



July 13, 2005

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Fair Share Farm CSA Newsletter

This Week's Share:

Full Share:

Tomatoes
Potatoes
Eggplant or Summer squash
Carrots or onions
Salsa fixings or okra
Bell peppers
Garlic

Partial Share:

Tomatoes
Cherry tomatoes
Potatoes
Summer squash or cucumbers
Green beans or eggplant

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

Calendar

July 20th — Distribution, Wednesdays

July 23rd — Distribution, Saturday

CRITTERS

We've noticed recently that our lives have been taken over by furry beasts. Here's some of the critters that keep life interesting at the farm.

At number one is always those seemingly meek herds of **DEER** that call our farm home. The fence is nearing completion with only 20 odd posts to go. Once the last posts are split and sunk, we think it will only take a day or two to "wrap" the farm like Christmas in black plastic netting (I know, trust me it will look better than it sounds). The deer continue to leave us evidence of their presence by nibbling on the chard and occasional tomato. Actually, with the tomatoes it seems they like to just sink their teeth into the juicy flesh and then drop the fruits on the ground uneaten (Didn't their mothers ever teach them to clean their plate?).

Other creatures will be unfazed by our fence and may even prefer the protection the fence will offer.

VOLES are rodents that are about the size of a rat with a short tail. Like their cousin the **GROUNDHOG** (which we may also have a few of), voles prefer fresh veggies. Their favorite habitat is grassy areas close to their favorite foods. With

our grass strips, Conservation Reserve Program areas, mulch, and yes, weeds, we are offering them the perfect combination of shelter and food. Lucky for us, many animals love to eat voles and their populations arc and plunge with little warning.

Red-tailed hawks, many species of **owls** (back to them in a bit), **dogs**, **coyotes**, and as we can attest **cats** prefer voles for dinner. We hope that fencing out some of these predators won't cause us more headache.

On to our latest and most fascinating critter experience. One of your fellow CSA members, Ruth Van Wye, works at Lakeside Nature Center. They get abandoned and orphaned wildlife from all over the KC Metro area to rehabilitate and release. The first time Ruth came out for her farm shift, she brought along a litter of infant **POSSUMS** that had to be kept on a heat pad and fed with a tube every few hours. They were such cute little hairless varmints! Anyway, the latest orphaned critters were a whole nest of **BARN OWLS**, a fairly rare species of owl who often nest in barns and whose favorite food is ... **VOLES!** You can read (and see!) more on their own page on the farm's website (go to News/Events), but suffice it to say their release at our farm met with mixed results. Out of eight owlets

released we know that two met with nasty ends, most likely at the hands, er talons, of a **GREAT HORNED OWL** (according to Ruth they eat Barn Owls "like candy") that lives in the woods across the road from the farm.

Gosh, I'm running out of room and I haven't even mentioned the **RACCOONS** that got into the corn and ate most of the first variety ("Spring Treat" was their treat, unfortunately) Seems our solar-powered charger that worked so great last year was not hot enough to keep the coons out this season. As soon as we realized the problem, Tom ran out and bought a super hot charger that runs off a car battery. Alas we were too late for "Spring Treat", and still have our work cut out for us.

And I've really run out of room to mention the **BARN CATS**. Briefly, they are beginning to earn their keep, although the kitten, Sunny, thwarts his mom's hunting most of the time by choosing inopportune moments to pounce on her tail.

All this murder and mayhem has reminded us that we are a part of a vast chain of animals that survive by feasting on each other. We may be near the top of the heap, but we are still affected by each link.

Your Share Items

Fresh Salsa

We are trying something new as a share item this year, putting together bags of paired up vegetables for making dishes that you may not otherwise try, but that we think you will get hooked on once you try them. We are starting with fresh salsa.

Over the coming months, we will be harvesting, on a regular basis, tomatillos and jalapenos. Tomatillos are little husk covered fruits that look like green tomatoes. They have a nice sweet, tart

flavor that is good fresh, even though they are normally cooked. Jalapenos are medium hot peppers, with a nice flavor. If you find peppers too hot, just remove the seeds and membrane before cooking.

The bag will contain a measured portion of tomatillos, jalapenos and onion. You will provide the tomato and sauce ingredients (red wine vinegar, tomato sauce, oil, S&P and lime juice). A copy of the recipe will appear in this newsletter for your reference. We may attach

recipe cards to the item in the future.

Potatoes

The potatoes are beginning to die back, and are ready to be eaten. We hope to have them for you about every other week for most (if not all) the rest of the season. Choices this week should include *Red Gold* (red skin, gold flesh), *Yukon Gold* (yellow skin and flesh), and *Purple Viking* (purple skin and white flesh). Enjoy the opportunity to eat these great, fresh potatoes.

Call for Picklers

Here at the farm we preserve most everything we grow, in one form or another. This time of year is when our canning season begins.

When we plan how much to grow, we figure in not only the CSA, but ourselves too. Eating and preserving the harvest is a factor in our budgeting. It's not often that your job will feed you, and we are happy we planned it that way. So we plan for excess—for our larder, and as much as is possible, yours too. Right now, our pickling cucumbers are coming in strong, and we have already canned more than 30 jars, so we don't want to see this harvest go to waste.

We grow 3 types of pickling cucumbers: *Cool Breeze*, our highest yielding pickler, is green and has a grainy skin and solid texture; *Piccolo di Parigi*, a green spiny cuke; and *Mini White*, which has the most seeds of the three, and can give a nice little burst when bitten into.

We harvest the cucumbers twice a week, and pick all but the very smallest. We end up with all sizes of cukes:

from small cornichons or gherkins; to 3—4 inch slender ones, perfect for packing whole into jars; to large ones for making chips or spears.

We hope we can fill the demand, and that you take advantage of these really nice pickling cukes. All you need to do to order some is mark it on the bulk list when you come to distribution. You can pick up your cucumbers the next week. If you want, you can also call or email us with an order. Supply is based on availability and everything is first-come-first-serve.

PICKLING CUCUMBER PRICES

Cornichons, (less than 2 inch)	\$4/QT
“Jar” size (3 to 4 inch)	\$3/QT
Slicers/spears	\$2/QT



Recipes

Fresh Salsa

The salsa bag will contain the following:

- ◇ 4 medium tomatillos (or equivalent)
- ◇ 2 jalapenos
- ◇ 1 small onion
- ◇ 1 clove garlic

You provide the following:

- ◇ 1 medium tomato
- ◇ 2 tbsp each red wine vinegar, olive or vegetable oil, tomato sauce
- ◇ 1 tbsp fresh lime juice
- ◇ Salt and pepper to taste

Clean the tomatillos by removing the papery husk and cutting out any remains of the stem. Cut the tops off the jalapenos, and use as is, or slit in half and scrape out the seeds and membrane (they are the hot part, try not to touch). Two peppers will make a spicy salsa.

Coarsely chop the tomatillos, jalapenos, garlic and onion (or use a food processor). Chop the tomatoes by hand and add to the other vegetables. Whisk the vinegar, oil, tomato sauce and lime, add to the vegetables and mix. You can add chopped cilantro, chives, or garlic chives. Serve with corn chips or add to vegetable wraps. This salsa is also good with some fresh corn, or black beans.

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