



SUNSHINE IN A BOX



Issue 1 Volume 5
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IN THIS ISSUE

Welcome!

Farm Updates

It is always exciting to harvest the first produce out of the garden after a long "pre-season" that started in the greenhouse back in March. This season has gotten off to a cold, moist start that has prevented many farmers from planting however I was able to take advantage of some early planting windows. Despite this, crops have been growing slowly but are starting to catch up with some of the warm, sunny days last week. Of course it is always a battle against the weeds, especially with the precipitation, however I am trying to weed and cultivate as early and often as possible. One alarming observation is a low number of insect activity compared to normal and I can't say if this is due to weather patterns or other causes. The few bees I have noticed seem slow and disoriented, and I hope to start seeing more insects around the farm soon. Each year I continue to grow the pollinator habitats around the farm to welcome these organisms that provide invaluable ecological services from pollination to pest predation.

Note on CSA boxes: Please open carefully by sliding the creased flap out of the notched flaps. Opening incorrectly may rip box. Please bring your empty box back next week and leave at the pickup location stacked neatly. Thanks!

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Mark Your Calendar!

The Solar Fresh Field Day will be held on **Saturday July 13th** this year!

Food and Art

The theme of this year's CSA is the Art of Food, and I look forward to exploring the way art intersects with farming, cooking, and our everyday lives. This spring, I have spent a lot of time reflecting on the creative process that goes into farming and gardening. Each season is a chance to develop the garden where the elements come together as an artistic medium. The visual beauty of the garden, while subjective, is an indicator of health and "goodness" and over time one can cultivate a sense for this by observing the qualities of nature.

Recipes

Sauce Vinaigrette

Page 2-3

Week 1 Produce

A slow start to the season will give way to more bounty in the coming weeks!

Page 2



Week 1 Produce

Spring Mixed Salad Greens: This large bag of mixed greens can be used in any type of salad but don't forget about sandwiches, wraps, on a burger or even on top of pizza! The hoop house provides!

Radishes: A sure sign of spring. Remove tops when you get home about a quarter inch above the root. Store tops and roots separately for maximum shelf life. Radish tops can be used as spinach—try sauteeing with eggs, add to a miso soup as an appetizer for stir fry, or roast radish greens and roots together along with olive oil and lemon juice (I like to add capers and anchovies as well).

Bok Choi: This asian green is a favorite to grow in the hoop house in spring because it can tolerate the cool temperatures of the unheated structure before the weather warms. The stalks can be used as celery. I suggest chopping the greens and stalks separately. Stir fry the stalks first along with any other meat or vegetables, and add the greens towards the end to just wilt. This vegetable is packed with vitamins and minerals and is known to prevent colon cancer.

Edible Flowers: Once bok choy is done with its life cycle, it will produce seed (as does any plant) but before it will produce fragrant yellow flowers. These yellow flowers also help attract pollinators to the hoop house (especially hoverflies or false bees). Edible flowers provide a fanciful flourish to salads or a cold beverage like ice tea. Pluck off individual flowers for an extra elegant touch.

Freak Flag Foods Kale Pesto: Local and organic, this company strives to produce value added products that are nutritious, delicious, and good for the environment. Thanks to a friend from the Sustainable Farming Association who also works with Freak Flag Foods we are able to have this special addition to this week's CSA share! Please enjoy and consider trying some of their other wonderful products.



Recipes

The Vinaigrette

When it comes to spring greens, the best type of dressing for these multicolored, iridescent leaves is a vinaigrette. While romaine lettuce can hold up to a creamy ranch or Caesar dressing, spring greens will stay light and refreshing with a simple blend of ingredients that is more than the sum of its parts. See the classic recipe below, which can be used as a good starting point to create variations with whatever flavors you choose

Sauce Vinaigrette

1 clove garlic

Salt

About 1 Tablespoon each lemon juice and wine vinegar

½ teaspoon dry mustard

½ to 2/3 cup best-quality olive oil

Freshly ground pepper

Fresh or dried herbs, such as basil

Puree the garlic through a press into a small mortar or bowl, add ¼ teaspoon salt, and mash vigorously with a pestle or wooden spoon to make a very smooth paste. Beat in a tablespoon each of lemon juice and wine vinegar, and the dry mustard. (Strain, if you wish, into another bowl or into a screw-topped jar.) Beat in gradually (or add all at once and shake to blend) ½ cup olive oil- 5 to 6 parts of oil to one of vinegar and/or lemon juice is about right, because too tart a dressing will spoil the taste of any wine you are serving. Beat in a grind or two of pepper, a big pinch of herbs, taste carefully, and correct seasoning, beating in more oil, salt, pepper or herbs as necessary. From Julia Child's Kitch

Bok Choi with Garlic

1/2 cup chicken stock or low-sodium broth

2 teaspoons cornstarch

1 tablespoon vegetable oil

2 garlic cloves, minced

2 pounds bok choy—stems cut into 1-inch lengths, leafy tops left about 4 inches long (or baby bok choy, left whole)

Salt and freshly ground pepper

In a bowl, whisk the stock with the cornstarch. In a large skillet, heat the oil. Add the garlic and cook over high heat until fragrant, 20 seconds. Add the bok choy and stir-fry until the leaves start to wilt, 2 minutes. Add the stock and cook, stirring, until slightly thickened, 30 seconds. Remove the bok choy from the heat, season with salt and pepper and serve. Source: <https://www.foodandwine.com/recipes/bok-choy-garlic>

