

In the Share

Shell Peas, 1 bag
Cauliflower, 1 head
Kohlrabi, 1 large & 1 small
Green or Yellow Beans, 1 bag
Cucumbers, 4 pieces
Lettuce, 1 head
Basil, 1 bunch

Not surprisingly, this week's share is a bit smaller than the last. Any share would be smaller than last week's! This one should be much easier to use up in a reasonable amount of time.

Now that I've had more than my fill of peas, the star item for me this week is the beans. I'm pretty sure I could eat them every night for weeks and not tire of them. My second favorite way to prepare them after steaming and serving with butter is to sauté them with tamari and sesame seeds. Just sauté garlic and onion in olive oil until tender. Then add a half-pound of tofu cut into 1-inch cubes and stir every so often to allow the tofu to brown on all sides. Finally add the beans. I usually break mine in half when I take off the ends so that they are more bite-sized. Pour in a bit of tamari, some sesame oil, and a bit of water, then cover the pan and let the beans steam for a couple of minutes. Be sure not to cook them too long! They should still be a bit crisp. Remove the lid and keep the pan over the heat to let any excess liquid cook off. Lastly add toasted sesame seeds and serve with rice.

A sliced cucumber topped with dilled yogurt on the side of those beans would be perfect! The cucumber crop this year is better than any I have seen at Troy. We have harvested close to 1000 cukes so far and still the vines are growing and flowering with no signs of slowing down. When we run out of drinking water on these hot, humid days, a good cucumber will almost do the trick to revive

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Claire's Comments

Stormy Weather

It has rained almost every Friday since we started CSA pickups. In the early part of the season we could find some indoor work to do while it rained, like putting labels on our spout and herb bags or shelling dry beans. But now we have no choice but to stay out and harvest. If we do not harvest on Fridays (and Mondays, Tuesdays, and Wednesdays), the food will simply rot in the field. I design the farm plan so that we will have a steady supply of food throughout the summer and that means that we harvest come rain or heat or federal holiday.

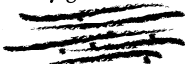
Our ability to get in the harvest was roughly tested this past Friday. After the stormiest Thursday evening CSA pickup that we have ever had – winds whipping, tents lifting off the ground, food and people getting soaked – we got to the field on Friday for more of the same. Unfortunately it was also one of the few days in the season when the pea and bean harvests overlap. It can take hours for a crew to harvest just one of these crops and we had to harvest them both along with cucumbers, summer squash, broccoli, cauliflower, lettuce, kale, our wholesale herb orders and more.

The crew started in the beans while I tried to get in as many of the odds and ends as I could in the meantime. It did not take long for the sky to darken and the thunder to start. At about 8:00 AM Mark (who is a canoe trip leader and used to noting the progress of storms) called over to me that the storm was about two miles away and that we should think of taking cover. I shouted back that he could take the crew over to the shed but that I was going to stay out and try to finish the cauliflower. It didn't take another five minutes for the lightening to get too close for comfort and I joined the crew huddled in the shed. Mark had called it perfectly.

After 15 or 20 minutes, the sky cleared enough for us to continue. But before all the beans were off the vines, the next storm rolled in. Back we all went to the shed while the rain poured down and the thunder and lightening crashed all around. This time we cleaned and packed out as much of the harvest as we could in the small, dark shed. By the time we emerged, the lightening had moved off a bit and the rain had slowed.

Our next problem was that the runoff from the storm was pooling in a low spot by the farm gate, trapping the truck behind it. Worried that the runoff lake would get bigger before it got smaller, we loaded the truck up with as much of the harvest as we had completed and prepared to get it out to solid ground. Knowing it would be difficult and dirty to get the truck out if it got stuck, I put the pedal to the metal and sped through the growing lake as fast as I could. Luckily, I made it out and down the muddy farm road without stalling. I hear the water flying up from the tires made quite a show.

With only about an hour left, rain falling, thunder and lightening still crashing in the near distance, we somehow finished most of the harvest. To their great credit, the crew emerged with smiles and good spirits after what has to have been the worst harvest morning we have ever had. Not that there was much of a clue by then of what our morning had been like. The sun came out promptly just as we were leaving. The overflowing rain gauge was the only proof of our trials.



Recipe

Inspired by the cauliflower last week, CSA member Sherry Buechner sent in this favorite family recipe. It sounds like a good way to use the last of the Troy Cauliflower for the year!

Cauliflower in Egg and Lemon Sauce

from Sherry Buechner

Here is a simple cauliflower recipe that my whole family loves! I lived in Greece for 4 years and we usually go back and visit my husband's family once a year. Their food is amazing, and I now have a new appreciation for vegetables. Greece is a veggie paradise. Vegetables never go to waste in our family and they have never tasted so good! Plus the bonus is the Mediterranean diet, which is great for you!

- 1 medium sized head of cauliflower
- ½ cup of olive oil
- 1 finely chopped onion
- salt & pepper to taste
- 2 eggs
- 2 lemons

Separate the cauliflower florets, wash them and brown them in a pot with the olive oil and onion. Then, cover with water, add salt and pepper, and cook the cauliflower until very tender for about 20 min. Remove pot from the fire.

Separately, beat 2 eggs with the juice of 2 lemons in a small dish and add a little of the hot liquid from the cauliflower. Pour the mixture into the pot and mix. Serve.

This dish keeps nicely for a few days, if you can bear to have it around that long!

Woodchuck News

The total woodchuck removal count is now up to seven. After the local dogs chased down the first two, we caught five more in our traps. How many more can there possibly be?!! Damage at the farm has definitely decreased. But it is hard to tell if that is because the woodchucks have stopped foraging or just because we don't notice their meal taking as much now that there is so much food to go around. After some advice from a trapper friend, our trapping efforts are definitely more successful than they were at the start of this problem. With continued good luck, perhaps our fall lettuce plantings will be completely safe.

(continued from "In the Share")

us. They are packed with sweet water and no doubt are benefiting from all the rain we are getting this season.

The lettuce too should be benefiting, but instead is starting to show signs of stress. In order to prevent further woodchuck damage to the lettuce crop, we covered our lettuce beds with remay back when the heads were still quite small. Remay is a row cover that lets in light and rain but keeps out bugs and woodchucks. It also holds in heat and moisture which is a real benefit to many crops in the early part of the season. Now that it is plenty hot and wet, the remay can cause problems on cool-loving crops like lettuce. The problem you may see on some of the lettuce this week is that the outer leaves will start to brown and rot, right at the base of the head. We took off most of these problem leaves at harvest, but you may have to remove another one or two that we left on to protect the heads in packing. You will also notice that the heads are getting smaller. They just don't size up as well in the heat.

The heat is also forcing the peas to their end. These shell peas will be last of the crop until next year. I know the farm crew that picks them three times a week is not sorry to see them go. I'm guessing that the pea eaters will not be overly sad either, given the bumper crop we have had! Remember to take these peas out of their shells before eating. The pods will be tough and fibrous if you bite into them.

Kohlrabi is back briefly. These will be the last of them until fall. Maybe you could try alternating peeled and sliced kohlrabi with those cucumber slices topped with dilled yogurt. Or just peel them and eat them like an apple the way Jake does.

I'm thinking this basil bunch will be enough for a decent batch of pesto: Toast a 1/3 cup of walnuts in a dry skillet, then chop them in a food processor. Process ¼ cup of Parmesan cheese separately and set both nuts and cheese aside. Remove the leaves from the basil stems and put them in the processor. Add ¼ cup of olive oil, a clove of garlic, and a pinch of salt and process to a thick paste. Mix in the nuts and cheese and serve over hot pasta or use as a sandwich spread or mix in with fried potatoes just before serving.

Next week look for fennel and beets, more cukes and likely some summer squash. Eggplant, tomatillos (for salsa), green onions, garlic, and tomatoes will not be far behind.

Troy Community Farm

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