



Summer 08: Week 2: 6/18/08

GROUP B

(next group B is week is 7/2/08)

Our thoughts are with all of the homeowners and farmers who are struggling through this ever so rainy June.

Here at Primrose, we have been really fortunate. Since we aren't near any rivers and are on a slope, we have been spared flooded fields.

The main way all of this rain impacts us is by making it difficult to get into our fields. Part of taking care of our soil means that we want to avoid compacting it. So when it rains, we simply must wait for the soil to dry out before we can use our tractors to help us cultivate and transplant. So in the meantime, weeds can get a head start on us. And meanwhile, we have many plants we have started in our greenhouse that need to be planted into the ground, but we simply have to wait until the ground

dries out.

Other impacts of the rain include soil erosion. While we do our best to keep unplanted fields in cover crops, many of the main beds where we are growing vegetables leave a fair amount of soil exposed. When so much rain pounds down so quickly, the ground simply can't absorb it, so as the water runs-off and it takes soil with it. If you come out to the farm, you may notice strange piles of mud and gutted tracks as evidence of the run-off. You may also notice that your head lettuce is dirty inbetween the leaves at the base - this too is evidence of soil moving in the fields.

A final impact of last week's severe weather is hail damage. While Mike and I were able to pull in our young plants that haven't been planted yet,

there's not much we can do to protect our crops in the field when hail comes. We had two bouts of pea size hail on Saturday

You will most likely see some of the impacts of this hail in the form of holes and tears in your leafy greens, especially the spinach.

In good news, the weather looks pretty tame this week. And meanwhile, Mike and I ate our first strawberries this past weekend! They are very behind due to the cold spring, but we think we're in for a nice crop. They are just starting to turn. We will most likely never have enough ripe at the same time to give everyone berries the same week, so we will distribute them to various sites over the course of a couple weeks.

If you're eager to have your first strawberry, come on out to our open house this weekend! On Sunday, June 22nd, from 3-5 pm, we will have an open house. It's a great chance to meet your farmers and see where your food comes from. We'll give a farm tour and then (if the berries are ready), we will end with some berry picking. Family members are welcome!

Sincerely, Cassie and Mike

In the Box:

Basil
Bok Choi (EO only)

White stalks with dark green leaves

Broccoli
Chard

Leafy bunch, with multi-colored stems and dark green leaves

Chinese Cabbage
(REG Only)

White stalks with pale green leaves

Cilantro (EO only)
Dill (REG only)

Garlic Scapes
Bunched, cylindrical stalks diameter similar to green beans

Green garlic
Unbunched, look similar to scallions

Head Lettuce
Radish

Red Russian Kale
(EO only)
Bunched greens, serrated with pinkish hue

Salad Mix
Spinach
Strawberries
(EOW Only)

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Open House! This Sunday, June 22nd, from 3-5 pm at the farm. We'll have a tour and maybe some strawberry snacking. We hope you'll join us!

Our new plastic boxes still aren't in yet, so this week we are once again using wax boxes.

The Joy of Cooking Veggies

Yea! We are on to our second week of CSA. This week your box represents the spirit of spring in one of it's more dramatic ways: hail damage. Where else can you see the evidence of storms past on your plate? That's the gift of CSA, but a gift you should eat quickly.

You can expect the veggies you get from Mike and Cassie to last you a long time- don't worry if you can't use things for a week or two. If you properly store your veggies you shouldn't have any problems. There are exceptions though. First if you leave your box out at room temperature or in a warm car for any length of time the shelf life will shorten. This will also happen if nature throws some hail at leafy greens. They'll turn yellow around the hail holes quickly.

To store your leafy greens of any type place them in a plastic bag that can be loosely sealed or has holes for ventilation. If the greens are very damp slide a dry paper towel along the inside of the bag. If the greens are on the wilted side a damp paper towel is better.

Sauteed Greens

You'll get a lot of greens this summer: kale, chard, spinach, lettuce, asian greens, cabbage, radish tops... and you can saute them all. Here are basic instructions for a terrific saute. Then, some ideas what you can do with your sauteed greens.

1 bunch greens, chopped into wide strips
1 T olive oil
1 T chopped garlic (green, scapes, or regular)
salt and pepper
lemon juice or vinegar

If the greens are particularly sturdy, blanch them first (dunk in boiling water for a minute or two, then drain and squeeze dry). Heat the olive oil in a large skillet. Add the garlic and the greens, stirring together. Season with salt and pepper. Toss things around until the greens wilt and are tender. Splash with the lemon juice or vinegar. Done!

In my opinion simple sauteed greens are delicious as is. But lets say you want something different...

- Mix into mac and cheese. The boxed kind is tasty but so are fresh noodles and sauteed greens tossed with sharp cheddar.
- Try on an egg sandwich, grilled tofu or chicken sandwich or as an omelette filling
- Toss with black beans for a flavorful salad

Chinese Cabbage

This vegetable might be new to your kitchen but you've likely seen it at a Chinese restaurant. It's a terrific option to combine with your favorite stir fry sauce. But I think chinese cabbage is especially tasty in cole slaw. It's more tender than regular cabbage and pretty with it's crinkly leaves. Use your favorite cole slaw recipe- creamy or a vinaigrette style, they'll both be good. Here's a slaw recipe from the "Fields Of Greens" cookbook by Annie Somerville.

4 c sliced chinese cabbage
1 scallion or green garlic, white and light green parts sliced thin
1 T chopped cilantro or dill (or more!)
2 T fresh lemon juice
1/2 T rice vinegar
1 t grated fresh ginger
2 T olive or peanut oil
1/4 t salt

Slice the cabbage in half, remove the thick core at the base and slice thin. Wisk together the remaining ingredients and toss with the cabbage.

Orange Beef Stir-fry

1 lb beef roast, sliced
1/4 c soy sauce
2 T mirin (rice wine) or sherry
2 t sesame oil
1 T garlic scapes or green garlic, chopped
1 orange
1 t cornstarch

Combine first 6 ingredients in a bowl or plastic bag. Peel the orange and toss rind in the bag- cut orange in half and squeeze juice into the bag also. Refrigerate for 4-6 hours. Remove orange rind and place beef and marinade in a pot. Bring to a boil and simmer, covered, on low until beef is tender and sauce is reduced, about 30 minutes. Mix cornstarch with 1 T cold water and mix into beef.

1-2 bok choi or half a Chinese cabbage, sliced thin
1 kohlrabi, peeled and sliced thin
3 radish bulbs and tops, sliced thin
3 scallions, sliced
1 c broccoli pieces
2 T peanut oil

Heat oil over high heat in a large skillet until hot. Throw all veggies into the pan and stir quickly. After only 1-2 minutes, add beef and stir, cooking for 30 seconds or so. Remove from heat and serve over rice.