



Volume 4 Issue 11, July 25, 2007

Fair Share Farm CSA Newsletter

IN THE SHARE week 11

Full:

Green beans or summer squash
Carrots
Tomatoes
Onions
Lettuce or salsa pack
Fennel, summer savory or basil or dried herbs
Okra, peppers or eggplant
Cherry tomatoes

Partial:

Carrots
Tomatoes
Onions
Summer squash
Cabbage or beets
Fennel, summer savory or basil or dried herbs

Next week: More tomatoes, squash, peppers, eggplant, salsa pack & okra. Potatoes and garlic return.

—the five year plan—

When we started Fair Share Farm in 2003, we created a five year plan. Last fall Tom and I took a mini-retreat right here on the farm to talk about our plan for the next five years. First, we took some time to imagine our ideal farm. From there we identified areas where we would like to improve. These included sustainability, community, business and comfort.

Sustainability is a term that is used a lot these days and with varying definitions depending on who is using the term. When we talk about sustainability, we are concerned with the whole farm organism being capable of continuing into the future indefinitely with little or no dependence on non-renewable resources. To achieve this goal requires that we

address energy use at the farm, fertility sources for the crops and our use of plastics and other non-renewable materials.

We purchase wind power from our local electric utility, Platte-Clay Electric Co-op, that supplies all of our electric power on the farm. We like this arrangement as it allows us to have clean, renewable energy with no additional time or attention on our end. All other energy used on the farm, including all tractor power, the 'Sweetpea' delivery van, and the irrigation pump (photo in last week's newsletter) are gas-powered. In order to reduce our dependence on this non-renewable energy resource, we are planning to convert some of our tractor power and our irrigation pump to an electric system powered by solar

panels this winter.

A healthy soil is the key to a successful organic vegetable farm and can require significant inputs from off the farm. These inputs are not necessarily non-renewable but they do leave the farm dependent on the delivery of rock powders and other nutrients from around the globe. Cover crops are our preferred method of soil maintenance. We grow cover crops, like cowpeas and buckwheat, and then turn them into the soil once they reach maturity. Our soils can't survive on annual cover crops alone and so we also purchase bagged organic fertilizers to ensure we have adequate nutrients for the vegetables. We would very much like to reduce our use of outside inputs and continue to contemplate the addition of some animals who could provide some fertility to the farm.

—critter update—

Seems we aren't alone with our raccoon run-ins. Both of our neighbors are having similar experiences in their tomato patches. A new trick may be working. After a recommendation from one neighbor we have placed a radio tuned to an all-night station in the tomato patch. The classic rock music seems to be keeping the raccoons away at least as far as the music travels. Several more radios may be needed to solve the problem. Now, if only they were solar powered . . .

CSA Harvesting—week 11:

If you are coming out to harvest this week, here's what's waiting for you...

Harvesting: basil, lettuce, green beans, carrots, onions, cherry tomatoes.

Other chores: onion harvest

CALENDAR

August 1: Wednesday pick-up

farm workers: April Cochran, Karen Overstreet, Sally Vlamis, Maryann Blitt
K.C. distribution team: Barbara Loveless, Jeri Wood, and Daniel Minton

August 4: Saturday pick-up

farm workers: (LIB) Dan & Diana Wright, Aaron Matthew, Amy Hearst, Linda Medoff

Recipes

Roasted Salsa

Last Saturday after harvesting we had lunch with member Yvonne Rangel. Her simple recipe is to roast all of your salsa ingredients before chopping into the salsa. We made this last night with the basic ingredients of our salsa pack (see notes at right), and a few tomatoes.

Ingredients:

- ◇ One Fair Share Farm salsa fixin's pack
 - 5 oz tomatillos
 - 2 cloves garlic
 - 1 small onion
 - Jalapeno pepper
- ◇ 2 medium tomatoes, quartered
- ◇ 1/4 tsp salt
- ◇ 2 tbsp chopped cilantro
- ◇ Juice of 1/2 lime

Method:

- ◇ Preheat oven to 375°. Roast the vegetables for 15 to 25 minutes, or until lightly roasted.
- ◇ Scrape the mixture into a food processor and use a pulsing action to chop things
- ◇ Pour into a serving bowl. Use as a dip for corn chips, in eggs, in burritos, with guacamole, or anywhere you want.
- ◇

Your Share Items

Peppers

Peppers are starting to appear in you shares as they begin to mature. The first ones you have seen are either green or purple. We pick the green ones not only to get you some good produce, but also to prune the young pepper plants so that they will grow more and generate more fruit. The purple ones are an early maturing variety called *Islander*. Green or purple, they are all sweet peppers that will eventually turn red, yellow or orange.

Okra

You know that you live in an area that's hot when you grow vegetables that are native to Ethiopia. Such is the case with okra. Back east where Rebecca and I met they didn't even try growing it. In Ohio we saw people growing it in plastic hoop houses. Here in NW Missouri, we seed it straight in the ground and let it do its thing. The plants are just beginning to produce, and we hope to have a good harvest this year.

Okra is one of those vegetables that falls into three categories: members love it, members hate it, and members have never tried it. If you are in the first two categories you need no help with okra. If you are in the third, you can go to the Recipe page of the website and search for okra to find the best ways to cook it. If you are a first time okrarian, try the August 16, 2005 recipe. Simply dip okra chunks in egg, coat with seasoned cornmeal, and bake at 375° F for 15 minutes or until crispy. They are the least slimy this way.



Salsa Fixin's Pack

Our first CSA season we handed out tomatillos and jalapenos to members, but many folks didn't know what to do with them. But since we do, and we want them around, we decided we needed some way to get folks to try them. So we created the Salsa Fixin's Pack.

Tomatillos are small green fruit with a papery husk on them that are the main ingredient in Mexican green sauce. To use them, simply pull off the husk, core out the stem end, and chop them up as needed.

The jalapenos are a rather hot pepper with great flavor that compliments fresh salsa and other Mexican dishes. It is best to clean them under running water to avoid getting "burned". Most of the heat is in the seeds, so scrape them out if you like.

The salsa fixin's pack contains these ingredients, plus garlic and onion. All you need to provide is the tomatoes and chop them all together for a great fresh salsa.

Here are some variations and additions that you might also try:

- ◇ Roast the ingredients first (see recipe at right)
- ◇ Add a splash of red wine vinegar, olive or vegetable oil, lime and cilantro
- ◇ Add chopped cucumbers, zucchini, or the vegetable of your choice

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