



In the Bag

Broccoli or Bok Choy, 1 bag or bunch
Scallions, 1 bunch
Spinach or Bok Choy, 1 bag or bunch
Green Garlic, 1 bunch
Pea Shoots, 1 bunch
Lettuce, 1 head
Kale, 1 bunch

Can you believe broccoli in the first share?! Every year I plant out hundreds of broccoli starts in the middle of April in the hopes of delivering some gorgeous June broccoli to all of you. And every year I get these tiny little disappointing heads, which are the result of too much cold stress on the plant. When will I learn to wait? So this week you have only a taste of broccoli. There will be more to come in later plantings that went out under milder, later spring conditions.

The scallions and green garlic look quite similar to each other, but there will be no mistaking the flatter-leaved green garlic once you get it close to your nose. Cut the garlic all the way up the stems like you would with the scallions, but use it anywhere you would use regular clove garlic. This early green garlic is a real treat for all you garlic lovers, and just a hint of what is to come when we harvest the head garlic in late July.

I love to eat the scallions and spinach together. Just sauté the scallions in a little olive oil and toss them with the spinach (stems included! the stems are the sweetest part!), feta cheese, and kalamata olives. This salad is my favorite spring meal.

Don't be worried by the pea shoots. They taste just like peas and make a delicious addition to your salad when cut in with the lettuce and maybe some chopped scallions. Like the garlic, they are another taste of what is to come.

Don't be worried by the kale either. Pick up the Joyous Kale recipe and enjoy this first, tender, spring kale!

Claire's Comments

Early Starts

I could hardly sleep this morning for thinking about getting ready for this first 2006 CSA delivery. I'm an early riser anyway, but this morning I was wide awake well before the first light, the first bird song, and even before I had any real desire to get out of bed. Early starts, premature starts even, have been the theme of this spring.

Every farmer takes pride in being the first to market with whichever new vegetable is maturing in the fields, and I am no exception. During those dreary December days, I sit at this computer making plans for how I can get earlier bok choy, broccoli, peas, kale, all those spring vegetables that will fill your shares in the coming month. I'm so anxious to feed you something more than salad in June. All those plans look so good on paper while I sit here with my heater and my tea.

Come early April I'm outside with the tiller working up the newly defrosted ground and calling on Maggie (the Farm Assistant Manger) to quit her winter job and help me get all these plants in the ground. It feels so good to trudge back home knowing that those seeds and starts are out there getting a head start on the rest of the vegetable crowd.

Now it's June and I feel foolish having to report what became of many of those early starts. The spinach looked so good and tasted so sweet during the month of May. It was ready long before many of you had even signed up for the year! The over-wintered scallions were gorgeous then too. Now they are going to seed right next to the bolting spinach. The baby bok choy I planted in mid April had it's day a few weeks ago also. I had to till it back into the ground without being able to include a single leaf in your shares. And those peas I planted to proudly on April 6th, what of them? They are still out there, but they did not germinate nearly so well as those I planted two week later.

This spring I'm having to learn not to push quite so hard. Some things are worth waiting for, better enjoyed in their own time. Next February maybe I will go ice skating instead of seeding that first planting of broccoli in the greenhouse. And next July maybe you will a full-sized broccoli head in your share!

Welcome to a new summer of fresh (and sometimes funny) vegetables! I'm done with hurrying this spring along. It's time to relax into this bounty of delicious food and enjoy all the ups and downs this season will bring. Welcome! We are getting started right on time!

Some Logistical Questions and Answers

Farm Pick-up:

Q: If I get to choose my own vegetables from the piles, how do I know what and how much to take?

A: The name and quantity of each vegetable is listed on the front of the newsletter (1 bunch, 1 bag, 3 pieces, etc.) Also, I do my best to set up the stand with vegetables displayed in the same order that they are listed in the newsletter. That arrangement will help you identify any mysterious veggies. Sometimes there will be multiple varieties of a particular vegetable to choose from, but you will still take only one of that vegetable. For instance, there may be red and green lettuce in the pile; you choose one or the other. Also, someone will always be behind the stand to help you. Just ask.

Q: What do I pack my vegetables in?

A: That is up to you. Bring a bag or a box to take your vegetables home in. But don't worry if you forget a tote on occasion. The farm will have some extra bags in the truck for you to use.

Q: What if I forget to come to the pick-up some week?

A: There is a back-up plan for folks who pick up at the farm. I set any unclaimed boxes on my front porch for the night. You can come by to get yours anytime between 7:00 PM on Thursday and 6:00 AM on Friday. At 6:00 AM on Friday I pack the leftovers into bigger boxes for Shirley (a follow CSA member) to pickup and use in the free Friday meal at St. Mark's Lutheran Church. My porch is at 1814 Sheridan Drive, about a mile from the farm.

Regent Street Market Pick-up:

Q: Do I get to choose my own vegetables?

A: Sadly, no. The bags at Regent Street will be pre-packed for you. But you can peek inside before you choose one to make sure you get the red or green lettuce that you like best.

Q: What if I forget to come to the pick-up some week?

A: The market will make sure that your vegetables are used. They may go home with an employee or volunteer or be given to the food pantry.

All Pick-ups:

Q: What if I am out of town some Thursdays?

A: Have a friend or neighbor pick up your vegetables instead. You can ask your friend to deliver the food to you, or just have her/him eat it if you will be gone for a while and won't be able to use it. If you cannot find someone to come to the pick-up, please try to let me know ahead of time and I won't harvest your share that week.

More Questions? Please ask in person or send me an e-mail. I will print the answers in the newsletter for everyone's benefit.

Troy Community Farm

Claire Strader

1814 Sheridan Drive

Madison, WI 54704

Phone: 442-6760 e-mail: farmer@troygardens.org

Upcoming Events

Farm Volunteer Days

*Fridays, 7:00 to 11:00 am
at Troy Community Farm*

The farm has an open volunteer day every Friday morning. This time is for fun jobs like transplanting (early in the season), mulching, weeding (Claire honestly loves weeding!), and some harvesting of large crops like garlic, onions, and squash (later in the year).

Everyone is welcome to join the usual crew of interns, worker shares, and youth in our Farm and Field program whenever they can. We are trying the early morning hours this year at the request of all those who suffered through the afternoon heat last year!

Savor the Summer Festival

*Saturday, 12 August, 1:00 am to 4:00 pm
at Troy Gardens*

Mark your calendars now for this annual Troy Gardens event! This year we have a Hmong and a huitlacoche cooking demonstration; workshops on dried flower arranging, uses of native plants, mosaic art in the garden, and creating birdhouses; plenty of kid's activities; and a full day of live music. This will be a great day to spend on the land with friends, family, and lots of fun!

Recipe

There was so much business to get out of the way in this first newsletter, I ran out of space for one of the most important features! So don't forget to pick up the half page supplement with recipes for Maggie and Ryah's Joyous Kale and Buttermilk Garlic Dressing. Next week the recipe will be right here on the newsletter as usual.

Send newsletter comments, suggestions, and recipe ideas to:
Liz and Marcia Campbell, Editors
mcatoncampbell@gmail.com