



May 25, 2005

Volume 2, Issue 2w

Fair Share Farm CSA Newsletter

This Week's Share:

Full Share:

Lettuce
Tatsoi
Broccoli or Peas
Green onions
Easter Egg radishes
Kohlrabi
Arugula, Mint, Dill or Cilantro

Partial Share:

Lettuce
Green onions
Easter Egg radishes
Kohlrabi
Arugula, Mint, Dill or Cilantro

Share box: Dried red peppers, Lettuce, Garlic greens, Arugula & Cilantro.

Next week: lettuce, sugar snap peas, radishes, green onions.

Calendar

June 1st — Distribution, Wednesdays

June 4th/5th — Distribution, Weekend

Living with Nature

We hope this newsletter finds you all well, with bellies full of salads & stir-fries. This week you get some crunch to go along with the leafy greens. The season is starting a bit slower than last year overall. Those frosts back in April set some plants back a bit, including the peas. But not to worry, if you miss out on peas this week there will be more soon.

With this being our third season farming in Missouri, one lesson that we are learning is that every year the growing conditions are different. We try to plan for every possibility and adapt as the weather changes. We've got miles of irrigation tape for dry times and miles of row cover to protect plants from frosts & insects. Each day brings the promise of surprise in the form of a perfectly beautiful head of lettuce or a cabbage head turned lacey overnight by a looper. Such are the joys & tribulations of an organic vegetable farmer. To be successful in our chosen career, you've got to appreciate the adventure of it all.

We've been having quite an adventure this last week with many highs and a few lows. A definite high

point was seeing all of you. We had a quite a crowd out here on Saturday, many who hadn't been out before. Grandparents, kids, dogs, everyone seemed to be excited by all the green growing things. Your enthusiasm for the CSA really gave us a boost.

Another highlight came in the form of Amy Bousman, who began as our first intern at the farm this week. She will be living in a RV parked down by the pond and working with us 40 hours each week from now until August. She has already demonstrated that she is a hard-worker and a pleasure to work with. We look forward to working with her over the next few months.

Now for the lows . . . oh, those pesky DEER! For those who were members last year, need I say more? Well, I guess I will anyway. The deer have begun their salad bar dinners at Fair Share Farm starting so far with next year's strawberries and the Swiss chard. Luckily we caught them early and have sprayed the veggies with some homemade deer repellent (eggs, garlic, & hot peppers). We are still covering many beds with row cover and hanging soap on others (the smell of Irish Spring is enough to make deer run away, so they say).

But the real solution is a deer fence. We do not take the decision to build a deer fence lightly. The fence must be 8 feet high and run almost 4,000 feet to surround our fields. The cost of the plastic mesh fence is considerable and was not in our original budget. We have tried every other method imaginable from hunters to animal communicators. Soaps, covers, and sprays work if you can keep up with the labor to put them on, refreshing them every so often and after every rain. And then there are some plants that get eaten despite your best efforts. Last year the unthinkable happened: the deer ate our tomatoes overnight. We vow to not allow that to happen again.

This winter we felled black locust trees on Rebecca's fathers property for over 150 eleven-foot long fence posts. With much of the planting behind us and Amy to help keep us on schedule, we are now ready to start the task of building the fence. Our goal is to start putting up posts within the next several weeks. If you would like to volunteer to help with fence building, let us know. We can accommodate any and all skill levels, although of course strong backs come in handy. The sooner the fence is up the sooner we can all breathe easier and enjoy the beautiful sight of deer on the farm again.

Recipes

Steamed Tatsoi with Peanut Sauce (*modified from Terra Firma CSA Newsletter*)

If you are wondering what to do with your tatsoi, here's a good place to start. The peanut sauce makes it a dish that kids should like too.

Cooker rice

1 head tatsoi

3 tbsp peanut butter

2 tbsp sesame oil

1 tbsp soy sauce

1 tbsp minced ginger

2 tbsp rice wine vinegar

White part of 1 green garlic

1 tsp brown sugar

1 carrot, grated

Chopped fresh cilantro

Pull or cut the tatsoi leaves from the stem. Chop coarsely and steam for 5 minutes. While it's steaming, mix the peanut butter, soy sauce, ginger, vinegar, green garlic and brown sugar in a food processor.

Serve the tatsoi over rice, with the peanut sauce drizzled over it. Top with grated carrots and cilantro.

Fresh Spring Slaw

Some recipes make themselves up, based on what you have. This is one of them.

1 kohlrabi, peeled and grated

3 radishes, trimmed and grated

1 carrot, grated

1 garlic green (white part), chopped

1 green onion, chopped

1/2 head tatsoi, chopped into strips

2 tbsp chopped cilantro

Juice of 1/2 lemon and 1/2 lime

1 tbsp rice or white wine vinegar

1/2 tsp sugar

2 tbsp sesame oil

Salt and pepper to taste

Grate and cut the vegetables and put them in a bowl. In a separate bowl, mix the lemon and lime juice, vinegar, sugar and sesame oil. Pour over the vegetables and let sit for 15 minutes.

The Politics of Food

Food is a complicated issue. It can be simply something that gets put down in front of you to eat, or it can be your livelihood. It's origin may be of little importance to you, or its knowledge may be critical. If you at least wonder some about these things, there was a very comprehensive front page article in the Sunday

May 22 Kansas City Star that did a good job of spelling out the many issues that are tied to our food.

There are other sources of food information linked on our website. The Organic Consumers Association website (www.organicconsumers.org) is an excellent source for the latest information.

Your Share Items

What's in My Share?

A good question indeed, what you get each week is based on many factors. We plan the shares during January, and plant accordingly. When the vegetables reach their peak, however, is only semi-predictable. So, whereas last year at this time the peas were in full swing, this year they are a little later.

It is also common that the shares on Wednesday are different than the ones on Saturday. So, since we only put the Wednesday newsletter on the website, don't be confused if your Saturday share doesn't match the listing on the front page.

Tatsoi

People have been asking about tatsoi, which is great to hear. It is one of several Asian greens that you will be getting this Spring. The others include bok choy, mizuna, and Chinese cabbage.

It is good both fresh and cooked. It has a beautiful shape and grows well for us, as long as it is covered to protect it from flea beetles. You can protect it in your fridge by keeping it in the vegetable crisper, in a ventilated bag (you will start accumulating them from us soon.)

Kohlrabi

Looking like something Master Yoda might cook, kohlrabi for many is a vegetable from the past, though slightly more common with the spread of CSAs. One variety reaches a diameter of 8 to 10 inches. The va-

rieties we grow for you are meant to be picked much smaller, and are more tender.

Kohlrabi has both a nice texture and taste. With all of the leafy greens that come in the Spring, it is nice to have something so crunchy and versatile. Simply tear off the leaves, cut off the root, and peel well. You can then cut or grate it anyway you like. It's firmness makes it a nice addition to slaws. It is also good baked.

Keep it in the crisper of your refrigerator. It is a good idea to cut off the leaves if you are going to store it awhile, as it will dry out quicker if you don't (and take up less space.)

Arugula

While some people dislike the taste of arugula, many (like us) think it is a great green either by itself, or in a mix. It is so popular at upscale restaurants, that last we heard a local farmer was planning on growing \$30,000 worth of it!

It has a definite spiciness, and it's strength varies with size of leaf and time of year. So if your bunch is particularly hot, chop it and use it as an herb. Otherwise, mix it liberally into your salad.

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