



BLOOMING GLEN FARM

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Newsletter

Issue #13

BloomingNow!

Features Fresh from the Farm

Community

Supported

Agriculture

From the field...

It was a wonderful week here at the farm, as the first distributions began. We farmers were excited to finally get to do some harvesting after the months of preparations and planting. How awesome to see strawberry stained youngsters emerging happily from the fields, and familiar and new faces joyfully weighing out their spring greens. Everyone agreed— it was a long winter and farm fresh produce is a happy sight! As you all are enjoying spring greens and roots in your kitchens, we are busy at the farm doing our best to ensure there will be a steady supply of the summer staples throughout the season. We're staking and trellising field tomatoes and peppers, planting cutting flowers, pruning the greenhouse heirloom tomatoes, cultivating and thinning the carrots and beets, and watching the weeds grow and

grow. Harvesting spring crops, tending summer staples, and sowing the fall bounty; this could be our most hectic time of the year. In an attempt to cut down on our use of non-renewable resources we are experimenting with biodegradable mulch in our sweet potato and winter squash fields. Preliminary reports from Tom and Nic indicate the cornstarch based material is a bit more susceptible to tearing, and in the hot sun, smells like burnt soy sauce. Other than that it looks just like the plastic mulch, and we'll see how it performs over the season. As I sit here on a rainy Sunday afternoon listening to the pitter patter of the remnants of Tropical Storm Barry, it's hard to believe that less than five days ago we were moving irrigation pipe in the fields around the clock.

Thanks to the rain it looks like

the next few days we will have time to catch up on weeding and trellising in the greenhouses!

I confess I am a bit of a cookbook junkie. Tom can whip up a good stir-fry full of flavor, all on instinct while I rely heavily on cookbooks for inspiration and ideas. I was excited to receive one as a gift this winter by Farmer John Peterson and Angelic Organics, a large CSA gaining fame from the award-winning documentary about the farmer's life. I will be citing it regularly for our newsletter recipes, and I highly recommend you check it out. Like "From Asparagus to Zucchini" it is broken down by major vegetables and includes cooking and storage tips, history, as well as anecdotes from the farm. Amusing and fact-filled, it's a good resource for your culinary libraries.

See you at the farm- Tricia

News and Notes:

- ♦ **Coming up in the share:** *escarole, swiss chard, kale, collard greens, broccoli raab, and hakurei turnips. Not too far off: kohlrabi and summer squash.*
- ♦ **There is a calendar posted in the distribution center with work day opportunities highlighted for the next 3 weeks. Please sign up for days and times you are available to work. We are working on posting this calendar on the website, but until then, please refer to the one at the farm. We are also looking for people who want to "adopt the children's garden" and help keep it weeded. This work can be done with your kids any time of the week that is convenient for you.**
- ♦ **We are looking for a farm member who mentioned they have a sign making business...please contact us if this is you!**
- ♦ **Email us your seasonal culinary creations and we'll add them to the website or next newsletter, or post them on the community board in the distribution center.**

Why Peat-free Potting Soil?

The farm has switched to a new source of potting soil, from a local start-up called The Organic Mechanics Soil Company (see their website <http://www.organicmechanicsoil.com/>)

The soil mix is free of the non-renewable resource, peat. Much like old growth forests, peat is harvested from virgin land. Peat takes hundreds of thousands of years to build up and should not be considered a sustainable resource. However, peat

is a common ingredient in most potting soils. Each year almost 32 million cubic yards of peat is harvested from virgin land for horticultural use. Imagine 10 football fields covered in a pile of peat 5 stories tall! Harvesting peat destroys one-of-a-kind ecosystems for both flora and fauna, and is particularly damaging to insect and migratory songbird populations. England has run out of peat for horticultural use; their entire industry is going peat-free by 2010. Ireland will stop

harvesting peat by 2020. The soil mix from The Organic Mechanics contains local compost, worm castings and coir, a peat substitute. Coir is made from the waste of coconut fibre production. Left to rot down, coir ends up as a crumbly substance which improves porosity and moisture retention in a very similar manner to peat. We are excited to support a business that embraces environmental sustainability as its core value.

Spring Turnips with Greens and Raisins

If you are used to thinking of turnips as a cooking vegetable you are in for a delightful discovery. Juicy, crisp and flavorful, our spring turnips can be eaten raw like a radish. They are also delicious in simple recipes that highlight their delicious taste and texture. Our favorite use—thinly sliced in stir-fries.

2 T butter, divided
2 tsp olive oil
1 medium yellow onion, diced
1 bunch spring turnips and greens
about 1/2 C raisins
salt
12 ounces orzo or bow tie pasta, cooked and cooled

Heat 1 T of the butter and all the oil in a large skillet over med. Heat. Add onions and cook, stirring often, until they begin to soften, about 5 min. Chop roots into 1-inch pieces, chop leaves. Add turnips after onions soften. Sprinkle with salt, stir and cover. Cook until turnips can be easily pierced with knife, about 8 min. Uncover, turn the heat up to med. high, and cook, stirring until turnips turn light brown at edges. Add the chopped greens and raisins, cook until the greens are wilted and tender, 3-4 min. Add remaining 1 T butter and salt to taste. Eat this as a side dish or toss it with cooked pasta for a main dish. Makes 3-4 servings.

From *Asparagus to Zucchini*

Creamy Choi Soup

Since the leaf texture of Choi (also spelled Choy) differs from the stems, it is practically two vegetables in one. The leaves can be cooked and eaten like spinach, while the crisp stems—sweet and mild in flavor—can be used like celery or asparagus.

1 T peanut oil
1/2 C chopped scallions
3 cloves garlic, minced (about 1 1/2 tsp)
2 tsp coarsely chopped fresh ginger
1 pound choy, chopped
1 large potato, peeled, diced
3 C vegetable stock or water
3/4 tsp salt
1/4 tsp fresh grd blk pepper
hot pepper flakes
1 tsp toasted sesame oil
2 T sour cream

1. Heat the peanut oil in a medium pot over medium-high heat. Set aside a couple tablespoons of scallions for garnish. Add the remaining scallions, garlic and ginger to the pot. Cook, stirring, until fragrant, about 1 min.
2. Add the choy and potato. Pour in the stock or water and add the salt, pepper, and hot pepper flakes to taste. Increase the heat and bring to a boil; cover, reduce heat and simmer until the potato is tender, about 20 min. Remove the pot from the heat, stir in the toasted sesame oil.
3. Transfer the soup to a food processor or a blender and puree. Ladle soup into individual bowls. Garnish with a dollop of sour cream and some chopped scallions. Serve immediately.

Sauteed Radishes with Radish Greens or Arugula

Radish greens and arugula both have a peppery bitterness that mellows slightly when they are cooked.

Serves 4
1/4 C butter
1 pound radishes quartered
4 C radish greens or arugula
2 T freshly squeezed lemon juice
Salt
Fresh ground black pepper

1. Melt the butter in a large skillet over medium heat. Add the radishes; cook, stirring constantly, until tender but still crisp, about 5

min. depending on the size. Transfer to a bowl to cool. Return the skillet to the stove.

2. Put the greens or arugula in the skillet with the wash water still clinging to the leaves. Cook over medium heat, stirring constantly, just until wilting, 2 to 3 minutes.
3. Turn off the heat. Add the lemon juice and radishes to the skillet; stir until well combined. Season with salt and pepper to taste. Serve immediately.

Recipes from *Farmer John's Cookbook*

Strawberry Viniagrette

about 1/4 cup of red wine vinegar
about 1/8+ cup of extra virgin olive oil
about a Tbsp and a half of spicy mustard
about a Tbsp of honey
cracked black pepper
4-5 strawberries

Blend in blender, adjust seasonings to taste, pour over farm fresh salad greens. Enjoy!

-From farm member Steffi Eger

Wilted Asian Greens

1/4 cup rice vinegar (not seasoned)
3 tablespoons soy sauce
2 1/2 teaspoons sugar
1 1/2 teaspoons finely grated peeled fresh ginger
1 1/2 teaspoons Asian sesame oil
Braising mix, arugula

Heat vinegar, soy sauce, sugar, ginger, and sesame oil in a small saucepan over moderately low heat, stirring, until sugar is dissolved (do not let boil). Pour hot dressing over greens in a large bowl and toss well. Serve immediately.

Forces in Food

“If one needs to stimulate one’s thinking then one should use especially the salty stimulant of the radish for instance. If someone is not very active in the head it is good for him to add some radish to his food which will activate his thoughts a little. So you see the strange fact emerges: One can say radishes stimulate thinking. And one does not even need to be very active oneself, the thoughts simply come when one eats radishes—such strong thoughts that they can even generate powerful dreams.”
 -Rudolph Steiner, *Nutrition and Stimulants*