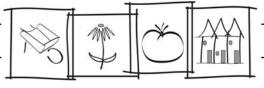
FRIENDS OF TROY GARDENS

Urban Roots

Troy Community Farm News



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In the Bag

Broccoli, 1 bundle Snow Peas, 1 bag Bok Choy, 1 head Spinach, 1 bag Garlic Scapes, 1 bunch Batavian Lettuce, 1 head Sugar Snap Peas, 1 bag

I never thought it could ever happen, but here is your third share of broccoli in three weeks. Our first planting of this crop went in the ground on April 19th. It was six beds and 1200 plants strong. We started harvesting it on June 4th and have not stopped. In fact, we will still have more broccoli to harvest from this planting next week. And by then the second planting of broccoli (the one planted on May 4th) will start coming in as well. So don't hoard the broccoli! You will likely get more next week.

Both Jake and I consider broccoli to be a "high value" CSA crop. It's not that broccoli is so expensive or especially precious. It's that most every CSA member loves it. No one complains about getting too much broccoli (though this could be the year!) or wonders what they will possibly do with it. The problem is that broccoli can be hard to grow. Often the heads don't develop to full size or they get funky before they mature. So, it can be hard to provide this staple vegetable reliably. Not this year! Right now we are rich in broccoli and perfectly delighted to share the wealth!

We are also a little richer in peas than I was expecting. I hoped we would harvest enough of the snow peas (the longer flatter ones) to give you all a half-pound. After a 7 person crew picked peas for two hours, we had enough to give you each a full pound. You should have plenty for snacking in the car on the ride home, as well as for including in salads and stir frys.

(continued on the back)

Claire's Comments

SOL Agriculture as Basic as the Sun

I finished reading Fast Food Nation this past weekend. It's another book on my bookclub's "food book" list for the year. I was all worked up when I finished the Omnivore's Dilemma, and Fast Food Nation did not calm me down. Together these books have me thinking a lot about our food system, the choices I make about food, and even the choices I make about where to shop for food. You might think that I ponder these topics regularly, given my line of work. But I don't. I grow food organically and distribute it locally. I shop at the co-op. I'm vegetarian. I guess I feel like I've done that thinking and I don't have to dwell on it.

These books have brought me back. Together they have emphasized for me the extreme importance of eating locally and supporting local business run by folks who are responsible to and actually care about our local community. I cannot reiterate here even a small number of the arguments in these books for why these things are important, you will have to read about that for yourself, but I would like to tell you about one related issue that has me a little riled up. It's "beyond organic."

More and more I hear folks comparing the virtues of local to those of organic. And more and more I hear the importance of organic falling behind that of local. I don't like it. One is not more important to me than another. I don't want the collards I can get from my neighbor farmer that are sprayed with pesticides daily to keep down the flee beetles, any more than I want organic red peppers from Israel in the dead of winter, any more than I want an organic frozen dinner with of "natural flavors" made from petroleum. I want local and organic and sustainable. I want it all.

After I read the *Omnivore's Dilemma* and heard Michael Pollen's praise for an excellent farmer who claims to be "beyond organic," I became very suspicious of the term. I loved the passion of this farmer and respected his (mostly organic) growing methods but I was appalled that he fed his chickens corn grown with atrazine (a widely used conventional herbicide) as 80% of their diet. He claimed that he could not buy organic corn locally and he didn't want to ship it from 500 miles away. For him identifying as "local" is much more important than "organic." He has serious qualms with what can be certified organic under the new federal rule (like those synthetic additives in processed food) and wants to distance himself from that in favor of local. But for me being "beyond organic" includes being organic as well. Unfortunately, such a stance is not currently part of the "beyond organic" movement.

So, I decided that we needed something new, something that made it clear organic is part of the picture as much as local and sustainable. "Organic and More?" "Organic Plus?" I couldn't find anything that sounded good and got the point across, so I put the problem to my best friend Lisa. She came up with SOL Agriculture. Sustainable, Organic, and Local Agriculture. I love it.

(continued next week)



Recipes

Vietnamese-Style Bok Choy Salad

I've been worried about loading you up with too much bok choy the last two weeks. When I said so during the harvest last week, Deb said that she thought bok choy was "such an inoffensive vegetable." She sent along this recipe in the hopes of convincing you of the same. Meanwhile, this will be your last chance to try it this year; you have the last of the bok choy in your bag!

3 tbsp fresh lime juice 1 tsp sugar

3 tbsp fish sauce 1/2 tsp sriracha, or other hot sauce, or to taste 2 tbsp rice vinegar 1 head bok choy, chopped into bite-sized pieces

Combine first five ingredients and taste, adjusting seasonings as necessary. Use to dress bok choy. Other nice additions to your salad could include: sliced radishes, grated carrots, mung bean sprouts, grilled chicken, cooked rice noodles, basil or mint leaves, chopped snow peas, thinly sliced red onion or shallots, and grilled garlic scapes. If you add a lot of these extras, you may want to double the amount of dressing.

Torta Salgada (Brazilian Quiche)

My partner made a variation of this recipe for our lunch boxes a few weeks ago. Honestly, I'm not much of an egg lover, but I could have eaten it three times a day. When I tried to duplicate it for my book club meeting last night, it was okay but not as good as Sarah's. I'm looking forward to trying it again, and next time I will add a bit more salt. The original version of this recipe (which is a bit different from the one below) comes from Extending the Table.

In a bowl, combine any of the following to make a 2 cup "salad:"

Onion or Scallions and Garlic Scapes, chopped

Tomato (fresh or canned), chopped

Fresh Parsley, Cilantro, or Oregano, chopped

Broccoli, Spinach, and/or Peas, all diced

Add and mix well:

½ t. salt

½ t. pepper

In a separate bowl mix:

3 eggs 1 t. salt

½ cup oil 1T. baking powder

2 cups flour 2 cups milk

½ cup sharp cheese, grated

Preheat oven to 350 degrees. Pour half the batter in a greased 9x9 pan. Spread salad mixture over batter. Pour remaining batter over the top. Arrange sliced olives on top as garnish. Bake 30 or 40 minutes until batter is set. Can be served hot or cold.

Tip: Sarah made hers in a pie crust and it was much nicer than the one I did without the crust.

(continued from "In the Bag")

This snow pea variety is called Sumo. I'm thinking that is because it is so huge. When I tasted how sweet it is and saw how productive it could be a number of years ago, I started saving my own seed for this variety. It's a good thing I did because it is no longer available for purchase through seed suppliers. In addition to the 6 beds of peas we have for you to eat this year, we have 2 beds just for the seed. So we will be sure to have plenty of Sumos for years to come.

The smaller bag of peas in your share has sugar snap peas. Like the snow peas, you can eat them pod and all. We only have a small amount this week, so I'm sure your family will understand if they don't actually make it all the way home. We will have more next week.

WARNING: The supplier included some off types in our snap peas this year. We try to keep them out of your bags, but you will find them when you bite into a pea and can't seem to chew through the tough pod. You have found a shell pea. Eat the sweet peas from those, but not the pods. The crew is learning better how to tell them apart, so with luck this will not be a problem next week.

I'm happy to say that this final offering of spinach is the best we have had this year. It is clean and sweet and relatively free of holes. We have included the stems because they are the sweetest part. Don't throw them out! Eat and enjoy!

The most exciting and elegant item in your share is the garlic scape bundle. Garlic scapes are the flower heads of the garlic. We cut them off in order to encourage the garlic to send more energy into the bulb. You can use them as you use green garlic, or check out this link (provided by our worker share Jen, who helped harvest the scapes) to find a recipe for garlic scape pesto: http://yesyellocello.blogspot.com/2004/06/june-scapes.html

This week Jake actually said to me "It can be tough when everything is growing so well." We laughed of course. Of all the problems we could possibly have, this one is hardly a problem at all. We would much rather worry about choking you on vegetables than starving you for them. When we harvested over 100 pounds each of snow peas and broccoli and then followed up with over 50 pounds of spinach and these huge, lovely, and delicious lettuces, we were worried about clogging your refrigerators with so much food. We solved the problem by postponing the kohlrabi and basil harvests to next week. But I'm not sure if we can postpone them any longer than that, so eat up! There is so much more to come!