

PRIMROSE COMMUNITY FARM



CSA NEWSLETTER

Summer 08: Week 1: 6/11/08

GROUP A

(next group A is week is 6/25/08)

Welcome to the Primrose CSA. For those of you that are new to the farm this year thanks for joining. We hope that this will be an enjoyable and educational endeavor. Being part of a CSA is a huge step toward sustaining the future of farming and maintaining our rural land for years to come.

For those of you that are returning, we think that you will find that we are improving and expanding our operation every year. While this spring has been wet and cold, our season is still looking like it's off to a great start. Our new full-time employee, Eva, has played a huge role in this. Her great work ethic and her cheerful demeanor is wonderful addition to our farm.

Also on our hard-working crew this year is Andy Hanson and Katie Williams, who both work part-time at the farm. Another 21 worker shares come to farm to help plant, weed, and harvest each week as well. Farming is an incredible amount of hard work. So if you ever see any

of our employees or worker shares on the farm please let them know that you value what they are doing.

The CSA is such a great way for us to provide you with a diverse array of produce. Some of the items may be unfamiliar to you. We hope to introduce you to some new vegetables this season, and give you a helping hand in learning how to use them.

One way we try to help you is to teach you the basics about how to identify and store your veggies. On the front page we will always put the list of all of the items that are in the box for the week, identifying any you may not be familiar with. We will put information on how to store the vegetables if there is any specifics on that particular item.

Unless stated otherwise, most all items can be put in a plastic bag or other sealed container and placed in the fridge. Under 'veggie guides' on our website, you can also learn a lot about how to properly store your vegetables.

Another way we will try to help you is to provide you with recipes. This year Rachel Armstrong, a seasoned CSA member and cook, will be gathering recipes, particularly for those veggies you may be unfamiliar with. These recipes will be posted in the newsletter each week. We will also post the newsletter on our website. All of our past newsletters are also on the website, so it's another great resource for cooking ideas.

Just remember, part of being a CSA member is becoming creative with your cooking. The best skill to have to use your CSA box is to look at a recipe and adapt it to what you have in your box. For instance, kale can replace spinach in many recipes; chop in some radishes in place of where you might use carrots. Have fun and experiment!

All of the items that we grow are maturing at different times, so you may notice that your head of broccoli or bunch of radishes is a different size than your neighbors. These slight discrepancies will tend to balance out over the course of the season.

Thanks again for joining us this season! We hope you enjoy being a part of CSA!

Sincerely, Cassie and Mike

In the Box:

The unusually cold and wet spring has delayed our strawberries and peas... hopefully they will be ready soon!

Broccoli (for REG Epic shares and all EO week shares)

Bok choy

Cilantro

Green garlic
(look like scallions)

Green Leaf Lettuce

Mint

Radish

Rainbow Chard
(EO week shares only)

Red Russian Kale
(leafy bunch with purple stems. leaves are serrated like oak leaves)

Salad Mix (REG shares only)

Spinach

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Our new plastic boxes aren't in yet, so this week we are using wax boxes. Please remember to unpack your box into your own bag and leave the box for us to reuse.

If you have recipes to share or ideas to help us improve, please email us at: primrosecommunityfarm@gmail.com

The Joy of Cooking Veggies

Hello! I'm Rachel. Like Mike and Cassie explained on the other side of this newsletter, I'll be bringing you tips and recipes every week. Welcome to the wonderful world of cooking from your CSA box. If you are new, hold on to your seat because this is the funest, most bestest way to cook. If you're a seasoned CSA chef then you've been salivating for months in anticipation of your first box. It's here! Let's COOK!

I should introduce a few things about what you can expect on this side of the newsletter throughout the summer. I am not professionally trained in cooking but I have years of failed dishes behind me (and a few more ahead no doubt), an expired catering business, and plenty of friends I've earned exclusively because they like my cooking. So while that's all the real credentials I can offer I think you'll find something useful here.

My approach to cooking is very relaxed. With ingredients as good as Mike and Cassie produce you can't go wrong. You'll have to try to make these things taste bad so don't worry! The first piece of advice I offer anyone new to CSA cooking is this: Trust yourself. If you think you have a good idea for how to use that strange kohlrabi you just received, do it. You're the best authority on what you like. I offer guidelines and ideas but adapt freely. Don't like mustard? Substitute ketchup. Prefer your food spicy? Add chipotle. Just trust your instincts and have fun! Oh, and send along your recipes. Mike and Cassie included their email on the front page.

Kale

I'm a big fan of this green veggie. It's tasty and strong enough to withstand high heat and plenty of flavorings. If you've never tried kale before here's some starting tips:

- Ⓓ While some folks happily munch away on the center ribs of each leaf, I prefer to strip them away. They can be tough so check for yourself. To accomplish this quickly, fold the leaves like a book along the mid-rib, grasp them in your hand and pull the stem upwards from the bottom. It should tear neatly away. I save the stems for soup stock.
- Ⓓ Again, some folks find kale to be a bit tougher in texture than they prefer so they blanch the greens first. "Blanching" means dunking in plenty of boiling water for a short time before rinsing in cool water. I blanch kale for 3-4 minutes before I use it in a dishes like the recipe below. See what you think!

Sweet and Sour stir-fried Kale

1 bunch of kale, stems removed, leaves torn into pieces
1 bunch radishes, bulbs and tops rinsed and sliced
1 T peanut oil
1/4 c green garlic, minced
2 T soy sauce
2 t brown sugar
1 t rice vinegar

Boil the kale in plenty of water for 3 minutes. Drain in a colander, rinse with cool water and squeeze dry. Heat the oil in a large skillet, add the garlic and fry for 30 seconds, add kale, radish tops and bulbs and remaining ingredients. Toss to blend, add more of either seasoning to achieve a sweet, sour, and salty balance.

Green Garlic: Use it just like you would regular garlic.

Radishes

If your accustomed to seeing radishes in salads and nothing else get ready to explore the wonderful world of red orbs! Radishes are tasty versatile vegetables. And you get two for the price of one- not only are the bulbs good but the green tops are nutritious and delicious too. Give them both a careful wash, slice them up and saute them together. Not only will it be a beautiful blend of red, white and green, with both crunch and tender texture, it will taste wonderful.

Pickled Radishes

There are a couple themes I return to over and over while cooking from the CSA box: one of them is pickling. This method keeps the veggie crisp, lessens any sharp bite, and offers a pleasant contrast in salads or on sandwiches. This recipe in particular was a huge hit at a local foods event REAP Food Group (whom I work for) hosted at the Madison Club. Did you catch this recipe in last weeks Dane County Farmers Market newsletter? Here's a mini- version to go with the taco recipe below.

Burrito Drive Pickled Radishes

1 c water
1 c white wine vinegar
2 T salt
1 1/2 T sugar
The whole bunch of green garlic!
1 bunch radishes, sliced thin
1 jalapeno pepper, if desired
Comine the first 5 ingredients and heat slowly until the sugar and salt dissolve. Pour over the radishes and peppers. Cool, then refrigerate overnight.

Mint and Cilantro

Herbs have so much more potential than just garnish! These ingredients are not optional, rather they are essential elements of many cuisines. Like mint- it's hard to imagine Middle Eastern cuisine without mint. Or Mexican food without cilantro. Use these liberally and creatively.

Week One Tacos

Saute sliced chicken breast in olive oil until no longer pink. Slide into a soft taco shell and top with shredded spinach, pickled radishes, chopped cilantro and pepper jack cheese. YUM!