In the Share

- Green Beans, 1 bag
- Eggplant, 1 globe OR 2 Japanese
- Cauliflower, 1 piece
- Salsa Basket, 1 bag
- Beets, 1 bunch
- Scallions, 1 bunch
- Summer Squash, 6 pieces
- Cucumbers, 4 pieces
- Batavian Lettuce, 1 head
- Garlic, 1 bulb
- Basil, 1 bunch

We have two new items in the share this week. One is the eggplant and the other is the salsa basket. The salsa basket includes all the ingredients you need to make fresh salsa verde. It is simple and delicious and everything you need to know about it is in the recipe on the back of this newsletter.

For most folks, the eggplant can be a little more difficult. Eggplant seems to be one of those vegetables that is either loved or hated. In our house it is loved. We will roast it with onions and garlic and summer squash and serve it over pasta, or use it as a pizza topper, or make baba ganoush. Last summer Sarah used a whole bunch of eggplant to make eggplant “meat” balls with basil and Parmesan cheese. They were so good we froze them and enjoyed them all winter with spaghetti and red sauce. I will include the recipe when next we have eggplant in the share. Meanwhile, check out CSA newsletters on our website for some yummy eggplant recipes from the past.

With this third delivery of beans, it is time to talk about our simple Szechwan bean recipe. Sarah and I will make this with either fresh or frozen beans. Sauté garlic and onions (or scallions) in

(continued on the back)

Claire’s Comments

Field Trip

Never is the term “field trip” so apt as when applied to an actual trip to a field. Every July we take our intern crew to a nearby farm. We tour the wash shed, equipment, and the field while we pepper the farmer with our questions about tools and technique and general farm management. The field trip is always the highlight of our intern class series and we always learn a lot.

This past Tuesday was our 2011 field trip. We visited Chris and Juli McGuire at Two Onion Farm in Belmont. Though they were having a bit of a hard day due to being unexpectedly short staffed, they were extremely gracious and generous with us. Jake and I were especially interested in visiting Two Onion, because normally we visit farms that are much bigger and much more mechanized then we are at Troy. Part of the point of the field trip is to expose our interns to different ways of doing things, and scale is one obvious difference. Two Onion, however has a very similar scale and level of mechanization as we do. As one of our interns said on the way home, it was still pretty impressive how a very similar farm can still be so very different.

For me, the two most outstanding differences were weed pressure and labor force. In the case of weeds, we were all struck by how clean their farm is. There were very few weeds to be found anywhere. For the last hour of our visit we wanted to thank Chris and Juli for being so generous with us, so Chris put us to work weeding a field. That got Jake and Julie and I thinking what we could do to get our own farm to that level. Taking it out of vegetables and putting it into corn for 20 years is obviously not the answer, but we have a few other ideas! We have been inspired by our glimpse of what a clean farm can be!

The other big difference was number of people working on the farm. In addition to Chris and Juli, they hire the equivalent of about 5 and a half full-time interns on our farm this year. Initially that difference seemed extreme to me. Then I calculated it out. All of our interns worked part-time, most of them just 10 hours per week. When I took it down to hours, hours, it turned out that both of our farms have about 220 to 240 hours of intern or employee labor each week. That number does not count farmers, worker shares, or volunteers; and given Two Onion’s distance from Madison, we certainly have more worker shares and volunteers. That calculation helped me to see the labor comparison a bit differently. Our focus is on a part-time internship program that is an important part of the educational mission of our farm and by necessity that means we have many more people in the field in a given week. For us, that is part of the difference between intern and employee.

Chris and Juli are thorough, organized, and skilled farmers. We learned much more from them than I can write about here including some wash shed design, soil blocks for seed starting, greenhouse system ideas, tools for small tractors, and more. Most importantly they sparked new ideas for us as we continue to improve our own systems at Troy. One of the things I love most about farming is that there are always new ways to do things.
Recipe

The salsa basket is one of the favorite share items each year. Making this salsa is easy and quick and more delicious than one would expect. Use the salsa on burritos or enchiladas, on the side with a simple egg scramble or beans and rice, and, of course, as a dip for corn chips. Keep this recipe on hand; you will be seeing several more salsa baskets in your shares before summer is over!

**Fresh Salsa Verde**

from Troy Community Farm

All ingredients are in the “salsa basket” in your share, except for the salt.

- Remove the husks from and wash the tomatillos.
- Put garlic in a food processor and chop. Then scrap down the sides of the bowl.
- Add tomatillos, cilantro, a dash of salt, and hot pepper to the garlic and chop again. [Note on the hot pepper: Be careful! Add it a little at a time so as not to go too far. Include the seeds for extra heat.]
- Remove the tomatillo mix from the processor and set aside.
- Chop the onion separately and add it to the tomatillos with a gentle stir.

Salsa ingredients will store well in the fridge for up to a week. Once the salsa is made, it is best if eaten within a few days.

Remember to visit the CSA garden at the farm to harvest your own flower bouquet!

See the 21 July 2011 Urban Roots for CSA garden details.

Many thanks to Angela Richardson for all these great photos!

**Troy Community Farm**

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