



Fair Share Farm CSA Newsletter

This Week's Share:

Full Share:

Cucumbers
Lettuce
Colorful carrots
Choice of cabbage
Summer squash
Chiogga Beets or Swiss Chard
New potatoes
Spring onions
Basil or parsley

Partial Share:

Cucumbers
Summer squash
Swiss chard
New potatoes
Spring onions
Basil or parsley

Next week: more carrots, summer squash, and cucumbers. Cherry tomatoes & beans are coming soon..

Hello Summer

Seems like Summer made her appearance months ago, but today is officially the first day of the hot season. The solstice is an annual milestone on the farm, marking the end of spring & the beginning of summer & of fall. This week we worked the broccoli, greens, spring roots, & peas back into the soil, while also planting the greenhouse with the fall brassicas (cabbage family). Usually 120 degrees F on a sunny day in June, the greenhouse was quite comfortable thanks to the addition of a shade cloth. Made of a polyester mesh, it looks like a very large bra, according to Tom, and I agree. The shade cloth offers 50% shade which is optimal for summer greenhouse production. The broccoli is already up and ready to grow.

Precipitation

The forecasters keep tempting us with views of the rainstorms all around us it seems. Liberty has gotten more rain than we have, as has St. Joseph, Platte City & Richmond. Right in the middle, we are dry. Since mid-April we have received about two inches of rain. Vegetables & fruits need an inch of rain per week and May and early June are usually when we receive the majority of our spring rains. Fortunately, the new irrigation pond is full and it looks like we're gonna need it. Tom has also begun preparing the fall beds, but its really almost too dry to do much. Without moisture the soil is either cloddy or dust and crop residues decompose slower. This week I hand-watered the orchard & it looks like we might have lost one.

We received an inch of rain last

week, but it wasn't enough to save the corn. Unfortunately, the corn crop is a bust again this season. Very few of the seeds ever germinated. We love the corn as much as most of you and are sad to see it go. Perhaps next year.

The crop update

Despite all this, the farm is actually looking pretty good. Ignoring the corn plot, the summer crops are growing well. With irrigation running daily, we are experiencing a bit of what it must be like to grow crops in the California Central Valley, where hot, dry summers require all the plants' water comes from a drip line. This has benefits for organic production where there are fewer options to battle fungal diseases that spread in hot, humid conditions.

The tomato plants continue to load themselves with fruit and the peppers aren't too far behind. Adequate water is critical at fruit set as plants with not enough water will drop blossoms without fruiting. Last year, the vegetable specialist for the K.C. area, Lala Kumar, gave us some good advice: water more. And with the new pond, we have the peace of mind to do just that.

CALENDAR

June 28: Wednesday pick-up

farm workers: Lolly Ockerstrom, Karen Brown, John Brown, Keith Snyder.

June 29, 6 pm: Fair Share Farm CSA Core Group meeting.

Topics to include: sign-up meeting evaluation, the mid-season member survey, and distribution. Contact the farm for more info.

July 1: Saturday pick-up

farm workers: Manoj & Kelli George, Michelle Tuohey, Martha Hufford

Your Share Items

Swiss Chard

We notice as summer comes along, that the harvest boxes get heavier and heavier. Cucumbers weigh a lot more than lettuce.

One of the greens that is hanging on the longest is our favorite—chard. We cannot recommend it enough. It is a great way to get to know how to cook greens, as it is simple with an excellent taste.

To cook it, chop the stems and sauté it with onions and oil over high heat, chop and add the tops, add some water to help it steam, season with salt, pepper, garlic, vinegar and/or butter.

Summer Squash

Our first planting of summer squash is doing extremely well this year. Squash, cucumber and melon plants have had a habit on the farm of growing, fruiting and dying

rather quickly. The current crop is still growing well after a bountiful first fruiting.

What is curious is the absence so far of cucumber beetles and squash bugs. Whether this is attributable to improved soil fertility, the use of beneficial microorganisms in our irrigation water, the row cover we've used to coddle the plants along this year, or all of the above has not yet been determined.

Cucumbers

We can only say ditto for the cucumbers. We picked 200 beautiful cukes on Tuesday, our nicest harvest ever. These early cukes are traditional slicers, great for salad.

Our harvest of pickling cukes is not far behind. We will soon have them available, and the ones that get a little too big for a jar will end up in the shares as flavorful slicers.

BEETS BEETS BEETS BEETS BEETS BEETS BEETS

We have extra beets right now, and we would like nothing better than to have the CSA eat them. They are the benefit of a good year of beet growing. There are 2 main types available; Chiogga (an heirloom variety with red and white circles on the inside) and a mix of red varieties. They are perfect right now for canning (see Issue 4 for info on canning class, and Issue 8 of 2005 for a pickled beet recipe). They will also be available in the shares or the swap box off and on for awhile.

Recipes

Ruggieri Zucchini Fritters

I called home to Cincinnati to talk to my Mom the other day. My sister Cathy was there, and we started talking about my Dad's family zucchini fritter recipe. I included it as a recipe in 2004, but was guessing at the ingredients. My sister filled me in on some of the key ones—eggs and parmesan cheese.

I cooked some up Tuesday night and they were great. They weren't quite the exact same taste though, so I will keep refining (or looking for) the recipe. Perhaps all they need is a little garlic, or more likely some garlic powder. I plan on making some more soon and will see.

Ingredients:

2 packed cups of grated zucchini
1 cup flour
1/2 cup milk
1 egg
1/2 cup parmesan cheese
1/4 tsp each salt and pepper
Frying oil

Method:

Mix the flour, milk, egg, cheese, salt and pepper into a batter. Add the zucchini and mix. Heat 1/2 inch of oil in a heavy pan on high. When the oil is hot use a tablespoon to drop the batter in the oil. Cook until golden and crispy. Drain on paper towel or newspaper. Eat as is, or with a sauce of choice.

Basil and Grated Carrot Dip

While good catsup or dressing is nice on the fritters, it's easy to use your share to make your own. This is good on lots of things.

Ingredients:

6 heaping tablespoons sour cream
2 tbsp mayonnaise
2 tbsp chopped basil
1/4 cup grated carrots
1/4 tsp each salt and pepper

Method:

Blend the ingredient together. Let stand in the refrigerator of at least 30 minutes if possible.



Fair Share Farm
18613 Downing Road
Kearney, Missouri 64060
(816) 320-3763
www.fairsharefarm.com

