ◆ 3 cup grated zucchini (unpeeled)
- ◆ 1 carrot, grated
- ◆ 1 clove garlic, chopped, or 1/4 cup chopped green garlic/garlic scapes
- ◆ 1 tbsp oregano
- ◆ 1/2 tsp salt
- ◆ 1 tsp pepper
- ◆ 2 cups flour
- ◆ 1/2 cup water

Mix all ingredients but the water, then add the water and mix with a fork.

Heat 1/4 inch thick layer of oil (safflower, corn or vegetable oil) in a large skillet.

When hot (sizzles from a drop of water), take 1 heaping tablespoon at a time of zucchini batter and drop in oil. Press flat with the back of a fork.

Fry until golden brown, turning several times. Adjust the heat of the oil as necessary

Drain on paper towel

You can serve the fritters as is, or can dress them up with a fresh sauce, like the one in the previous recipe, or some tomato/pizza sauce.

Your Share Items

Variety is the Spice of Life

You already know that one of the benefits of a CSA is variety. We want another advantage to be useful information about your produce. This week we're providing a little *Who's Who* list for the 9 types of zucchini and summer squash we're growing for you.

Squashes make up the genus *Cucurbita* of the family Cucurbitaceae. Summer squashes are varieties of the species classified as *Cucurbita pepo*. They are native to North America, having been cultivated by the continent's pre-Columbian cultures.

They are high in Vitamins A and C, and are great cooked or raw.

Zucchini

Raven—a straight, dark green ("black") zucchini, Raven has 4 times the lutein (an antioxidant) of other varieties.

Cocozelle—a beautiful striped zucchini, especially good when small.

Costata Romanesca—similar to Cocozelle, but ribbed, it is considered one of the most flavorful zucchini. Has a nice star shape when sliced.

Tondo di Piacenza (Round of Parma) and Tondo di Nizza (Round of Nice)—these 2 varieties have a great round shape and are

excellent for grilling (cut into rounds) or stuffing. The Piacenza zucchini is dark green, and the Nizza is light green.

Summer Squash

Early Yellow Crookneck—deep yellow, with a narrow curved neck and a bulbous end, it's what most people think of as summer squash.

Lemon—a squash the shape and size of a lemon, and new to the farm this year. We only have a few plants, but hope we can provide everybody with some through the summer.

Sunburst Patty Pan—if Kohlrabi is an alien looking vegetable, patty pan squash is from the same galaxy. With its space saucer shape and fluted edges, it's nice just to look at. Sunburst runs the range of colors from yellow to green, to yellow and green.

Bennings Green Patty Pan—similar to Sunburst, but with a beautiful light green color.

Basil

You're getting a sampler this week of the three types of basil we grow. Let us know what you think.

Genovese basil—large, broad green leaves, Italian sweet basil at its best

Thai basil—small, pointy leaves with a licorice/anise subtlety that goes well with Asian dishes, or in a simple tomato salad

Purple/Aromatica basil—colorful and very aromatic, use in salads or pastas

The Nutritious Nature of Organic Food

A recent article in Mother Earth News (June/July 2004) told us something that we always suspected—organically grown fruits and vegetables are more nutritious than conventionally grown ones. The reasons are many, from the positive results of using natural methods in organic farming, to the documented decline in nutritional value over the last 30 years for non-organic produce.

Numerous studies have shown that the

high levels of nitrogen provided to plants by chemical fertilizers stimulates quick growth and increases crop yields because the fruits and vegetables take up more water. Organic methods use natural forms of fertilization that release slowly, and yield produce with denser concentrations of nutrients. So that big melon in the local grocery store will have less Vitamin C (and other nutrients) than the ones you'll receive this summer.

Another benefit is our ability to get you much of your produce the same day we pick it. We harvest at the peak time, and then clean and process your vegetables to preserve their nutritional value. No 5 day old lettuce in your bag, or tomatoes shipped out to ripen during a 1,500 mile journey to your grocer.

You can read more about the multiple benefits of organic foods at www.organic-center.org.

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