



July 6, 2005

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Fair Share Farm CSA Newsletter

This Week's Share:

Full Share:

Tomatoes
Carrots or beets
Eggplant
Summer squash or cucumbers
Sweet 'Walla Walla' onions
Green beans or potatoes
Cherry tomatoes
Basil, summer savory, rosemary, or tarragon

Partial Share:

Tomatoes
Carrots or beets
Summer squash or cucumbers
Sweet 'Walla Walla' onions
Basil, summer savory, rosemary, or tarragon.

Next week: Tomatoes, eggplant, squash, cucumbers, beans.

Calendar

July 13th — Distribution, Wednesdays

July 16th — Distribution, Saturday

I just finished reading last week's newsletter and laughed a lot. So much for my prediction of dry weather. My father always says we get a good 3 inches or so around the fourth of July. He got it right again. We are very happy to have the rain for the most part. It gave us some time to work on other projects instead of rushing to get the irrigation out. We are learning that a big part of the art of vegetable farming is knowing how to juggle all of the work calling your name, picking the one that needs to be done now.

GARLIC

Harvesting garlic made it to the top of our list this week. While you've been getting various stages of garlic since the beginning of the season, the final and largest harvest for the season begins now. The heads are fully developed and once cured for about a month in the barn will be ready for distribution.

We use garlic in about every dish we make here on the farm and we hear that many of you do as well. We grew a lot of it this year and should have plenty to hand out every other week for the rest of the season plus perhaps some to sell

for a little extra income. Garlic is a nice crop for several reasons. We planted the garlic we are harvesting now last November, a slower time of year for us. After planting, we mulch the garlic which minimizes weeds, conserves moisture, and protects the crop from our winter freezing and thawing cycles. Our barn is an old tobacco drying barn perfectly designed for curing garlic. Once cured, garlic stores well so it can be distributed (and eaten!) over several months. And its yummy and has many healthy attributes.

AUTUMN

Another farm task that made it to the top of the list this week was planting fall crops in the greenhouse. About the time when we said goodbye to the Spring broccoli and cabbage, its time to say hello to the Fall broccoli and cabbage. . . and cauliflower! The little plants have just emerged from the soil in their trays and won't be ready for transplant in the field until the end of the month. End of July is also the time for seeding fall crops directly in the soil: more carrots & beets, turnips, and greens. So when the temperature and humidity start rising over the course of the next 2 months, remember that the cool veggies of fall are already on their way.

PRESS

Fair Share Farm & the CSA have been in the news a lot the last few weeks. We've responded from calls from the KC Star, KCUR 89.3 FM, and the Liberty Tribune—all in the last 2 weeks (The Liberty Tribune article should be out tomorrow, Wednesday, July 6th.). Its very gratifying to get such exposure after only our third year of farming. We are very excited to be able to spread the word about the CSA concept. The response has been great so far. You all are a "select few" who got in to the CSA this year. Currently, we have 15 families on our waiting list and the list is growing with all the publicity we've received.

PICNIC

Just a reminder that the KC Food Circle picnic and Fair Share Farm tour will be taking place on the afternoon of July 24th. The picnic (RSVP to the Food Circle) begins at 1pm at the Watkins Mill picnic shelter, with the farm tour and ice cream social following at 3 pm. Come & meet your fellow CSA members & local food folks from the KC community! If you would like to help with either "farm beautification" prior to the tour or logistics that day, let us know.

Recipes

Pickled Beets

One thing that scares some people away from pickling is that they think it implies you have to know how to can. However, this is not true. If you want to make a small batch of pickled vegetables, you can simply put them in a jar and store them in the refrigerator until you want to eat them. Such is the case for this traditional pickled beets recipe.

- ◇ White or cider vinegar
- ◇ Sugar, salt, whole cloves, cinnamon stick
- ◇ Onions, cut into bite-size chunks
- ◇ Garlic clove, quartered

The quantities you use will depend on how many beets you have. You will want to have enough liquid to cover the beets in whatever jar or container you use.

Cut off the beet greens and blanch the beets in boiling water for 10 to 15 minutes. Drain and immediately place in cold water. When cool,

peel the beets, cut into bite-size pieces and set aside.

To the vinegar add sugar in the ratio of 1/2 cup sugar per pint of vinegar. Add cinnamon (1 stick per pint), salt (1 tsp per pint) and cloves (3 whole cloves per pint). Bring the mix to a boil. At the same time, place your jar(s) in the oven at 175°F to warm up. This helps prevent the jars from cracking when you add the hot vinegar.

Pack the beets into the jars, adding a few pieces of onion and garlic. Pour the vinegar over the beets, filling to about an inch below the rim. Screw on the lid and either process in a hot water bath for 10 minutes, or set on a rack to cool. They are best if



Politics of Food—Mad Cow Disease

No doubt you have heard a lot lately about mad cow disease (aka bovine spongiform encephalopathies or BSE), a progressive neurological disease that affects cattle. The human disease, variant Creutzfeldt-Jakob Disease (vCJD), belongs to the same family of diseases and is thought to be caused by eating the neural tissue of BSE-infected cattle (yuk!) Cattle can contract the disease by eating feed that contains blood meal or waste products from other cows (allowed under USDA regulations). A contentious point between consumers and the USDA, you can learn more about the facts at www.organicconsumers.org.

As big an issue as health is, a positive test for mad cow can have a substantial impact on the beef industry, especially from a drop of sales to foreign markets (such as Japan.). One problem is the lack of testing—of the 35 million cattle slaughtered in 2002, only about 21,000 were tested for the disease. If you eat beef, and are concerned about mad cow disease, you have many local options. Grass-fed and organic beef are fed only grass and/or organic grain, eliminating the potential for contracting mad cow. You know about Medicine Creek Farms, our grass-fed beef supplier, and there are many others in the KC area. Join the Food Circle and get a copy of their farmers directory to find safe, high quality sources of local meats.

Your Share Items

Tomatoes

The time we are all looking forward to is here, the tomatoes are coming in. They are beginning to ripen and, we hope within the next 2 weeks we will have a deer fence to keep them safe for you. The first varieties are **hybrid tomatoes**, made as much for a farmer's field as a backyard garden. While not heirlooms, we feel we have some pretty good tasting varieties. The yellow ones are *Golden Girls*, bred at Purdue University, my alma mater, and named after the head majorette. The red varieties are *Jet Star* and *Celebrity*, familiar names to many gardeners.

The **cherry tomatoes** come in many colors, yellow *Sun Sugars* and *Blond Kophchers*, *White Cherries*, red *Sweet Cherries*, *Black Cherries* and salad size red *Tomcats*.

If you are unfamiliar with tomatoes that are not red, and are not sure when they are ripe enough to eat, use your sense of touch to guide you. When the tomato has lost the rock hard firmness of a green tomato, and has ripened to a soft feel, it is ready to eat. We pick tomatoes twice a week and take all the tomatoes that

have just started to color, so you will get both ripe and ripening tomatoes in your share. Still not sure when to eat it—just ask us if you see us, or call the farm.

Onions

We hope you haven't been getting too many onions. We may be overcompensating for the poor onion season last year, but people have been telling us they use a lot of onions.

We are starting to get into the really good ones now, and will be digging onions for the next several weeks and curing them in the upper barn. This week you will be getting *Walla Walla's*, a sweet onion similar to a Vidalia. Soon to follow will be a really nice red variety called *Mars*, another sweet one (*Candy*), and finally the *Copra's*, a good storage variety. If we are lucky, our Italian flat onions (*Cippollini*), will be ready at the end of the month.

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