



# Harmony Valley Farm

An update for our Community Supported Agriculture Members - Since 1993

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## VEGETABLE FEATURE: Swiss Chard

By Andrea Yoder

Chard is a gorgeous leafy green with crinkly green leaves and bright, vivid rib-like stems in a variety of colors including red, yellow, orange, pink and white. It is actually in the beet family and bears resemblance to beet greens, which may be used in place of chard in some applications. While chard is most often considered a cooking green, the leaves are tender enough to also eat raw. While less of a traditional use, you can use it in salads, such as in this week's recipe for **Swiss Chard Salad with Lemon, Parmesan and Breadcrumbs**. Chard has a taste similar to spinach, but it is more earthy & full-flavored. Some describe it as having a "mineral flavor." Since minerals are what help give food its flavor, that means chard tastes really good! It's packed with nutrients including vitamins A, C & K, calcium, iron, magnesium and a variety of antioxidants and B vitamins. Most of the time chard is referred to as "Swiss Chard." It really has nothing to do with Switzerland, rather the origin of this term goes back to how this vegetable was identified in France many years ago. Just know that Swiss chard and chard are the same thing.

In the Midwest, chard is available from early summer to late fall. Unlike kale and collards, chard is not very frost tolerant. Because of its long season of availability, you'll see chard used in a variety of applications with both summer and fall/winter vegetables. While there are many ways to use chard, some common ways include vegetable gratins, soups, or just simply sautéed in olive oil with garlic and a drizzle of vinegar.

Chard pairs well with bacon, lentils, white beans, chickpeas, cream, cheese, black pepper, raisins, pine nuts, vinegar, olive oil, and lemon juice. It also goes well with fresh herbs (thyme, cilantro, basil), and other vegetables (potatoes, tomatoes, eggplant, peppers, winter squash). You can eat both the leaves and the stems, although the stems require just a tad longer cooking time. In addition to eating chard raw, you can also steam, sauté or stir-fry it. When properly cooked, the leaves are tender and silky. Take care to not overcook it! Store chard in a plastic bag in the refrigerator until ready for use.

## What's In The Box?

**GREEN SCALLIONS:** These have beautiful tops, so make sure you use the entire onion—top and all! Slice thinly and add to soups, salads, etc just before serving.

**GARLIC SCAPES:** Nearly all of the scape is usable, and no need to peel. The tail end is sometimes tough and should be discarded. You'll notice a white bulb-like portion near the end of the garlic scape. There is a lot of flavor packed in that part of the plant. Slice it in half and peel back the outer layer which is more tough. Use the contents of that little white pouch just as you would use the remainder of the scape.

**STRAWBERRIES:** We are in the peak week of strawberry picking, so the berries are abundant in this week's box. Given the rainy end to our week, you need to handle these berries with care. Be sure to keep them in the refrigerator. If you don't think you'll be able to eat them in the fresh state within 2 days, do something to preserve them. Clean them and freeze them, make a batch of freezer jam, turn them into strawberry muffins, make a bottle of strawberry liqueur, dehydrate them, puree them and turn them into popsicles, make strawberry lemonade....the point is they are delicate and need to be eaten soon!

**RED BOSTON OR RED OAK LETTUCE:** These varieties have a green core with reddish-bronze coloring on the leaves. The crisp leaves are good used in salads as well as vegetable wraps, etc.

**GREEN OR ITALIAN ZUCCHINI:** It is best to store zucchini at either room temperature or in a warmer location with a temperature of 45-50°F. If you store it in the refrigerator you risk it getting chill injury.

**KOHLRABI:** Both the bulb and the green tops are edible. Refer to the **Main Article Newsletter** for more information about this unique vegetable.

**BROCCOLI:** Use broccoli raw or cooked and don't forget to use the stem. Peel back the outer skin and you'll find a tender vegetable inside. The leaves are edible too!

**CILANTRO:** This herb isn't just for tacos and salsa! Use cilantro in salads and slaws, vinaigrettes, marinades and sauces such as chimichurri.

**RAINBOW OR RED CHARD:** Check out this week's **vegetable feature article** for more information about this gorgeous leafy green.

**CHOICE-- BABY WHITE TURNIPS:** We have a beautiful crop of these tender salad turnips that are in their prime this week, but the box is already full! We've sent this as a choice item packed on the side.

This year we have two separate newsletters. Our Main Article Newsletter is published every other week and our **What's In The Box Newsletter** (that's this one) is published weekly and in the Green folders at your delivery site.

This week we are doing a double feature about celtuce and kohlrabi as our main article in the **Main Article Newsletter**. This newsletter is published bi-weekly and is in the Red folder at your delivery site. Make sure you check out both newsletters either on line or pick up a hard copy at your pickup site.

### Swiss Chard Salad with Lemon, Parmesan & Breadcrumbs

Yield: 2-3 servings (as a main) or 4-5 servings (as a side)

1 bunch Swiss chard	Crushed red pepper flakes, optional	Zest of one lemon
¾ cup extra virgin olive oil, divided	1 ½ cups fresh breadcrumbs	3 Tbsp lemon juice
1 clove garlic or 1 garlic scape, finely minced	Salt, to taste	1 tsp Dijon mustard
	Freshly ground black pepper, to taste	¾ cup grated Parmesan cheese

1. Wash and dry the chard. Separate the stems from the leaves. Finely chop the stems and put into a large salad bowl. Stack a few of the leaves on top of each other, then cut lengthwise into thirds. Holding the stack together with one hand, cut horizontally across the leaves into ¼ -inch strips. Add the leaves to the salad bowl.
2. Heat ¼ cup olive oil in a medium skillet over medium heat. Add the minced garlic/garlic scapes and red pepper flakes (if using). Sauté briefly, just until the garlic becomes fragrant. Add the breadcrumbs and cook, stirring frequently, until they are crisp and golden brown (about 5-10 minutes). Be careful not to burn them! Season with salt and a little black pepper, then remove from heat and cool.
3. In a small mixing bowl, combine the lemon juice and Dijon mustard with a few pinches of salt. Stir to combine, then slowly whisk in ½ cup of the olive oil.
4. Add lemon zest & Parmesan cheese to the bowl of chard. Drizzle with ½-¾ of the dressing, then toss gently until all of the components are nicely coated with the dressing. Taste and add more dressing if you like. Be careful not to get too much dressing or the greens will be soggy. Toss in the toasted breadcrumbs and serve immediately.

**Note:** If you are not going to be eating or serving the entire salad at one meal, store the greens, dressing, Parmesan cheese & breadcrumbs in separate containers. Assemble and toss only the amount of greens you will be needing at one time.

This recipe was adapted from *alexandracooks.com*.

### Orzo Pasta with Chickpeas & Chard

Yield: 4-6 servings

8 oz dried orzo pasta (about 2 cups uncooked)	2 cups zucchini, small dice	1 Tbsp red wine vinegar
½ pound bacon, cut into ½-inch wide pieces (optional)	1 can (15 oz) chickpeas/garbanzo beans	2-3 Tbsp lemon juice
3-4 scallions	1 bunch chard, stems and leaves separated	¼- ½ cup fresh basil
2-3 garlic scapes or garlic cloves, finely chopped	3-4 Tbsp balsamic vinegar	Salt & freshly ground black pepper, to taste
Red pepper flakes, to taste	1 Tbsp stoneground mustard	Parmesan cheese (for serving), optional

1. Cook orzo pasta according to package instructions until al dente. Reserve 1 cup pasta water, then drain the pasta and set aside.
2. Next, prepare the garlic and scallions. Separate the bottom portion of the scallions from the green tops. Thinly slice both the bottom portion as well as the green tops, but keep the tops separate from the lower portion. Finely chop the garlic scapes and set aside.
3. Heat a large skillet or sauté pan, over medium heat. Add the bacon and fry until crisp and golden. Remove the bacon from the pan and set aside. Drain off any excess bacon fat. You want to leave about 4 Tbsp of bacon fat in the pan. **NOTE:** If you choose not to use the bacon, you can omit this step. Replace the bacon fat with 4 Tbsp olive oil and proceed with the remainder of the recipe.
4. Next, add the garlic scapes and scallions (lower portion only) to the pan. Sauté briefly, then add a pinch of red pepper flakes, zucchini, and chickpeas to the pan. Sauté for 5-10 minutes or until the zucchini is tender and just slightly al dente.
5. In a small bowl, mix together 3 Tbsp balsamic vinegar with stoneground mustard. Stir to combine, then pour in the skillet with the chard, zucchini, etc. Chop the chard stems and add to the pan. Make a stack with the chard leaves and slice them in half lengthwise, then horizontally into strips about ¼ inch wide. Add chard leaves to the pan and season with salt and black pepper as well as ¼-½ cup pasta water. Stir to combine and allow the chard to wilt down.
6. Once the chard is wilted, add the orzo along with red wine vinegar and 2 Tbsp lemon juice. Simmer for 3-5 minutes. Add more pasta water if needed. You want the orzo to shimmer, but you don't want it to have a lot of liquid in the pan. Remove from heat and stir in the basil and sliced scallion tops. Taste and adjust the seasoning by adding more salt, balsamic vinegar and/or lemon juice as needed.
7. Serve warm topped with freshly grated Parmesan if desired.

Recipe developed by Chef Andrea Yoder