



Harmony Valley Farm

Producers of Fine Organic Produce & Beef

An Update for Our Community Supported Agriculture Members - Since 1993

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Madison & Local Edition

Meet the Chef

-by Andrea Yoder

Welcome to spring and the start of another exciting CSA year with Harmony Valley Farm! My name is Andrea Yoder and I have been afforded the rare opportunity to be the Farm Chef for this season! I am looking forward to the year ahead and all the new adventures and experiences it will bring forth. I still pinch myself sometimes to make sure I'm not dreaming. I commented the other day that I haven't had a bad day since arriving here April 7! I thought I'd start off the year by introducing myself to you and sharing a little bit about where I come from and why I'm glad to be here.

Originally from Indiana, I grew up on the farm my grandma (now 93 years old) was born and raised on. My dad milked dairy cows as well as farming corn, soybeans, and alfalfa. My two brothers and I were able to intermingle some fun and mischief along with the work and chores. Although I thought I had it rough then, I can't imagine growing up with any other place for my playground. I enjoyed helping my mom plant and harvest her garden. We spent many hours working together in the kitchen making applesauce, canning peaches, making sweet pickle relish and many other things. I have always been interested in food and cooking, so when it was time for college I decided to study nutrition. After graduating from Purdue University with a degree in nutrition, fitness and health, I moved to



Charlottesville, Virginia. I completed an internship program there and started working as a dietitian specializing in nutrition support. I worked mostly with critically ill patients who were unable to eat food by mouth, thus I had to figure out ways to nourish them through tube feedings and intravenous nutrition. Ironically, I chose the field of nutrition because I loved food and ended up finding myself far removed from using whole foods in my work. I began to think I was missing the boat on what I was meant to do with my profession. So, I jumped off that train and pursued a degree in culinary arts at The Culinary Institute of America (CIA) in New York. My whole world opened up through my experience at The CIA. Considering myself a "foodie," I was grossly humbled when I realized I can study food every day for the rest of my life and still never learn all there is to know!

This Week's Box

Green Week

Vegetables

- ♥ **Chives:** Pair well with eggs, potatoes, and dairy. Add to sour cream for a lovely veggie dip!
- ♥ **Parsnips:** Sweetest of the year! Toss with olive oil and roast for a sweet side dish.
- ♥ **Ramps:** Available for a limited time only! (see recipe on back)
- ♥ **Spinach:** Toss with a light vinaigrette, or pair with ramps in the recipe on the back.
- ♥ **Sunchokes:** Can be eaten raw or cooked.
- ♥ **Black Radish:** Best eaten raw (marinated) in salads. (see recipe on back)

Choice

- ♥ **Curly Willow:** Please don't eat this, but you can eat with it... when used as a decorative on your patio at your first cookout of the spring!

I consider Harmony Valley Farm to be the perfect job for me for many reasons. First, I get to do something every day that I love—COOK (and with beautiful organic produce nonetheless)! One of my main responsibilities is to cook lunch for the crew five days a week. This is my time to play in the kitchen experimenting with different flavor combinations and test out new recipe ideas, as well as become

more familiar with some of the vegetables that are new to me. But it isn't all about me. Making sure the crew enjoys lunch and leaves feeling nourished and refueled is a big priority for me as well. I also enjoy new adventures and discoveries, and the farm is always full of them! I enjoy taking time to go to the fields to see what's growing and plan ahead for what will be coming in the next week. I quickly learned the field is not the only place we harvest from though. Until now, I had never foraged for anything in the woods. During my first week here, Richard showed me where to find watercress in a natural spring that feeds into the creek on the farm. What a treasure waiting to be discovered in a beautiful, quiet, serene place. Perfect excuse to take a walk! The final reason I am glad to be here directly involves all our CSA members. I am here as a resource for you and welcome your emails and phone calls with any cooking or food related questions or comments you might have. Please don't hesitate to email or call if you find a good recipe or if you are in the middle of a recipe and don't know what to do. Remember to never be intimidated by a vegetable or cooking. If something doesn't quite turn out how you had imagined it might, it is never a mistake—just an experiment to learn from (Ask Richard and Glen—they've already eaten some of my "experiments"). I look forward to meeting you in person at the farm events and welcome you to stop by the farmer's market in Madison to say hello! Here's to a new year filled with lots of delicious food....Bon Appetit!

Editors Note: Contact Chef Andrea with all your veggie questions. Chef Andrea can be reached via email at chef@harmonyvalleyfarm.com or phone at 608.483.2143 ext. 200.

Vegetable of the Week - Ramps

Ramps are one of spring's treasures tucked away in the woods quietly announcing the arrival of spring with their bright, green, lily-like leaves. A foraged crop which grows in the Appalachians and west to Minnesota, ramps have a short 2-4 week harvest starting in April. Also known as "wild leeks," they have a distinct flavor of their own that resembles a combination of garlic and a mild onion. The entire plant can be eaten either raw or cooked. The flavor of ramps is delicate, thus ramps should be the feature of any dish—too many components and the ramps will get lost.

Ramps pair well with eggs, cream, and cheeses. They are delicious in frittatas, omelets, quiches or custards. Eaten raw, they can be added to salads along with other spring greens such as spinach, sorrel, or watercress. For a delightful spring sandwich, spread a piece of crusty bread with a soft cheese and top with raw ramps. Although I don't know why you'd want to wait a week to eat them, they will stay fresh for up to 5-7 days if wrapped with a damp cloth and kept sealed in a plastic bag under refrigeration.

Creamed Ramps and Spinach - Serves 4

2 bunches (½ #) ramps	1 pint cream
4 oz spinach, fresh	1/3 cup Parmesan cheese - grated
3-4 quarts water	1/2 tsp salt, or to taste
1 teaspoon vegetable oil	1/4 tsp ground black pepper, or to taste

Method:

- Bring 3-4 quarts of water to a boil. Cut ramps into 1-2" pieces keeping the bulbs separate from the leaves. Blanch the ramp leaves by boiling just until wilted and bright green. Remove from water and put in a colander. Rinse with cold water and squeeze off excess water. Repeat the same procedure with the spinach.
- In an 8-inch oven proof skillet, heat oil. Saute ramp bulbs just until slightly tender. Remove from heat and top with ramp leaves. Season with ¼ teaspoon salt and a pinch of black pepper. Layer spinach on top of ramps and season with ¼ teaspoon salt and pinch of black pepper. Pour cream over vegetables and top with cheese.
- Bake in a preheated 350°F oven for 15-20 minutes or until cream is bubbling and the top is golden brown.

Black Radish Salad - Serves 4 -6

2 medium to large black radishes	1/4 cup of honey
1 medium yellow or orange carrot, julienned	1 tbsp pickled ginger, chopped
1 tbsp salt	1 tbsp fresh basil, chiffonade
2 cups of water	1 tbsp fresh mint, chiffonade
1 1/4 cups of white vinegar	

Method:

- Prepare radishes by washing gently, do not peel. Slice thinly. Place radish slices in a small bowl and cover with water. Add salt to the water and stir. Soak for one hour, then drain off water and rinse.
- In a small saucepan, make pickling liquid by combining vinegar and honey and heat to a simmer. Pour over radishes and refrigerate for 1-2 hours. Drain off most of pickling liquid, reserving to add back as needed. Toss radishes with carrot, ginger, basil and mint. Add about 1/3 cup of pickling liquid or enough to lightly coat the salad. Chill until ready to serve.