



Harmony Valley Farm

An update for our Community Supported Agriculture Members - Since 1993

June 19-20, 2015

Strawberry Day 2015!

By Captain Jack-The Dog

Hello Everyone! I'm so excited for our Strawberry Day party this coming Sunday, June 21! I wanted to make sure I reminded everyone about the party in case you haven't had a chance to read any of the invitations we sent previously. We're going to have a great time sharing together in a potluck lunch, followed by wagon tours through our fields and lots of strawberry picking. Of course, I can't forget to tell you we'll also have strawberry ice cream! We have a lot of exciting things happening in our fields right now and there will be plenty to see and pick. Here's a little sneak preview of some of the things we're excited to show you on the tour.

We'll start with the obvious.... strawberries! My dad, Farmer Richard, says this is one of the best fields of strawberries he's ever seen....and he's seen a lot! We spent a lot of time and effort making sure the field was mulched really well last fall. Dad says our investment has paid off this year. Despite the rains we've had over the past week, the field still looks good and the berries are clean. The plants have really been producing gorgeous, sweet, delicious berries. My dad and some of his crew leaders will be in the field on Sunday to help you find the best berries. Don't forget to walk in between the rows with your ballet shoes on. We want to keep the plants nice and healthy so we can continue to pick berries this year and so the field looks nice again for another year. If you aren't sure where to walk, just ask my dad. He'll show you the best way to tread lightly in the fields.

Along the tour route, you'll see quite a few other vegetable crops as well. We just started picking zucchini last Friday. The plants look really nice and they are loaded with blossoms! Right next to the zucchini you can check out the progress of the cucumbers, watermelons and melons. If you look closely you might find a tiny little cucumber! To get to the zucchini field, we'll have to drive by the onions. Man, they look good! I think it's going to be a good onion year....at least that's my perspective as a dog. Just another week or so of scallions and I think the green top Cipollini onions will be ready to harvest. These are some of my mom's (Andrea) favorite onions. As we're leaving that farm, you can take a look at the celery root field. It looks pretty good!

We'll make another stop at a location we call "Dorothy's Bench." Dorothy is our landlord and she has a really nice farm.

This Week's Box

GARLIC SCAPE: See this week's vegetable feature for more information.

RED OR GREEN SCALLIONS: Don't let any part of these onions go to waste! make sure you use the base of the onion as well as their green tops. They are excellent when gently sautéed with sugar snap peas.

SALAD MIX: Nature's fast food! Just toss with a flavorful oil & vinegar and you're good to go.

RED LEAF LETTUCE: Use these gorgeous leaves to top off a burger.

BABY BOK CHOI: Slice thinly and toss with thinly sliced scallions and garlic scapes. Toss with a sesame-ginger dressing and top with toasted almonds for a quick, easy salad.

KOHLRABI: See last week's newsletter for more information about using kohlrabi. It's sweet, tender, delicious and good eaten raw or cooked.

STRAWBERRIES: Whew! The field is producing this week....just in time for Strawberry Day! Captain Jack, Richard and Andrea hope you're planning to join us for the party!

BROCCOLI: Keep it simple--Lightly steam the broccoli and drizzle with olive oil, salt & pepper.

SUGAR SNAP PEAS: This is a variety of peas that has an edible pod. Simply snap off the stem end and peel back the string that runs along the seam of the pea pod on top. Pop the pea pod in your mouth and enjoy these sweet treats.

ZUCCHINI: Enjoy the first zucchini of the season by slicing them lengthwise, brushing with olive oil, salt & pepper and grilling them. You can use the grilled zucchini as a pizza topping, layered on sandwiches, or just eat it as a side to roasted or grilled meats.

This year we planted our early broccoli, cauliflower, kohlrabi and sweet heart cabbages on her farm. They look really nice and we're excited to show you these beautiful fields. We also decided to plant our tomatoes on her farm this year. The first planting has already been staked and tied for the first time. Wait until you see the tomatillo plants.....their stems are huge!

Before we leave Dorothy's you'll want to check out the sugar snap peas. I have trouble picking them, but I can show you where they are and tell you how to decide whether they're ready to pick or not. You want to look for the big fat ones...they're the sweet ones. Don't eat too many peas though...we have to save room for strawberries!

The strawberries are so delicious this year! I've been eating them for my snack almost every day! You are welcome to pick and eat in the field. You might get a little dirty, so don't wear your nicest shirt. If you want to take some home to make jam or strawberry pies, make sure you bring some containers. Kelly will have a scale by the packing shed where we're going to load up the wagons for the tour. Make sure you talk to Kelly before you

get on the wagon so she can weigh your empty container. Oh, I almost forgot... we're having a contest! While you're picking strawberries, keep your eye out for large berries. We are offering a prize to the kid and adult who find the biggest strawberry (by weight). The prize will be strawberry ice cream that you can take home! So let's talk about this ice cream. Most members probably know by now that I really like strawberry ice cream. Our friends at Castle Rock Organic Dairy made the ice cream for our party again this year. They use their delicious creamy milk and strawberries from our farm that we froze last year. They always alter their ice cream recipe a little bit for us so there is at least twice as much strawberry in it! Last year there was a member who said she didn't like strawberry ice cream, but she tried a little bit anyway. Surprise—she loved it!

It's time for me to get back to work. I need to go check on the harvest crews with my Dad and then it will be time for my afternoon nap. I hope you will consider coming to our farm on Sunday. I'm really looking forward to a fun day!

Vegetable Feature: Garlic Scapes

by Andrea Yoder

Back in the early 90's garlic scapes were not a vegetable you would've seen featured on any menu or in one of our newsletters. In fact, we used to cut them off the plant and throw them on the ground! Garlic scapes are a curly shoot that forms on a hardneck garlic plant and grows up from the center of the plant in June. All of our varieties of garlic are hardneck garlic. This type of garlic produces scapes as part of nature's plan for the plant to propagate itself. The scape extends from the middle of the plant and forms a small bulb on its end. If left to choose its own destiny, that bulb would eventually tip over and plant itself in the soil. We want the garlic plant to focus its energy into producing a nice bulb of garlic, so we remove the scape from the plant.

We were the first farm in the Midwest to start saving the scapes and actually encouraging people to eat them. In the early 90's there was a woman from Korea who asked us to save the garlic scapes for her so she could make pickles. We thought this was odd (remember we used to throw them on the ground), but saved some for her anyway. She shared a jar of pickled scapes with us and we realized how good they are for eating! We stopped throwing them away and started eating them!

Nearly the entire scape is edible. They are best when harvested young and tender. I recommend trimming off the skinny end near the little bulb and sometimes you'll need to trim the other end a bit as well. The entire scape is edible and doesn't need to be peeled....Easy! Scapes have a bright, mild garlic flavor. They can be used in any recipe that calls for garlic cloves, just chop them up and add them as you would clove garlic. You can turn them into a simple pickle, or you can do a whole host of things with them including tossing them on a grill and then using them as a topping for a pizza. They are a great addition to eggs, are tasty when mixed with butter to use as a spread, or toss them into a stir-fry.

They'll keep in the refrigerator for about 2 weeks. You could also take advantage of their unique & dramatic appearance and use them as a decorative item on your table for a few days before you decide to use them!

Pickled Garlic Scapes

Recipe borrowed from the blog *Foodie with Family* (www.foodiewithfamily.com).

Yield: 1 pint

1 bunch garlic scapes (washed and trimmed)

$\frac{3}{4}$ cup apple cider vinegar

$\frac{3}{4}$ cups water

1 Tablespoon kosher salt

1 Tablespoon raw sugar (can substitute granulated white sugar if necessary)

$\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon black peppercorns

$\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon mustard seed (not ground mustard)

$\frac{1}{4}$ teaspoon crushed red pepper flakes (can omit if you're sensitive to heat)

$\frac{1}{4}$ teaspoon coriander seeds (not ground coriander)



1. Coil each garlic scape and insert into a sterilized pint mason or ball jar. When you have filled the jar to within $\frac{1}{4}$ -inch of the top of the jar, coil or break any extra scapes and stuff them down into the center of the jar. When the jar is full of scapes, add the spices to the jar. Set aside.
2. Bring the apple cider vinegar, water, salt, and sugar to a boil, stirring until the salt and sugar are dissolved. Carefully pour the boiling brine over the garlic scapes. The garlic scapes will probably pop up and look like they are trying to get out of the jar. Use a sterile chopstick or butterknife to push it back into the jar. Wipe the rims of the jars, then fix the lid tightly into place. Let the jars come to room temperature before storing in the refrigerator for 6 weeks before opening and tasting. Be patient. It's worth it!
3. The pickled garlic scapes will store well for up to 8 months when stored tightly covered in the refrigerator. If at any point the scapes stick above the brine and develop mold, remove the entire scape that has mold. The rest should still be alright.

Garlic Scape & Cilantro Pesto

This recipe was recently published in the *Edible Madison, Season by Season 5th Anniversary Edition*. We'd encourage you to take a look at this publication, either in print or online: <http://digitaleditions.sheridan.com/publication/?i=261309> or at their website: <http://ediblemadison.com/recipes>. It features seasonal recipes contributed by seasonal cooks and chefs from the region. Dani Lind is responsible for this recipe. Dani is a long time friend of Harmony Valley Farm and a talented chef and owner of Rooted Spoon Culinary in Viroqua. If you're in our area this summer, check out her website to see what special events she has going on. (www.rootedspoon.com)

Serves 6 (Makes approximately 1 $\frac{1}{2}$ cups)

1 cup garlic scapes (6 to 8 scapes, or about 1 bunch), cut into 1-inch pieces, tips removed and discarded

$\frac{1}{2}$ cup raw pumpkin seeds, toasted and cooled

1 bunch cilantro, leaves and stems coarsely chopped

$\frac{1}{2}$ cup cold-pressed sunflower oil

2 tsp lime juice or apple cider vinegar

Salt and pepper to taste

1. Combine scapes and pumpkin seeds in food processor and pulse until coarsely ground.
2. Add cilantro, lime juice and oil; pulse until evenly chopped. Season with salt and pepper. Use within a week in the fridge or freeze.



****HVF Serving suggestions:** Toss with hot pasta and grated cheese for a quick dinner; Stir into scrambled eggs, use as a spread on a sandwich, mix with sour cream or plain yogurt and use as a dip for fresh veggies.