



In the Bag

Pea Shoots, 1 bunch
Green Garlic, 1 bunch
Radishes, 1 bunch
Bok Choy, 1 small & 1 large head
Lettuce, 2 heads
Choice of Spouts, 1 bag
Choice of Herb, 1 bunch

After a long winter of broccoli, greens, and beans from the freezer, this week marks the return of fresh food from the farm! Never does salad taste as good as it does the first week in June. Tonight my partner Sarah and I will celebrate the return of the CSA season with a lettuce salad topped with sprouts and clipped pea shoots and chives. We might also toss in some toasted almonds or make croutons from some stale bread. Our dressing will be oil and vinegar. We, as you, have waited a long time for this salad! With two heads of lettuce in your share, there should be almost enough salad fixings to last you through to the next pickup.

If you are looking for something a little more substantial to accompany your salad, a stir fry with green garlic and bok choy will be a good choice this week. The green garlic is some of the best we have ever grown. You can use the white base all the way through the green leaves anywhere you would normally use garlic. Just chop up the bunch as you would chop scallions and add it in to your hot oil with some onions. Next I would add tofu (or chicken) to cook and brown. Finally the bok choy goes in. I add the chopped ribs first and toss in the tender greens close to the end so they don't over cook. My favorite stir fry sauce is simply grated ginger and chopped garlic (or green garlic) tossed with tamari (or soy sauce), olive oil, and sesame oil.

For more recipe ideas, check out our newsletters from previous years at www.troygardens.org/farm.html.

Claire's Comments

Where We've Been & Where We Are

We are entering the 8th CSA season at Troy Community Farm! Our first season was in 2002, when we started with 14 members willing to take a risk on a small start-up non-profit farm in Madison. Back then, I was producing food on only a half-acre or so and busy trying to remove the brush and stumps from the over 150 buckthorns and mulberries and honeysuckles that dotted the rest of our 5-acre farm. The brush was all cleaned up by 2003, but we didn't have a permanent deer fence or a shed or any other pieces of basic infrastructure that we needed to expand to our full capacity. So, we kept the CSA membership low at 25 even for our second year and kept working on getting everything we needed in place.

While I cannot say that we yet have *everything* we need these seven years later, we do have a fence, a tractor, a shed, a walk-in cooler, and reliable access to water for washing our vegetables. In those first years, I hauled the harvest from the farm to my home on Sheridan Drive, washed vegetables in my driveway, and then hauled them to Willy Street Coop to store on a top shelf in their produce cooler. When I think back on those very early days of working on my own with a couple of interns and volunteers and no infrastructure at all, I am amazed at how far we have come!

Perhaps even more key than the cooler, we now have an amazing farm crew. Jake Hoeksema came on as the Assistant Farm Manager in 2007 and has made himself indispensable. We will work with and train 9 interns on the farm this summer, including Gini Knight who is returning as a second year intern and working toward running her own farm one day. We have 10 worker shares who come to the farm each week to plant and weed and harvest in exchange for a CSA share. And we have a wonderful and dedicated group of students and volunteers who have already put in many hours at the farm. Eighteen Shabazz High School students come out to the farm twice a week as part of an organic and ethnic gardening class they are taking this spring. Ten UW students are working and studying at the farm as part of a new course on practical organic farming offered through the Agroecology department. And we have a remarkable number of volunteers who come to the farm each Friday to work and learn and inspire us with their enthusiasm. Our intern crew has not only been absorbing a great deal of farm information, they have also been doing a great job helping to teach and supervise this incredible group of people.

As we work on building Madison's first passive solar greenhouse, plan a trip to D.C. to talk about a possible White House Farm, and grow food for you, our 118 CSA members, we have reason to believe this will be a year like no other. Welcome to Troy Community Farm!

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, 2 heads, etc.) Also, the vegetables are displayed in the same order that they are listed in the newsletter. This 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 bag unclaimed shares and set them on my front porch for the night. You can come by to get yours anytime between 7:15 PM on Thursday and 6:00 AM on Friday. At 6:00 AM on Friday I combine the leftovers into larger bags 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.

Lydia's Porch Pick-up:

Q: Do I get to choose my own vegetables?

A: The bags on the porch will be pre-packed for you. 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: Lydia is an excellent cook and also has many friends who love vegetables. They will likely be used one way or another.

All Pick-ups:

Q: I signed up for eggs. How do I get them?

A: Eggs will be in a separate cooler or box. Just cross your name off the egg list and add your dozen to your bag. Folks who signed up for a weekly dozen will get eggs every week. Those who signed up for biweekly eggs will be assigned to an "A" week or a "B" week and will get their dozen every other week accordingly. Either way, your name will be on the list if you are scheduled to get eggs that week.

Q: What if I am out of town during the pickup?

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. Contact information is below.

Recipes

Every spring there is hot debate on the farm about the value of radishes. We find there are radish lovers and radish haters and few points of agreement to be found between the two. Alex is an intern on the farm this year and a radish lover. She offers these two simple recipes in an effort to make radish lovers of us all!

Note: The measurements and times in these recipes are approximate. Adjust as you see fit.

Quick Pickled Radish Salad

1 bunch radishes
½ tsp salt
1-2 tbsp rice wine vinegar
toasted sesame oil (optional--available at Asian and health food stores)
black sesame seeds (optional)

Remove radish tops and slice horizontally into thin coins. In a bowl, sprinkle radishes with salt and drizzle with vinegar. Add a generous dash of sesame oil. Cover and refrigerate for 30 minutes or so. Before serving, sprinkle with black sesame seeds if desired.

Tender Blanched Radishes

1 bunch radishes
extra virgin olive oil
red wine vinegar
freshly ground black pepper

Bring a pot of water to a boil. Wash radishes carefully to remove any grit from the base of the greens. Trim radish roots. Leaving the greens attached, cut radishes in half length-wise. (If they are small, leave the radishes whole.) Drop radishes into boiling water and cook just until the greens wilt and the radishes turn color, about 2-3 minutes. Remove from water, allow to cool for a few more minutes, and drizzle generously with olive oil and vinegar. Sprinkle with pepper to taste. Serve at room temperature.



Troy Community Farm

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