

# Cascade Farm CSA Harvest Notes 2011

Cascade Farm CSA Harvest #3 June 2, 2011

## WELCOME

### Your Harvest Share this week

So be careful what you wish for... this has been quite a hot week. Lots of sunshine (a good thing) but too much heat at once. This coming week is predicted to be sunny but milder.

With the sunshine comes the sunburn, but also more lettuce and greens. Plants that were too small last week have grown quite quickly in this weather and are ready for harvest this week.

Some new items this week, spinach, usually a favorite and garlic scapes. For those of you who are not familiar, scapes are the curly flower stem cut off the garlic plant in spring to redirect the plants energy into the bulb growth (and bigger bulbs in summer). The scapes have a mild garlic flavor. We add them whole to stir fries to add flavor and interesting shapes.

This week there will also be some more rhubarb, green garlic and some new herbs. We hope you are enjoying and experimenting with the variety of fresh herbs. Let us know what you think.

## THE FARM SHARE

### Keeping your harvest fresher longer

The length of time your produce will last in your refrigerator or kitchen will depend on a lot of factors. We try to use practices before and during a harvest to ensure the crop is harvested, washed or cooled quickly as required. We provide the harvested crops to you soon after they have been harvested (usually within hours – you can't get that in a supermarket). Another step to ensuring fresh produce requires your help. When you pick-up your produce be careful how you pack it (heavier items on bottom, fragrant herbs in their own bags). Read the tips here and in other cookbooks or online to prep your produce prior to storage. Plan to use the shorter lived produce first. In very warm weather, transport your produce in a cooler or thermo bag especially if you will be running errands or have a long trip after you pick up your share. Even a mildly warm day can bring up the temperature in your car.



### THIS WEEK'S HARVEST MAY INCLUDE:

- Lettuce – 2 Varieties (Green Summer Crisp, Red Summer Crisp)
- Kale – 3 Varieties (Red Russian Kale, Toscano Kale, and Curly Kale)
- Rhubarb
- Swiss Chard
- Green Garlic
- Garlic Scapes (New this week)
- Spinach (New this week)
- Fresh Herbs (Lemon Balm, Sage)

## HARVEST TIPS

### **GARLIC SCAPES**

Garlic scapes are the flower stems that garlic plants produce before the bulbs mature. Growers often remove the scapes to push the plant's energy toward bigger bulbs. The scapes when young and tender have a subtle flavor.

#### **Storage Tips**

- Keep in sealed plastic bag to retain moisture for 1 to 2 weeks refrigerator
- Can also be frozen whole or chopped

#### **Cooking Tips**

- Can be cooked whole or chopped
- Use as you would like bulb garlic in any recipe

### **SPINACH**

Spinach can be eaten raw in salads, cooked as a side dish, or added to dips. Great when mixed with pasta and cheese or added to an omelet.

#### **Storage Tips**

- Trim stems and wash thoroughly but gently in cold water, spin dry in salad spinner, and pack loosely in plastic bag or cellophane
- Will keep in refrigerator crisper for up to four days
- Freeze spinach for longer storage by steam blanching for 2 minutes and chill in ice water. Cool, drain, and package in an air-tight container (will keep in freezer for up to six months).

#### **Cooking Tips**

- Remove stems as they are tougher than the leaves
- Briefly steam or sauté in oil and garlic or chopped spinach cooked in a cream sauce
- Spinach reduces dramatically when cooked

### **FRESH HERBS - SAGE**

Sage should be used sparingly due to its intense aroma. Store fresh sage leaves in a plastic bag in the refrigerator for up to a week or freeze the leaves to retain the flavor. Sage compliments asparagus, potatoes, tomatoes, cheese, eggs, chicken, and pizza.

### **FRESH HERBS – LEMON BALM**

Lemon Balm has a distinct lemon flavor and can be used in recipes instead of lemon peel. It can also be used in teas, salads, or fresh fruit. Lemon balm compliments broccoli, corn, and fruit.

## FEATURED RECIPES

### Swiss Chard with Raisins and Pine Nuts

The recipe below is adapted from Angelic Organics Kitchen in *Farmer John's Cookbook, The Real Dirt on Vegetables* by John Peterson

#### Ingredients

- 3 tablespoons of olive oil
- ¼ cup of thinly sliced onion
- Garlic (clove or sliced green garlic)
- ¾ to 1 lb. of Chard (rinsed and coarsely chopped)
- 1 handful of raisins
- 3 tablespoons of pine nuts
- 1 teaspoon lemon juice
- Salt and pepper to taste

#### Directions

1. Heat 2 tablespoons of olive oil in large skillet over medium-high heat. Add the onion; cook, stirring occasionally until golden, about 15 minutes. Stir in garlic and cook 1 minute more.
2. Add the chard in batches, add more as each batch wilts (the only water you will need is the water clinging to the leaves from rinsing), and keep the pan covered between batches. When all the chard is added and the leaves are wilted, stir in the raisins, pine nuts, lemon juice, and the remaining 1 tablespoon oil. Season with salt and pepper to taste.

### Strawberry Spinach Salad with Rhubarb Dressing

This recipe from: *Simply in Season* by Mary Beth Lind and Cathleen Hockman-Wert

Dressing:

2 cups of rhubarb, chopped

½ cup of sugar

¼ cup of vinegar

¾ cup of oil

2-3 tablespoons onion (grated)

1 ½ teaspoons of Worcestershire sauce

¼ teaspoon of salt

Cook rhubarb, sugar, and vinegar over medium heat until soft. Drain in sieve. Discard pulp. To 6 tablespoons of this juice, add remaining ingredients. Shake in jar or whisk together. Chill at least 1 hour before serving.

Salad:

4 Cups of spinach or other mixed greens

1 cup of fresh strawberries, sliced

Combine salad ingredients then pour on chilled dressing to taste.