



Volume 4 Issue 1 , May 16, 2007

# Fair Share Farm CSA Newsletter

## IN THE SHARE week 1

### Full:

Lettuce  
Leeks  
Choice of greens  
*French Breakfast* radishes  
Broccoli raab  
Green garlic  
Cilantro, dill or dried herbs

### Partial:

Lettuce  
Leeks  
Choice of greens  
Green garlic  
Cilantro, dill or dried herbs

**Next week:** More lettuce, radishes & herbs. Spring turnips & green onions enter.

### — WELCOME —

This first week of the CSA season is a welcomed sight. We've been nervously eyeing the crops for weeks, worrying that we might not be able to start on time. While not as hefty as we would like, the shares contain a nice collection of the jewels of spring. Emerald is the predominant color, but blushed heirloom lettuces & young radishes provide some contrast. Salad spinners : start your engines.

### — crop report —

While the weather out here on the edge of the prairie could be described as adventurous on an average day, we are experiencing an especially erratic spring season. During the 'Easter freeze' we recorded 17 degrees two nights running after several nights in the low twenties. Records were broken from here to Georgia & Texas. Then, after a few weeks of pleasantness, we received the second hit last week when over 5 inches of rain fell in less than 48 hours. On our farm some crops were killed, some

injured, some confused. The arugula is of the later category as it bolted (I.e. sent up a flower stalk) a week ahead of schedule. The spinach, on the other hand, just gave up and turned soggy & yellow. Many other spring crops remain behind schedule. Our farmer friends tell similar stories, and worse. Stories of rivers running through gardens, whole fields frozen before harvest, tractors under water up to their steering wheels.

### — the cranky farmer —

I tell you these things not to alarm you. This newsletter serves to inform you about the status of your shares. Tom's page will tell you all about what you're getting each week and how to eat it. My job is to keep you abreast of the field conditions. At times it may be worrisome, but if we've learned anything farming here its that more than likely by next week the weather will be completely different. Regardless, the weather always plays the lead in the drama of Fair Share Farm and expect to hear about it on these pages—good or otherwise.

The weather hasn't been all bad. We've had adequate rainfall for the first time in more than a year. The summer crops we've planted are growing well and the ponds are full. We plan to complete the bulk of the summer planting this week.

### — WANTED —

*waxed produce boxes:* we reuse boxes from the natural groceries in town for our produce. The wax allows many uses of them before they begin to show their age. We are starting the season with a fresh batch of boxes, but could use more. If you'd like to help, just ask for *waxed organic produce boxes* next time you are grocery shopping. Bring them to distribution or the farm and we'll be happy to have them.

*egg cartons:* Parker Farms has run low on egg cartons to hold their growing supply of eggs. Rather than buy new, they'd much rather take your used, but clean, egg cartons. Drop them off at distribution or the farm and we'll see that they get them.

### — Thank you —

A busy spring has left us with many to thank. Here's a few to start. Shanna Parcell braved the freezing wind putting on row cover. Elaine Reynolds commiserated with us over dinner. And as always, John Graff, my dad, contributed generously of his time, farmer wisdom & resources. Our heartfelt thanks to you all.

## CALENDAR

May 16: Wednesday pick-up

farm workers: Chris & Denise Osbourne, Marjorie Yates, Bryan Morgan & Julia Keller

May 19: Saturday pick-up

farm workers: Jamie & Ryan Friedrich, Ann & Tom Duckett, Sara & Gillian O'Connell and Sheri Brown

## Let the Season Begin

We are pleased to be starting our 4th CSA season and providing fresh, healthy vegetables for your table. This side of the newsletter (and our website) are where you can get ideas of how to get what's in your share from your bag to your table.

We will tell you about items that are appearing in your share for the first time; have recipes that include as many share items as possible; and offer other food advice and information. If you still have questions after reading the newsletter, go to the Recipe section of the website (<http://www.fairsharefarm.com/info/recipes/recipes.html>). There you can search the Fair Share Farm website for info on any vegetable we've ever written about.

### Pantry Suggestions

To get the most out of your share, we suggest that your pantry is stocked at a minimum, with the following items:

- ◇ Olive, sesame and vegetable oil
- ◇ Balsamic, rice wine, red wine and white wine vinegar
- ◇ Soy sauce and fish sauce
- ◇ Nuts such as walnuts, pine nuts, peanuts, or Missouri pecans
- ◇ Dried herbs such as thyme, oregano, marjoram, summer savory, tarragon, dill and rosemary (available as the season progresses)
- ◇ Spices such as cumin, coriander, curry powder

It is also good to have a regular supply in the fridge of yogurt, lemons, and limes.

## Your Share Items

### Asian Greens

We grow several types of Asian greens for your share, some leafy, some more "stalky" and some cabbagey. This first week you will be getting the leafy type. *Tat soi* grows in a beautiful rosette and has round leaves. *Yukina savory* looks similar, but has more crinkly or "savoyed" leaves.

Both are a nice substitute for spinach. As a fresh vegetable they are great, chopped or torn up for salads, on sandwiches, or in wraps. They can also be sautéed or cooked in a wok like any other green.

### Broccoli Raab

A favorite Italian green, we are picking it young for use fresh in salads and as a tasty garnish. It has a mild mustard taste and is a little nutty. When mature raab has a much stronger flavor.

### Leeks

Perhaps my favorite vegetable, leeks in some stage of growth are on the farm 365 days a year. A member of the onion family, we start leek seeds in the greenhouse in February. One set is planted for harvest in the fall, and a second set is planted for harvest the following May. That means the leeks you have in your share were started 14 months ago. A nice blanket of straw mulch helped get them through the winter.

As leeks have become a staple of the first week's share, we have tried each year to have a good recipe. We like this year's.

### Green Garlic

Green garlic is what garlic looks like in it's early growth stage, before it starts to form a bulb. It is milder than clove garlic, and gives a fresh taste to Spring dishes.

To use it simply trim off the roots and cut off the top half. The white part can then be used anywhere you would use garlic.

### Herbs—Dill, Cilantro, or Dried

We plan the CSA to have fresh herbs in every share. Since last year, we have also tried to have a supply of dried herbs available as a choice too.

This week's choice are the spring herbs of dill and cilantro. Both are harvested this time of year for their flavorful leaves. Dill goes great with potatoes, in slaws, eggs and fish. Mix it with mayonnaise for a nice sandwich spread or cold sauce.

Cilantro is a traditional Latin and Asian herb. Add it to salsas or use it to garnish stir fry's, eggs or wraps. It also complements dishes that call for fresh lime juice.

The dried herbs will become available as we dry them. We'll talk about them individually as the season progresses.

### — Use the Website —

*If you have access to the internet, we encourage you to use the website to answer your questions. For now you can go to the Recipe page and search the site, or peruse the newsletter archive index to find something interesting.*

*Our goal is a website that helps members get the most from their shares and the CSA experience. Your suggestions are welcome.*

## Recipes

### Baked Leeks (adapted from Allrecipes.com 5/14/2007)

Baked cheese dishes are something even kids like. The leeks are milder than onions, and have a flavor all their own. This recipe is also simple to make, requiring only what's in your share and some milk, butter, flour and cheese.

#### Ingredients:

- ◇ 2 tablespoons butter
- ◇ 1/4 cup all-purpose flour
- ◇ 1 1/2 cups milk
- ◇ 1 cup shredded Cheddar Cheese
- ◇ 1/2 tsp garlic powder or 1 tbsp chopped green garlic
- ◇ salt and pepper, to taste
- ◇ 1-1/2 lbs leeks, cut into bite size pieces or smaller

#### Method:

- ◇ Preheat oven to 400 degrees F. Grease a 9x12 inch baking pan.
- ◇ Melt butter over low heat. Stir in flour until smooth. Gradually stir in milk and cheese until cheese is melted. Season with garlic powder, salt, and pepper. Remove from heat. Place the leeks in the prepared pan and cover with the cheese sauce.
- ◇ Bake for 30 minutes in the preheated oven, until leeks are tender and sauce is bubbly.

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