



Where The Land, Food, and People Come Together!

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Field Walk....

WELCOME to our third season at Three Rivers CommunityFarm. If you are a returning member, then Welcome Back!!and thanks for your continued support. If you are a new member, well, we are glad you found us and we can't wait to introduce you to Elsah, the CSA experience, and our little piece of heaven.

We have been busy at the farm since mid-February when the first cabbage, kale, onions, and swiss chard plants were seeded. We quickly filled parts of the Principia greenhouse and began using ours in early March. When we weren't seeding in the greenhouse, we were tilling the soil, applying a calcium and micronutrient blend mixed with other organic fertilizers, preparing the beds and then we began planting in mid-March. Ever since then, it has been a steady drum beat of seeding, planting, weeding and now harvesting!! Add in some much needed fence repairs, building a pig shelter and new pig feeder, cleaning out the chicken coop and mowing and seeding the back pasture into a clover cover crop and you have our spring summarized!

Of course, we wouldn't have been able to do a quarter of that workload without many hands--sixteen of them to be exact. We were fortunate this year to hire two exceptional interns: Leslie Touzeau and Liberty Hunter who both worked at an urban farm in Kansas City last year. They have added to our farm positive, hard-working energy, inquisitiveness, calmness, many laughs, and Sancha (Liberty's dog who you will see running around the premises). On Tuesday and Thursday afternoons we become the classroom for four Principia students: Jen, Molly, Emma, and Laura. Instead of sitting through another lecture, they participate in some hands-on learning literally; they've helped us seed in the greenhouse, plant, weed, drive tractor and harvest. We've even squeezed in visits to two farms to expose them to other beautiful, productive farms in our area. Liberty and Leslie spend good chunks of the day talking and dreaming about starting their own farm in Missouri next year and we hope our Principia interns leave with enough beginning knowledge to work on other organic farms or start their own gardens someday. When you see them, make sure to say THANKS for all their hard work!!

Overall the season is shaping up to be a fine one. The weather has been a little extreme at times: mid-80's and then mid-60's; no rain for a much of April, and then nearly three inches in just this last week. We've had glorious triumphs production-wise and some mysteries as well. All our greens have never been ready this early or looked so lush; we've had excellent germination of early carrots and beets; all the potatoes have popped; and the cabbage is starting to head up nicely. We are keeping our eyes peeled for any early blight in our tomatoes (all this rain right now doesn't help, so we have a copper spray on stand by); however, our first planting of cucumbers died overnight in the field--probably a fungal disease, but a bit of a mystery. Farmings like poker--you just gotta play the hand your dealt the best you can and be thankful that there's a couple of rounds to get it right.

Enjoy the harvest, Amy, Segue, Diego, Leslie, & Liberty

Mark Your Calendars

***Live Springs Farm Pork Sale** Tuesday, May25th and Friday, May 28th from 2-7PM at the farm. Just in time for your Memorial Day grilling--pasture-raised pork from our friends Bobbi & Alex in Carrolton, IL.

***Summer Potluck and Barn Dance** July 31st starting at 5:30PM. Come to the farm to celebrate the summer harvest and stay for a contra dance at Farley Music Hall in Elsah.

***End-of-the-Year Harvest Dinner** Sunday, Nov. 14 14th.

A lot of plants (almost 45,000), planting (over 5 acres) and weeding (hours and hours) has led up to this first harvest!!



Early Season Vegetables

Kale & Swiss Chard: both these greens are high in vitamins, iron, and calcium, and are incredibly easy to use. Swiss chard can be substituted for spinach in any recipe (we especially like to use it in omelettes!). Kale takes a little longer to cook, but still can be easily sauteed with a little olive oil, garlic, onion, a splash of chicken or vegetable stock and a little soy sauce at the end will add a lot of flavor. Both greens can be washed and stored in plastic bags in your refrigerator.

Lettuce: Lettuces are at their tastiest in the spring. Expect to see many types of romaine, red and green leaf, and speckled.

Salad Mix: Our salad mix is comprised of many different baby lettuces and asian greens, such as tatsoi, arugula, and mustards. We wash and spin dry the salad mix once to keep it cool and fresh; ***however, to have it last a week, once home give it a good wash again and spin very dry in your salad spinner.*** Then store in a plastic bag in the crisper.

Bok Choy: Bok choy is a type of asian cabbage with upright heads of dark green leaves and large white stems. We harvest both full size heads and baby bok choy. ***Both leaves and stems can be cooked and eaten***—it's two vegetables in one!!

Spinach: A bumper crop of spinach is expected this spring! Spinach is a versatile vegetable, easily sauteed and added to pastas, eggs, soups, and stir-frys.

Radishes & Turnips: We grow a variety of radishes: french breakfast, easter egg, and cheriette. Add them to any salad or use as an additional condiment to hamburgers, tuna or chicken salad sandwiches. ***Our turnips are ready now*** and are of the japanese variety (sometimes called a white radish). They are typically the size of golf balls, milky white, and the sweetest turnip you'll ever eat. ***Both the greens and turnips can be sauteed in olive oil or butter and seasoned with salt and pepper.***

Stawberries & Peas: The strawberries will be a meager crop this year due to old plants (however, we have 1500 feet of new strawberries planted for next season!). Quantities will be limited We will have decent amounts of both shelling peas and snow peas. They should be ready for picking the last week of May. The sugar snap peas germinated poorly (better luck next year).

Monday: Traditional Caesar Salad

*add some grilled chicken, a loaf of crusty bread and your favorite cheese--dinner served!

For the Salad Dressing:

1 egg yolk
1 garlic clove
1 anchovy (optional)
1/2 tsp Worcestershire sauce
1/2 tsp dijon mustard
1 T lemon juice
1/2 cup olive oil
salt and pepper to taste
2 heads of romaine
grated parmesan cheese and croutons
Combine all ingredients except the oil in a blender. With the blender running, hold the lid slightly ajar and add the oil in a very slow, steady stream. Season with salt and pepper. Toss over washed and chopped romaine. Garnish with parmesan and croutons. Serves 4.

Wednesday: Fusilli Pasta with Spinach

1/2-3/4 lb. spinach (from Fine Cooking Fresh, page 90)
2 T olive oil
1 small onion
salt and pepper to taste
1 cup ricotta cheese
1 cup half-and-half or light cream
pinch nutmeg (optional)
1 T unsalted butter
1 lb. dried fusilli (or penne rigate)
1/2 cup grated Parmigiano-Reggiano
In a large pan heat the olive oil. Add the onions, cooking until soft. Add the washed, chopped spinach and saute until wilted (add a little water to steam). Drop in the butter and season with salt and pepper. In a small bowl, combine ricotta, cream, nutmeg, and stir until smooth. Stir the ricotta mixture into the spinach and simmer for 5 minutes. Meanwhile cook the pasta until al dente. Reserve 1/2 cup of the pasta cooking water and add it along with spinach mixture to pasta. Toss thoroughly with parmigiano and serve.

Friday: Baby Turnips and Greens

1 bunch of turnips
2 T olive oil
2 T butter
salt and pepper to taste

Chop leaves and baby turnips into medium size strips and chunks. Wash and shake dry. Heat oil in skillet. Add the turnips and leaves and saute for 8-10 minutes. Add a little water to the skillet to help steam the turnips. Cook until just soft (not mushy). Then toss with butter, salt and pepper. Serve as a delicious side dish to your protein of choice.

Tuesday: Stir-Fried Bok Choy with Mushrooms and Cashews

1/4 cup chopped cashews (from Farmer John's Cookbook, page 77)
8 oz. dry rice noodles (or you can serve over basmati or brown rice)
6 T peanut oil or mild-flavored vegetable oil
2 bok choy, stems and leaves chopped
8 shiitake mushrooms sliced
3 scallions chopped (or 1 small onion can be substituted)
1/4 cup water
2 T rice vinegar
2 T soy sauce or tamari
1 tsp toasted sesame oil
1 T chopped fresh cilantro leaves (optional garnish)
Toast the cashews in a dry skillet over high heat until they begin to brown. Transfer the nuts to a dish to cool. Cook the rice noodles according to the package directions. Meanwhile, heat a wok or skillet over high heat for 2 minutes. Add 3 T of oil and allow to heat for 30 seconds. Add the bok choy and stir fry for 2 minutes. Then add the mushrooms, scallions and water. Cook for 8-12 minutes. In a small bowl, whisk the remaining 3 T of oil, rice vinegar, soy sauce, and toasted sesame oil. Add a little sugar if desired. Pour over vegetables and then add noodles to wok. Toss and serve.

Thursday: Kale and White Bean Stew

2 cans of white beans or cannellini (or 1 lb soaked overnight and cooked)
2 T olive oil
4 cloves of garlic
1 bay leaf
1 large onion
2 T sage
1 tsp cumin
pinch of dried red pepper flakes
3 potatoes, cut into 2 inch cubes
3 cups of vegetable stock or water (or more as needed)
1 lb. kale (about 10 leaves), chopped coarsley (chard would work as well)
salt and pepper to taste
Heat 2 T of olive oil in a deep baking dish or dutch oven. Add the onion; saute until translucent, about 5 minutes. Stir in the sliced garlic, sage, cumin, red pepper flakes; saute for 1 minute more. Add the potatoes, stir to combine. Add the stock or water (if it does not cover the potatoes, add a little more to cover). Bring to a simmer. Add the kale; cook until the potatoes and kale are tender, about 20 minutes. Season with salt and pepper. Stir in the beans and simmer until heated through. Add a nice salad, grilled cheese sandwiches and you've