



Where The Land, Food, and People Come Together!

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Distribution Week #1

## Field Walk...

It's all coming back to me now...seed 50,000 plants in the greenhouse; spread lime; till the soil; plant 40 rows of potatoes; seed 10 beds of spinach; plant and seed about 55 other vegetables spread out over 6 acres; weed, weed, weed them all; and now harvest, harvest, harvest. And, oh yeah, deal with **the** rainiest spring ever recorded in St. Louis history (almost 24 inches so far)! May 7, May 8, May 9, May 10, May 11, May 13, and May 15--RAIN! RAIN! RAIN! Sound the alarm, bring out the sump pumps, the hair dryers, the heaters. What happened to spring in St. Louis? This is spring in Portland, OR, or the rainy season in Guatemala, or the monsoon season in India.

Even though the growing conditions so far have been challenging to say the least, it is difficult to complain too badly: the trees are happy; the groundwater and ponds are full; the earthworms have resurfaced. And the farm has hung in there through it all. The most nerve-wracking thing so far has been observing daily how slowly the plants have grown with soil temperatures being about 8 degrees cooler than normal. They have struggled to get oxygen and nutrients in the soupy medium, look a little yellow, and have succumbed to insect pressure more than usual. And the May 10th storms, especially the wind, damaged about half of our tomatoes and washed away an entire planting of cucumbers. But if that's all--being a week or two behind schedule and losing a few plants here and there (all of which, we have been feverishly replanting)--in the grand scheme of things, we consider ourselves lucky. No flooding, no hail, no tornadoes, and no earthquake damage (in fact, these dog-tired farmers slept right through it).

So, with the bad news out of the way, here's the good--welcome to new and returning farm members. We've titled this newsletter "Field Walk" because we would like to invite you to take a walk with us around the fields. This newsletter will give you a glimpse of what our days are like, what challenges and triumphs we have faced, whether it has rained too much or not enough, and whether Segue and I are still talking to each other after working seven days a week, 12 hours a day TOGETHER!!

Welcome back to the first lettuce of the season; the first crunchy radishes; and to the vibrant green of sauteed bok choy! This first week may not be the best-looking or the biggest, but it is the first! Smile broadly as you take that first salad bite--fresh vegetables are back and salad is just the beginning of much, much more to come! We hope you enjoy the harvest,

Amy & Segue

## What's In Your Share:

radishes, red lettuce, salad mix, and...

**Bok Choy:** sometimes referred to as "Chinese cabbage," but the literal Chinese translation is *white vegetable with a heart*. Ranges in size from baby (nice and tender) to a full-size head. Best when sauted, steamed or stir-fried. *See recipe and picture on back.*  
and/or (depending on availability)

**Broccoli Raab:** similar to mustard greens, only with a tiny broccoli bud sprouting from the top; leafy, rough, and bitter! Too harsh and fibrous to serve raw, it is best cooked with bland foods--potatoes and pasta--to add zest. *See recipe and picture below.*

spinach and baby spring turnips will be ready next week...

## What's For Dinner Pasta with Broccoli Raab

from "Vegetables from Amaranth to Zucchini"

1 bunch of broccoli raab  
1/2 lb of your favorite pasta  
*spinach pasta is nice!*  
12 oil-cured black olives (optional)  
1-3 garlic cloves  
2 T olive oil  
1/4 tsp chilli flakes  
salt and pepper  
lemon wedges



Set a large pot of water to boil. Cut a slice from broccoli raab base and taste to determine toughness. If fairly tender just slightly trim stalks; if tough, trim more. Drop broccoli raab into boiling water and add a little salt. Cook until tender--about 3-5 minutes. With tongs or strainer drain. Add pasta to the boiling water in which the broccoli raab cooked. While pasta cooks, slice or chop broccoli raab. Pit and slice olives, if you choose. Mince garlic. Add olives to pasta during the last few minutes of cooking. When pasta is al dente, scoop out and reserve 1/2 cup of water. Drain pasta. Add 1 T of oil and toss. Combine remaining 1 T oil, garlic and chilli flakes in the pasta pot over low heat. Cook until garlic softens. Add greens and half the reserved pasta water. Raise heat and simmer, partly covered, until greens absorb flavors and soften, about 3 minutes. Add pasta and remaining water. Boil gently, stirring often, until most liquid evaporates--just a few minutes. Season. Serve with

## A Little History...

**Broccoli Raab was introduced to cultivation in the early 1930's by the Italian D'Arrigo brothers who "found the plant growing all over California fields and remembered it from Italy. They began a breeding program...and ultimately developed varieties with juicy stalks, many buds, and small leaves--a combination that appealed to Americans more than the Italian type, which is more like its turnip-top kin"--from Elizabeth Schneider's Vegetables from Amaranth to Zucchini, 2001.**

## What's For Dinner!! Bok Choy, Broccoli Raab & Shiitake Mushrooms

*from Mollie Katzen's "The Vegetable Dishes I Can't Live Without"*

2 T canola oil or peanut oil  
1 medium sized garlic bulb  
1 small head of bok choy (up to a pound)  
small bunch of broccoli raab (about 1/2 lb)  
1 1/2 cups chopped onion  
10 medium-sized shiitake mushrooms  
1/4 tsp salt (or to taste)  
1 tsp minced or crushed garlic  
freshly ground black pepper  
Optional Toppings:  
roasted whole cashews  
dark sesame oil  
chili oil

Roast garlic at 375 for 30-40 minutes, or until the bulb feels soft when squeezed. Squeeze the pulp from the skins, when cooled and set aside. While the garlic roasts, prepare the bok choy and broccoli raab. Coarsely chop the leaves and stems of both into 1 inch pieces. Place a deep skillet over medium heat. Add oil and on high, add the onion and shiitakes, and cook, stirring often, for about 2 minutes. Add the vegetables, 1 1/2 T water, a sprinkling of salt and cover. Turn the heat down and cook for 2 more minutes. Add both the fresh and roasted garlic, tossing gently. Cook and stir just a minute longer. Season with pepper and serve with optional toppings.



The May 10th storm left the farm a mess! The first cucumber planting was washed down the Mississippi :(



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## Making the Transition to Local Eating

Whatever your reason for choosing to eat locally, it will mean committing to change. In the beginning you may find yourself feeling clueless, overwhelmed, or deprived. You may get your share this month and hope for cucumbers and tomatoes, only to be faced with bok choy and kohlrabi. You may be wondering what in the world you are supposed to do with them. First of all, remember not to let a vegetable intimidate you--it won't talk back or bite. In the beginning, take a simple approach to using vegetables. Select several key internet sites or cookbooks and limit your searches to those. Keep in mind that a recipe is simply a suggested road map for a dish. It can give you a starting idea and a suggested end point, but the journey is yours. Don't be afraid to alter recipes dependent on what ingredients you have available. Also, look to other cultures for some interesting uses for the unfamiliar vegetables. Beyond our newsletter, below are some resources for information on vegetables, recipes, and cooking methods to help you get started.

### Cookbooks:

"From Asparagus to Zucchini"--available at [www.mac-sac.org](http://www.mac-sac.org)

"The Real Dirt on Vegetables"--available at [www.angelicorganics.com](http://www.angelicorganics.com)

"Simply in Season Children's Cookbook"--available at [www.mcc.org](http://www.mcc.org)

### Websites:

[www.seasonalchef.com](http://www.seasonalchef.com)

[www.foodroutes.org](http://www.foodroutes.org) (has online video

[www.worldcommunitycookbook.org](http://www.worldcommunitycookbook.org) cooking demos by chefs)

[http://groups.yahoo.com/group/3Rivers\\_CSA](http://groups.yahoo.com/group/3Rivers_CSA)-- (a Yahoo group started by

Christy Wells of St. Louis that includes recipes, stores, and discussion)!

## Volunteer Opportunities & Farm To Do List:

We love volunteers and our harvest mornings are a great time to experience what vegetable farming is all about. Please wear appropriate clothing, bring water, and gloves if you use them. Kids are absolutely welcome!! We harvest:

**Tuesday: 8-Noon**

Know how your food is being grown and the farmers growing it!

**Wednesday: 8-Noon**

**Friday: 8-Noon**

## Farm To Do List:

Seed 25 beds of winter squash, 4 beds of summer squash, 2 beds of carrots; plant lettuce, basil and sweet potatoes; weed everything!! put up **pig fence (they arrive Wednesday, May 21st in the afternoon)** and order balloons, cake and plenty of beets to celebrate their arrival; have our own American Idol finale between the rooster and the pigs; hoe the radicchio; seed cucumbers, melons in the greenhouse; sleep!