



In the Share

Snow Peas, 1 bag
Broccoli, 1 bunch
Sugar Snap Peas, 1 bag
Summer Squash, 3 pieces
Radish, 1 bunch
Kohlrabi, 1 bulb
Lettuce, 1 head
Spinach, 1 bag
Basil, 1 bunch

Snow peas are back today. You have a full pound in your share, which should be enough to have a snack on the way home and also to add them to stir fry and salad for the rest of the week. The wind over the past weekend did a job on our pea trellis and bent most of the once tall and lovely snow pea vines in half. Sadly, these may be the last of the snow peas for this season.

The other, (smaller, half-pound), bag of peas in your share are sugar snaps. You can tell the snaps from the snows because the snaps are shorter and fatter, with a thick pod around the pea. The snows are longer and house the peas in a thinner, flatter pod. Both can be eaten whole, without shelling and either raw or cooked. I usually get my fill of raw peas while picking them three times per week, and that is my favorite way to eat them. This past week however, I had some extra sugar snaps from market and I decided to steam them and eat them with butter. I had forgotten how very good they are just slightly cooked. You should have another bag of sugar snaps in your share next week, so you will have another chance to figure out your favorite way to eat this very popular pea.

Broccoli is also back this week, with another pound and a half bunch. I believe we harvested more broccoli this week than we have ever harvested in one week before. Broccoli likes cool

(continued on the back)

Claire's Comments

Our Bees and Beekeepers

I first learned basic beekeeping during six months in Santa Cruz working at the UCSC farm and garden in 2000. I decided to attend the UCSC program as a way to get my hands back in the soil after a couple of years away from farming. At first, I attended the class on beekeeping only because I thought I should take advantage of all the educational offerings I could while I was there. I was not especially interested in keeping bees myself. But after that one day-long class, I was hooked. It turned out I loved working with and learning about bees. When I came back to Madison and started working at Troy, I set up beehives as soon as I could. We have had two to four hives at the farm every year since 2003. Twice over those years, I have been able to offer Troy honey to CSA members, which was very exciting. And every year the bees benefit the farm with their pollination services and give me countless opportunities to learn more about these incredible insects.

This year we have two more beekeepers at Troy as well. My partner Sarah has been following the activity in the hives and learning about beekeeping for the past several years. She now organizes our weekly hive inspections, tracks hive activity in our bee log, and has taken over primary responsibility for worrying about the many things that can go wrong in the bee yard. She is also a woodworker, which turns out to be a truly valuable skill when it comes to making bee boxes and frames for honeycomb. When we went into the hives this week, we found that they are filling the honeycomb fast (yippee!), so Sarah will be back at work making boxes and such soon.

Sierra is our brand new beekeeper this year. You all know Sierra because she helps you pack your vegetables at the Thursday pickups each week (unless she happens to be away dancing at one of her many dance workshops!). Sierra wrote and was awarded a youth SARE grant this winter so that she could learn about beekeeping. She comes out weekly with Sarah to inspect the hives and keep the bees happy. Sierra named her hive Nevada and it happens to be the strongest hive in our apiary – currently 6 boxes tall!

Our three other hives are named Aba (after Sarah's three nieces – Anah, Bella, and Adi), Bertha (a solid sort of name, we thought), and Cinderella (who lost her queen early on and has been working hard to catch up ever since). Just two weeks ago a bee inspector came out to the farm and examined all our hives. With the exception of Nevada who was already going strong, he rated all the hives either average or weak. They are healthy – basically disease and parasite free – but just were not building up their populations very quickly. When we went into the hives this week, we found that Aba and Bertha were busting out of their boxes and needed more room right away! We gave it to them and now have our fingers crossed that they will fill those new boxes with honey.

If all goes well, we hope to offer you a taste of our very unique Troy honey this fall, after the honey flow and honey harvest is complete.

Recipe

This recipe comes from Audrey Trainor. She is both a CSA member and my across-the-street neighbor. She introduced me to spring rolls last spring, and it turns out I love them! Sarah made them for dinner at our house in the heat last week, and I realized how great it was to be able to make dinner without even turning on the stove. The veggies content is very flexible, so we used shredded radishes and kohlrabi instead of the sprouts and green onion. We also arranged the finished rolls on a plate alternating with fresh raw snow peas. It was very pretty and delicious! Audrey's notes and tips are below.

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.

(continued from "In the Share")

weather, much like we have had the last few days. But, through it feels like a distance memory at this point, the extreme heat of last week seems to have signaled the broccoli that it should mature now or never. After this harvest, there is not much left in the field. I believe this will be the last of the broccoli until fall.

This spinach is definitely the last until fall. It has been a tremendous spinach harvest, so I am guessing that most of you are ready to say goodbye to it for a few months. You will see that this batch is not as perfect as the spinach of the last three weeks – it has some holes and the leaves are smaller and thinner. It might be a good week to make pesto pizza topped with spinach and broccoli! (See pesto recipe below.)

Like spinach, broccoli, and peas, the lettuce is also a cool weather crop. You will see the size and beauty of the lettuce significantly declined this week. The flavor is still excellent, however. If you are sick of salad, try Audrey's spring roll recipe on the left.

The basil bunches are large and healthy. It is definitely time for pesto. The easiest pesto recipe I have come with the mini Cuisinart I purchased a couple of years ago. I was sick of making pesto in my blender and needed a better tool for making multiple batches for freezing. Both the tool and the recipe work perfectly for me: Pulse 1 ounce of Parmesan until finely ground. Add ¼ cup toasted pine nuts or walnuts and pulse 5 times. Set cheese and nuts aside. Process 1 clove garlic (or scapes or green garlic) and 1 tsp. kosher salt until garlic is ground. Scrape the garlic from the sides of the work bowl and add 1 cup (packed) fresh basil leaves and 1/3 cup extra virgin olive oil. Process until ground. Scrape the sides of the bowl. Add the reserved cheese and nuts and pulse to just blend. Pizza is my current favorite way to eat pesto. I will give you my crust recipe (good for both pizza and calzones) sometime this summer...

Though some folks do it, I'm not sure I would put summer squash on my pizza. I would prefer to have it sliced and lightly sautéed with olive oil and fresh basil. This is just the beginning of the summer squash season, however, so there will be many ways to eat this quintessential summer food.

Next week: We should have more sugar snap peas, summer squash, and kale or collards. New items will likely include shell peas and fennel, and possibly green beans, beets, or scallions.

Troy Community Farm

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