



First Week of Summer

Mother Nature has given us the most wonderful and “average” year so far and it seems like she was right on cue again with the summer solstice. We are so grateful for the ideal growing and outdoor working conditions. This warm and slightly humid weather with some storms mixed in is exactly what I was envisioning 6 months ago on the winter solstice. The long daylight hours make this the perfect time of year to reflect on our relationship with the natural world and to take a break from the daily grind to celebrate the season. I can’t think of a better way to do so than cooking a delicious local and organic meal for friends and family. I hope that being a part of the CSA helps you become closer to nature and more in tune with the cycles of life.

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Solar Fresh Produce is on Facebook! You can like our page for additional recipes, pictures, and tips on gardening and using your produce. Also, let me know if there are any topics you would like more info on in upcoming newsletters.

What’s Coming Up

As you may have noticed, the boxes have contained a lot of greens and some items that might be new to your kitchen. Now that summer is upon us, we will soon have many of the more familiar “fruiting” vegetables. Some of the items we are looking forward to in the near boxes include cauliflower, summer squash, potatoes, and more!



Box 3 Items

Beets: This root vegetable is packed with nutrients. Try it roasted or boiled and drizzled with some olive oil, nuts, and goat cheese. Remove tops for storage but don’t forget that the greens are also an edible delight!

Arugula Spinach Mix: Good as a salad mix or sautéed in an omelet

Carrots: These baby carrots are best for snacking and do not need to be peeled. Remove green tops for storage and use in a carrot green pesto.

Head Lettuce: A salad is a great way to use your veggies! We love the beautiful blush color this lettuce has taken on.

Garlic Scapes: This will make a good substitute for garlic or onion in a recipe or can stand on its own as a side dish.

Swiss Chard: See the recipe below for a crowd pleasing version of dark leafy greens.

Kale: Massage with oil and let rest in the fridge for an hour for a nutritious raw kale salad, or blend up a few leaves in your morning smoothie.

Radish: (Full Shares) This is the last of the radishes until fall!

Recipes

Swiss Chard Gratin

2 bunches Swiss chard leaves, chopped (about 8 cups packed)
 1 cup water
 1 tablespoon olive oil
 1 tablespoon unsalted butter, more for the baking dish
 1 cup milk

2 tablespoons flour
 Sea salt and freshly ground black pepper
 1/4 cup grated Comté or Parmesan cheese, divided
 1 tablespoon whole wheat bread crumbs

Preheat oven to 350°F. Place chard leaves in a saucepan with the water and cook over medium heat until leaves are just tender, 3 to 4 minutes. Drain, reserving 1/4 cup of the cooking liquid. Set chard aside. In the same saucepan, heat olive oil and butter over medium heat. When butter has melted, whisk in the flour until blended. Whisk constantly for 1 minute. Slowly whisk in the milk and reserved cooking liquid. Continue cooking and stirring until the sauce thickens, 3 to 5 minutes. Season with salt and pepper and stir in half of the grated cheese. Stir in the cooked chard and transfer to a buttered 9x9-inch baking dish. Sprinkle with remaining cheese and breadcrumbs. Bake for 20 minutes or until hot and bubbling. Serve immediately.

Moist Chocolate Beet Cake

8 ounces (240 g) beets, unpeeled, rinsed and scrubbed free of dirt
 7 ounces (200 g) bittersweet or semisweet chocolate (70% cacao solids), chopped
 1/4 cup (60 ml) hot espresso (or water)
 7 ounces (200 g) butter, at room temperature, cubed
 1 cup (135 g) flour

3 tablespoons unsweetened cocoa powder (the darkest you can find, natural or Dutch-process)
 1 1/4 teaspoon baking powder
 5 large eggs, separated, at room temperature
 pinch of salt
 1 cup (200 g) superfine sugar

Butter an 8- or 8 1/2 inch (20 cm) spring form pan and line the bottom with parchment paper. Preheat the oven to 350°F (180°C).

Boil the beets in salted water with the lid askew until they're very tender when you stick a knife in them about 45 minutes. Drain then rinse the beets with cold water. When cool enough to handle, slip off the peels, cut the beets into chunks, and grind them in a food processor until you get a coarse, yet cohesive, puree. (If you don't have a food processor, use a cheese grater.)

In a large bowl set over a pan of barely simmering water, melt the chocolate, stirring as little as possible. Once it's nearly all melted, turn off the heat (but leave the bowl over the warm water), pour in the hot espresso and stir it once. Then add the butter. Press the butter pieces into the chocolate and allow them to soften without stirring.

Sift together the flour, cocoa powder, and baking powder in a separate bowl.

Remove the bowl of chocolate from the heat and stir until the butter is melted. Let sit for a few minutes to cool, then stir the egg yolks together and briskly stir them into the melted chocolate mixture. Fold in the beets.

In a stand mixer, or by hand, whip the egg whites until stiff. Gradually fold the sugar into the whipped egg whites with a spatula, then fold them into the melted chocolate mixture, being careful not to overmix. Fold in the flour and cocoa powder.

Scrape the batter into the prepared cake pan and reduce the heat of the oven to 325°F (160°C), and bake the cake for 40 minutes, or until the sides are just set but the center is still is just a bit wobbly. Do not overbake. Let cake cool completely, then remove it from the pan.

Serving and storage: This cake tastes better the second day; spread with *crème fraîche* and sprinkle with poppy seeds shortly before serving. Or serve them alongside