



In the Share

Spinach, 1 bag
Radishes or Turnips, 1 bunch
Garlic Scapes, 1 bunch
Broccoli or Snap Peas, 1 bunch/bag
Choice of Spouts, 1 bag/box
Lettuce, 1 head
Choice of Herb, 1 bunch

There are a few new items in the share this week, but I have to say the item I am most proud of is the lettuce. I think it might be the best lettuce we have ever grown. You will have one of two very similar varieties, both known as Batavian types. Batavians are a cross between leaf and romaine types, so they have the sweet flavor of leaf lettuce combined with the crispness of romaine. They are delicious in any way you would serve lettuce – salad sandwiches, tacos, and especially the spring roll recipe on the back of the newsletter. They also tend to keep longer than other types, which is good because it might take you some time to go through these large heads!

Turnips are a new crop for Troy. I planted a couple of varieties this spring as a trial. One variety germinated well and has lush tops, but still is not sizing up any roots. The other variety germinated poorly, has small tops and has formed some beautiful roots. It's the second variety, called oasis, that will be in your share if you choose turnips over radishes. The greens are holey because the flea beetles got in when the row cover was lifted in the storms, but the roots are in good shape. Let me know what you think of them and perhaps we will grow more turnips next spring.

The garlic scapes may be new and unusual to many of you. All hard neck garlic sends up a scape (or flower) as a secondary form of reproduction – secondary to the bulb itself which is the first form.

(continued on the back)

Claire's Comments

Bright Spots and Clouds

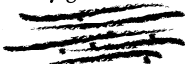
I have to finally admit that we have fallen a bit behind schedule. Though we plant and mulch and weed and harvest every day, we still have not caught up to where we should be for this time of year. The late frosts followed by the heavy rains have conspired to keep the winter squash and other warm weather crops from being planted, the edamame and sweet corn from germinating once finally planted, and most other crops from growing very much at all. This week of sunshine has been a welcome change. We have been able to do some much needed weeding and mulching and even a bit of planting. I'm just wishing this week had come a few weeks ago!

I think May and June are some of the hardest months in the farming season. So much is riding on getting things done in a timely fashion and so much needs to be done all at the same time. Every year there are bright spots and clouds, this spring has just been a little cloudier than most. When I'm trying to put myself to sleep at night, I think about all those things that need doing and make my lists of what can or should be done in what order. It doesn't take long for me to figure out that I won't get it all done the next day, so finally I try to let all the problems and chores go and focus on the bright spots of the season.

Eventually I can lull myself by thinking about how good the onions look right now – all weeded and strong and in great shape to start bulbing (as they will do in the next week when the days start getting shorter again). I remember that we did finish weeding the carrot beds that are so hard to keep clean when they are small. I think of the first basil sprig that I pulled this week and how I decided that we will harvest our first small bunches of this crop on Friday. Everyone loves to harvest basil! I remember that the peas are forming beautiful purple and white flowers, and that the buckwheat cover crop is tall and strong and doing a wonderful job of holding our soil in place through the rain, and that the lettuce at last is huge and beautiful and somewhat protected from the woodchuck under the row cover. There are plenty of bright spots for sure, and more and more of them at the end of every sunny day in the field.

By far the brightest spot of this spring has been our crew. We have six interns this year, ten worker shares, and some dedicated and reliable volunteers, all of whom, without exception, have been doing a great job. I'm so impressed with their desire to learn, their positive attitudes, and their hard work. It is truly a pleasure to have them all at the farm.

June is almost over now and if July is anything like last year it will make us wish for some more clouds soon enough! That's always the way with farming, nothing stays the same for long.



Recipe

This recipe comes from Audrey Trainor. She is both a CSA member and my across-the-street neighbor. She called last Thursday evening having just turned her CSA share into a fresh spring roll dinner. She shared both the rolls and the recipe with me. While I cannot hand out samples to demonstrate how delicious they are, I can pass on the recipe, complete with Audrey's notes and tips.

Spring Rolls

from Audrey Trainor

You can use any veggies in these. I typically add shredded carrots or turnips, but I did not have them on hand so I used the sprout mix, which tasted grand. I also had no basil for the recent batch - no big loss.

1/2 package of spring roll wrappers (rice paper, not dough)
1 package of baked tofu (Thai style is de-lish)
.75 head of lettuce
handful of mint
handful of basil
1 package of sprout mix
1 stalk green garlic (or garlic scapes)
1 green onion

1. Thinly slice tofu and set aside.
2. Chop/shred/mix all other ingredients in a large bowl.
3. Fill a baking dish (big enough to lay a wrapper in it) with an inch or two of warm water. Put a wrapper in the water (submerged completely). Let soften (less than two minutes).
4. Pick up the wrapper and gently shake off extra water or blot dry. Lay the wrapper flat on a cutting board surface with one corner facing you (in the diamond position).
5. Lay two slices of tofu on the wrapper and put veggie mix on top of tofu.
6. Fold and roll up, following the diagram on the wrapper package.
7. Arrange rolls on a plate to serve, or set them aside in fridge if serving later. They keep well over one night.

Spring Roll Dipping Sauce

1/3 cup peanut butter
2 Tbs. water or more to make into desired consistency
2 Tbs. rice vinegar
1 Tbs. soy or tamari
1 inch ginger
1 jalapeño
1 handful of cilantro

1. Put all ingredients in small blender jar.
2. Blend until smooth, adding additional water as necessary to achieve your desired consistency.

Serve the sauce in individual dipping bowls alongside the rolls.

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(continued from "In the Share")

We take off the scapes in order to encourage the plant to focus its energy on making large heads and bulbs. As a side benefit, we also get to eat the scapes! Like the green garlic you have been getting, the scapes can be chopped and used anywhere you would use garlic. We tried a new harvest method this year where we pulled the scapes out of the plant rather than snapping them off. As a result these scapes have some white bases and are much more tender than usual.

As is often the case with the first harvests of some crops, there was not quite enough of either the broccoli or the peas for everyone. So, you have to make a choice. There will be more of both these foods in the weeks ahead. The peas are sugar snaps, so you should eat them pod and all on your salad or just as a snack. The broccoli is fresh and tender enough to eat raw as well, but for me personally, I love it steamed.

Next week we will have more lettuce and/or salad mix, kale, and probably the first snow peas. The spinach is starting to yellow and bolt in the recent heat, but there may be a little spinach as well.

Woodchuck News

Iris (CSA member and co-housing resident) came by the farm this week to let us know that she spotted the woodchuck den. They have made a cozy home in a hollow almost equidistant between the farm and the community gardens. You know what they say about the three most important factors in building a home – location, location, location. Clearly the woodchucks know too. We have had several folks report this den to us now, but still we are not quite sure how to coax the clan away from their dream home to start all over again in a spot out of range of the lettuce and broccoli fields.

Meanwhile, the woodchucks are getting braver. On Wednesday I had some lettuce flats out on the picnic table by the farm shed waiting to be transplanted to the field in the afternoon. By the time we got to them, the woodchuck had climbed onto the table and had a (presumably) delicious salad bar lunch. In my opinion, that is just going too far.

Still no bites in the live traps... I guess Skippy peanut butter cannot compete with fresh lettuce.

Troy Community Farm

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