



# Harmony Valley Farm

An update for our Community Supported Agriculture Members - Since 1993

www.harmonyvalleyfarm.com

May 26-27, 2017

## **"Going Into The Woods Is Going Home." -John Muir** By Farmer Richard

I have always enjoyed being in nature, walking in the woods, observing the sounds, trees, plants and animals around me. For many years I have wanted to create walking trails through our woods and have slowly been working on doing so over the last few years. Last fall we had time to really make some progress and were able to make trails to access parts of our woods that were previously inaccessible. All the time we were working in the woods, I kept thinking about how much I'd like for our CSA members to be able to enjoy our little corner of the world and all of the beauty and treasures within our woods. In our 2016 survey, we asked our members what farm events they would enjoy participating in and woods walks was at the top of the list! So for the past two weekends, I was able to get out into our woods with some of our CSA members and a few expert friends to help us all learn more about what is actually living and growing in the woods. On Saturday, May 13, we hosted a woods walk with a bird-watching emphasis. Kyle Lindemer was our bird expert who helped us on this walk. This past Saturday we invited Little John to join us. John Holzwart (aka Little John) is from the Sheboygan area and is very knowledgeable about foraging from the woods, identifying plants and knowing which ones are edible, medicinal, or both! We had a great time on both walks and I wanted to share a little bit about our experiences.

Lets start with our bird walk two weeks ago. The timing for our walk was perfect as it was a prime time to see birds migrating through...

*(See our Blog for remainder of this article & pictures of our day!)*

## **What's In The Box?**

**ASPARAGUS:** We've had a downright cold week! Asparagus harvest has been slim, but there will be more coming.

**POTATO ONIONS:** This is an overwintered onion with spikey, rounded tops and a pale yellow base.

**GREEN GARLIC:** Don't forget to use both the flat green tops and the white base. Substitute green garlic in any recipe that calls for garlic cloves.

**PEA VINE:** Refer to last week's newsletter for more information and recipes!

**RED BUTTERHEAD:** This lettuce is greenhouse grown so we could have lettuce ahead of the lettuce we planted in the field.

**FRENCH BREAKFAST RADISHES:** The green tops are edible too! Saute them with other greens, add them to soups, or chop finely and add them to other salad greens to eat raw.

**HON TSAI TAI:** This is the bunched green with purple stems and small yellow flower buds (which are also edible). It is pronounced like "Han Sigh Tie."

**BABY ARUGULA:** In the cool of spring and fall, the spicy flavor of arugula is more mild and balanced. It may be eaten raw as a "salad" green or may also be lightly wilted into risotto, on top of a hot pizza, or into your morning scramble.

**SAUTE MIX:** This flavorful mix of Asian greens may be eaten raw or lightly cooked. It wilts down in just a few minutes--nature's fast food!

**HERB PACKS:** Herb packs this week are for every-other-week brown week vegetable shares, members with flex vegetable share who did not receive a pack last week, and those who specifically requested another pack last week.

<b>Chervil</b>	<b>Thyme</b>	<b>Savory</b>
<b>Oregano</b>	<b>Sage</b>	<b>Italian Parsley</b>
<b>Basil</b>	<b>Basil</b>	<b>Curly Parsley</b>

*All herb packs are planted with the same herbs. If you can identify at least one herb in the pack, you can use this diagram to help you figure out the rest. For further assistance with identifying the plants, go to our blog to find individual pictures of the herbs.*

### **Hon Tsai Tai**

By: Andrea Yoder

Hon tsai tai holds an important place in our spring vegetable line-up. It matures more quickly than other spring-planted greens and is very tasty when grown in cool spring weather. While it is related to such vegetables as mustard greens and bok choy, what sets it apart is its purple stems that produce a sweet, delicate, edible yellow flower. The sweetness of the buds and flowers is the part we love the most! While other vegetables in the brassica family also produce flowers, they do so towards the end of their life cycle and at that point there are often undesirable flavor changes in the edible portion of the plant. Hon tsai tai is unique in that it flowers early in its life when all the parts of the plant still taste good.

Hon tsai tai has a mild mustard flavor. The entire plant is edible and may be eaten raw or cooked. The thin purple stems are more tender when the plant is young. While still flavorful, they may become more coarse as the plant matures, so should be cut very finely at this stage. Hon tsai tai is delicious in stir-fries or lightly steamed, but also makes a stunning and flavorful addition to raw salads. A common preparation in Chinese cuisine is to quickly stir-fry hon tsai tai with garlic, onions, and ginger, then add oyster sauce. Store hon tsai tai in a plastic bag in the crisper drawer of your refrigerator until ready for use.

### Cooking with This Week's Box!

Even though we're only about a week away from the first day of June, it has been very chilly which makes me want to revert back to warm, comforting soup! With this week's box, I'll start off by using the hon tsai tai to make a warm pot of the **Asian Soup with Rice Noodles** that is featured in this week's newsletter. It doesn't take long to make and will utilize some of the potato onions and green garlic in this week's box. You could also make this soup using other greens such as this week's saute mix or pea vine. I don't usually make two soups in one week, but this week might be the exception. In our Facebook Group, Paul and Carol recommended a recipe for **Cream of Asparagus Soup with Pea Vine** that was published in an HVF newsletter back in 2004. It calls for about 4 ounces of pea vine which is the size of the pea vine bunches this week. Thanks for reminding us to keep looking back to the oldies but goodies...

*(See our Blog for the remainder of this section, and our suggestions for utilizing every item in your box!)*

### Asian Soup with Rice Noodles

Yield: 4-6 servings

6 cups chicken or vegetable broth  
8 oz shiitake mushrooms, stems discarded, caps thinly sliced  
¼ cup minced fresh ginger  
4 scallions, thinly sliced  
2 Tbsp soy sauce  
3 cloves garlic or ¼ cup minced green garlic  
4 oz thin rice noodles, broken in half  
10 oz firm tofu, cut into 1-inch chunks  
1 bunch hon tsai tai, finely chopped (stem, leaves and flowers)  
1 Tbsp toasted sesame oil  
4 tsp rice vinegar  
Freshly ground white pepper, to taste (optional)  
Salt, to taste



1. In a large saucepan, combine the broth, mushrooms, ginger, scallions, soy sauce, and garlic. Bring to a boil over medium heat.
2. Add the noodles and cook until almost tender, 3 to 5 minutes.
3. Add the tofu and hon tsai tai. Cook until the greens are tender, about 2 minutes
4. Stir in the sesame oil and vinegar. Adjust seasoning to your liking with a touch of white pepper, additional soy sauce and/or salt as needed. Serve hot.

*Recipe adapted from **The Rodale Whole Foods Cookbook** (2009).*

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### Hon Tsai Tai Salad with Spicy Tahini Ginger Sauce

Yield 2-3 servings

#### **Spicy Tahini Ginger Sauce (makes 1 ½ cups)**

½ cup tahini  
2 Tbsp grated peeled fresh ginger  
2 Tbsp tamari or soy sauce  
2-3 tsp maple syrup or honey  
1 Tbsp freshly squeezed lime juice

#### **Salad Components**

1 bunch hon tsai tai, finely chopped  
1 cup cilantro, roughly chopped  
3 green onions, thinly sliced  
9-12 radishes, thinly sliced  
5-6 stalks asparagus, cut into 1/2 inch pieces  
Avocado, 1-2 each, cut into bite-sized pieces  
Toasted almonds

1. Make the sauce: Place the tahini, ginger, tamari, maple syrup, lime juice, and ½ cup of water in a blender and blend on high until smooth and creamy. Taste and adjust the seasonings, if necessary. Set aside.
2. Prepare all of the salad components. When you are ready to eat, build your salad by putting some of the hon tsai tai and a bit of the cilantro in a bowl along with the sliced green onions, radishes and asparagus. Add enough sauce lightly coat the vegetables and toss to combine. Garnish the salad with chunks of avocado and toasted almonds.

*The sauce portion of this recipe was borrowed from **Naturally Nourished** by Sarah Britton.*