



In the Bag

Shell Peas, 1 bag
Broccoli and/or Cauliflower, 1 bag
Fennel, 1 bulb
Snow or Sugar Snap Peas, 1 bag
Lettuce, 1 head
Kohlrabi, 1 bulb
Choice of Herb, 1 bunch

This is your third, and officially the last, delivery of peas for the year. Pea season it so short. Everyone has **shell peas** again this week, but there were not enough **snows** and **sugar snaps** to go around, so you have a choice of one or the other. The heavy bag with the most peas is the one with the shells. Remember to take those out of the pod before you eat them. The smaller bag has either snows (longer and flatter) or sugar snaps (shorter and fatter). You can eat these two pod and all.

This is also the last of the **broccoli** and **cauliflower** you will see for a while. Our early plantings did very well, but the later ones are starting to struggle in the heat. These brassicas are cold-loving crops.

Fennel is the new and exciting item this week. It is the vegetable with the white bulb and lots of green fronds. Typically the bulb is the part that is used, but the stems and fronds are yummy also. The whole thing tastes like anise or black licorice. The stems can be eaten as a snack, the fronds can be cut into salad, and the bulb can be eaten raw or cooked. See Shirley's article on the back for two fennel ideas.

You also have your choice of **herb** this week. Our herb gardening is doing very well, so you will like have your choice of herb for many weeks to come, and can eventually rotate through them all. The basil, thyme, sage, and mint, can all be hung to dry if you cannot use them all now. But the chives, parsley, and dill are best used this week.

Claire's Comments

Learning the Ropes

We had a beautifully efficient, successful, and cheerful CSA harvest this week. You may think that they are all this way, what could be more enjoyable than harvesting gorgeous organic vegetables after all, but I can assure you that they are not.

Our Wednesday harvest crew includes 2 farm interns who work at the farm two or three days a week in exchange for farming experience and a stipend, 5 worker shares who each work four hours a week in exchange for a share, and Maggie and me. All these folks (except for me, Maggie, and two returning worker shares) are new to the farm. For the past month or two everyone has been learning just how particular Maggie and I are: Shallow crates go here, deep there. Thin towels go below the vegetables, thick on top, unless of course you are packing basil, peas, salad mix or beans. Those crops need wrap-around towels, sometimes wet, sometimes dry. These clippers are for scallions and kohlrabi, those are for herbs. And, by the way, every single vegetable has to be harvested, cleaned, and packed according to exacting and somewhat changeable (depending on weather, time of year, quality of crop, etc) guidelines. If it sounds like a lot to learn, try to teach it over and over again until all 6 interns, 8 worker shares, 15 high-school youth, and every volunteer who works on the farm this year knows what to do. It is a difficult process for all involved.

For a while there, I thought I was going crazy. As careful and clear as I thought I was being in my instructions, folks were not getting it. Some tasks needed to be started again from the beginning, many jobs needed to be corrected in the end, and there was still much work to do after the crew left. I knew that everyone wanted the harvest to go smoothly. I knew that everyone working at the farm was there because they cared about the place and the people and they wanted to learn. And I was so frustrated that we were just not speaking the same language when it came to... well it felt like everything.

After a couple of talks where we outlined our goals for the harvest morning and made it clear that it was Maggie and my responsibility to be patient and clear in our instructions, while it was the crew's responsibility to ask questions and make sure they understood the tasks, we finally got it! This week every task was done right the first time. This week I could just say "harvest 110 kohlrabi" and the crew knew exactly what to do. This week we finished in time to even do a little weeding in the CSA flower garden before the shift was over. It was so great! I was so happy!

Many thanks to all the folks who work at the farm for doing their best and trusting that one day it would all come together.

A New-Found Love of Fennel

Shirley Jonas, Troy CSA Member

This past March my partner Kate and I took a trip to Italy to celebrate our 15th anniversary. It was an astounding adventure filled with sights and history and architecture unimaginable. Equally astounding were the simple yet elegant meals that we enjoyed. I am no stranger to the kitchen and our tablemates would often ask me what it was that we were eating, be it a pesto made of tarragon or a rosemary risotto minus the piney twigs. They also quickly learned that I would gleefully eat for them their serving of arugula if they had not yet acquired a taste for it. However, one evening while dining in Assisi, we were served a most delicious vegetable that I could not for the life of me place. It looked like celery, but tasted like a root. Fortunately our friends from Australia knew it was fennel. I had never imagined that fennel could be so delicious. My favorite way, and admittedly the only way, I had really eaten it was as a salad – sliced raw with tart apples, sunflower seeds, and a light vinaigrette. What they did in Assisi was to cut the bulb into eights, steam it with garlic, and drizzle it with salt and olive oil. It was scrumptious. It is with this memory in mind that I shall ever after look forward to receiving fennel in our CSA share.

Shirley is a long-time member, the cook who uses your unclaimed shares in the free Friday meal at Saint Mark's Lutheran church, and a dear friend of mine. She served me fennel prepared in this new (to me anyway) way and I, for the first time, loved fennel. That meal inspired me to devote some extra attention to our fennel crop this year, and I have to say it paid off. You have in your share the most beautiful fennel that Troy Community Farm has ever grown.

Notes

Bags

Do you have a stack of old plastic handle bags stored under the sink or in the junk drawer in the kitchen? Clean them out and bring them to the farm! We use your old bags to pack shares for the Regent Street pick-up. We will also use the paper bags you collect from the grocery store to supply farm pick-up folks who forget to bring one themselves. Unfortunately, we cannot reuse all the small plastic bags that we pack your individual vegetables in. But you need to keep something in that junk drawer!

Towels

Do you wonder how we keep all those vegetables moist and cool during the CSA pick-up? The trick is wet towels. If you have any unwanted towels (hand or bath), bring them to us and we will put them to good use wrapped around your vegetables.

CSA Flower and Herb Garden

The CSA garden is officially open! Stop by when you pick up your share or anytime during the week (especially for the Regent Street pick-up members) and harvest a bouquet or herbs. If you don't know your way, take a map from the entrance kiosk to guide you to the farm. Please remember to keep the gate closed! Humans are welcome, but the deer are not!

Recipe

Couscous with Kohlrabi and Chermoula Dressing

From MACSAC's Asparagus to Zucchini Cookbook

1-2 teaspoon minced garlic	3 tablespoons olive oil
2 tablespoon minced cilantro	2-3 cups cooked couscous, cooled to ward temperature
2 tablespoons minced fresh parsley	2 cups peeled, diced kohlrabi
1 teaspoon paprika	1/2 cup diced radishes
1/2 teaspoon ground cumin	16 kalamata or oil cured imported black olives, chopped
salt	1/2 cup crumbled feta cheese (optional)
3 tablespoons fresh lemon juice	

Mix garlic, cilantro, parsley, paprika, cumin, and salt to taste. Stir in lemon juice and olive oil. Toss this mixture with couscous. Bring to room temperature. Gently toss with kohlrabi, radishes, and olives (if desired). Serve as is or sprinkle with feta cheese.

Troy Community Farm

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