



SUNSHINE IN A BOX



SOLAR FRESH

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CSA Week 5

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Peas and Harmony

Farm Updates

The 4th of July's full moon eclipse was a good phase for hand weeding, cultivation and irrigation. Plants keep growing healthy and weeds need to be "eclipsed" from the garden. One technique I've been using is called occultation and this involves placing a tarp over an area to block the sun. Weed seed germinates and then dies in the absence of light. This process takes a few weeks depending on the conditions. This creates a stale seed bed ready for planting. I will still be planting some fall crops into areas that have been occultated. I am also starting to see the results a few weeks after planting into some areas that had tarps which has promising results so far. This is just one tool in the toolkit for reduced tillage farming.

Dry weather along with hoop structure growing means running the irrigation system regularly. I have expanded drip tape irrigation and continue to maintain the existing system to reduce leaks.

Irrigation is essential especially in the hoop house and caterpillar tunnel, which house the cucumbers, tomatoes and more. These will be coming in the next few weeks. For some more info on growing and soil health you can view my field updates via the Sustainable Farming Association's website:

<https://www.sfa-mn.org/caterpillar-tunnels-soil-health/>

Harvesting happens regularly throughout the week at this point. It is a lot of balancing between weeding, fall planting, maintenance, and harvesting but everything gets done little by little. Garlic harvest is underway and the crop looks amazing. Half will be replanted this fall and the other half will be cured.

CSA boxes are back! Those bags just did not get the job done but thank you for humoring me in my attempt to try something different. **Please return your box each week**—thank you!

Farm Updates Recipes

Sunny Kale Slaw
Pesto Broccoli Flatbread



Week 5 Veggies

Broccoli: Despite drought and other challenges in its first months, the broccoli pulled through. Try it fresh tossing with the sauce for the kale salad, or try it roasted on the pesto flat bread recipe. Broccoli can also be blended up into the pesto. The variety of broccoli is called Green Magic

Kale: To prep kale, hold the stem and strip off foliage. Tear into pieces and wash loosely in cold water. Drain, dry and place in a storage bag with paper towel. Use as needed to sautee or in raw salads

Garlic: The harvest has begun! Most garlic will be hung to cure for 1 month to increase storage potential. Fresh uncured garlic is more spicy and pungent. Pairs well with kale and broccoli, and of course in a basil pesto sauce. Try chopping and letting sit for 10 minutes before cooking to allow allicin to form. When cooking use low heat and do not burn garlic.

Baby Beets: More garden candy for roasting or salad topping.

Salad Mix and Arugula: Tasty arugula is grown in the caterpillar tunnel. Read more about it here: <https://www.sfa-mn.org/caterpillar-tunnels-soil-health/>

Little Gem Romaine: Small quick growing summer romaine. Perfect for a wedge salad for two or even cut in half and grilled.

Peas: Last week for peas—try shelling larger peas when pod has become tough and use them in the kale salad recipe below.

Summer Squash: A favorite among the more rebellious chickens, I am trying various techniques to exclude them from the squash picking and growing area.

Basil: More basil as you can never have too much of this beneficial herb. Remove rubber band and store in a cool area of the kitchen at room temp. Make sure to add it to any dish, and if you can't get to it while fresh dried basil will be useful later on. Try drying basil at the lowest oven setting (convection if available) on a cookie sheet flat in one layer until just shatter dry and still green.

Tulsi (Holy Basil): Considered sacred in India, this special basil is beneficial fresh in tea or pesto, or dried for tea later. Try mixing half basil and half Tulsi in pesto for a refreshing yet spicy floral flavor. Wilted Tulsi can be infused into almond oil for a natural skincare product. To make a tea, fill a quart jar or pitcher with fresh water and add 5-10 sprigs of Tulsi removing leaves and flower tops from stem if desired. Let infuse in the sun for several hours and then strain or scoop out Tulsi. Add a squeeze of lemon juice and sweeten with honey if desired. Drink in the afternoon for a pick me up beverage.

Recipes

Sunny Kale Slaw

For the Sauce:

½ cup sour cream

½ cup mayo

2 tablespoons lemon juice

2 tablespoons white vinegar

2 tablespoons heavy cream or whole milk

2 Tablespoons sunflower oil

1 teaspoon honey

1 teaspoon with sugar

Salt and pepper to taste

Garlic clove, grated

To prepare the kale, remove stems, wash and tear leaves into very small pieces. Layer kale with salt alternating in a large bowl. Cover with a paper towel and plastic wrap and place in fridge for 1-2 hours. The salt will help tenderize the kale.

In the meantime, prepare the sauce and vegetables. To make sauce, combine the first seven ingredients and stir into a smooth consistency. Grate garlic and add to the sauce. To finely chop basil, first cut into a chiffonade and the cut across, and then run your knife back over it a few times. More chopping will help release the essential oils. Crumble any dry herbs before adding to sauce. Stir to combine and let sit for 1-2 hours, taste and adjust adding more salt, pepper, vinegar, or honey as needed. Shell peas and set aside.

10-20 basil leaves, finely chopped

10-20 Tulsi leaves, finely chopped

Other herbs fresh or dried (parsley, oregano, dill, or marjoram)

For the salad:

1 bunch of kale, washed

3-4 T salt

Peas, shelled

Edible flowers

Sunflower seeds

To assemble the salad, drain and pat dry kale. Toss with the sauce and sprinkle peas and sunflower seeds over the top. Garnish with small purple Tulsi flowers.

Pesto Broccoli Flatbread

For the cracker:

2 cups all-purpose flour, plus more for kneading dough
2 1/4 teaspoons baking powder
2 teaspoons sugar
1 teaspoon kosher salt
3/4 cup water
2 Tablespoons olive oil

For the pesto sauce:

1 cup packed herb leaves using a combination of basil and Tulsi
1/4 cup olive oil
1/4 cup sunflower oil
Salt and pepper
Garlic, roughly chopped
A handful of sunflower seeds
Grated Pecorino Romano or parmesan cheese (optional)

2 cups broccoli florets (or about 1 head)
2 T Sunflower oil
Lemon

In a large bowl, whisk together the flour, baking powder, sugar and salt.

Add the water and olive oil, and using a spatula, stir together the ingredients until combined.

Lightly flour your work surface then turn out the dough and knead it for 1 minute until it comes together into a smooth ball. (Do not over-knead the dough.)

Place a damp towel over the dough and let it rest for 15 minutes.

In the meantime, make the pesto sauce. Roughly chop garlic and basil. Combine all ingredients in a food processor and blend until desired consistency. Add more oil if needed to smooth out the sauce.

Cut broccoli into small bite size florets and toss with sunflower oil, salt and pepper.

When ready to bake, preheat the oven to 400°F.

Lightly flour your work surface then roll the dough into a 12-inch circle that's roughly 1/4-inch thick. Transfer the dough onto a baking sheet lined with parchment paper then top it with a layer of pesto (extra pesto can be reserved for other uses) and evenly distribute the broccoli florets on the cracker.

Bake the flatbread until the crust is golden brown and reached your desired level of crispiness, 15 to 20 minutes. Remove the Flatbread from the oven, cool, garnish with small purple Tulsi flowers a squeeze of lemon juice, more cheese, and then slice and serve.

Adapted from Senyei, Kelly. Just a Taste. 4/4/2020
<https://www.justataste.com/easy-homemade-pizza-dough-without-yeast-recipe/>