



# Harmony Valley Farm

Producers of Fine Organic Produce & Beef

An Update for Our Community Supported Agriculture Members - Since 1993

## Madison and Local Edition

### Committing to Local Eating: Making the Transition

By Andrea Yoder

"I walked up to the open garage, unsure what to do. Everyone else seemed to know exactly what was going on. I found my name on the list, saw the newsletter, and picked up a box. I'd made my first CSA pick up. Now what? I had this box of vegetables, some of them familiar, many of them foreign to me and I wasn't even sure how to cook them. Had I just made a huge mistake? I started with simple recipes, stir fries and casseroles. I won't lie, not everything came out great and not every vegetable in the box was my new favorite. But I was really starting to feel like I was making improvements. Now I can't wait for Saturday when I can walk confidently into that garage, check off my name and walk out with the next week's food adventures." — Amanda Eivers, two-year member

As our food supply has evolved to a global community, our culture has grown accustomed to filling our shopping carts with foods from all over the world. We are left eating well-traveled food with a loss of awareness of seasons, local agriculture, and the impact our food sourcing decisions may have on our local economy, our environment, and our own health and well-being. In her new book, *Animal, Vegetable, Miracle*, Barbara Kingsolver writes, "It is both extraordinary and unsympathetic in our culture to refrain from having everything one can afford." In a culture where we are quick to satisfy our immediate wants and desires, it may seem odd to deny yourself the dinner you are craving just because there is snow on the ground and you want to have fresh strawberries for dessert. After all, strawberries are being grown somewhere and chances are there's a truck to get them to you. We have grown accustomed to making food choices based on what we may feel like eating instead of what is



Last Week's CSA Box

available to us in season.

Whatever your reason may be 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 go to the farmer's market or open your CSA box in the middle of May hoping to see sweet corn and fresh tomatoes, only to be confronted with kohlrabi and bok choy. Faced with vegetables you have never seen or tasted before, you may be wondering what in the world you are supposed to do with them. Although it may be a steep learning curve with challenges along the way, choosing to eat locally can expose you to a plethora of opportunities to experience new foods and flavors while increasing your knowledge of your food source and forming a connection with your producer. For those of you who are new to seasonal and local ways of eating, I hope to share with you some ideas and resources to make your transition a positive one with rewarding results.

First of all, remember not to let a vegetable intimidate you—I promise it won't talk back or bite! In the beginning, take a simple approach to using the vegetables. Select several key internet sites or cookbooks that focus on seasonal cooking and limit your searches to those in the beginning. 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. As you learn to cook with some of these new products, focus on learning cooking methods and techniques. Once you learn the techniques, you can apply that skill to other foods not listed in the

### This Week's Box

#### Green Week

- ♥ **GARLIC SCAPES:** Saute until caramelized and use as a pizza topping
- ♥ **ROMAINE OR LEAF LETTUCE:** Toss with strawberries and a poppyseed vinaigrette
- ♥ **KOHLRABI:** Try in soup
- ♥ **NAPA CABBAGE:** See feature on back for napa cabbage
- ♥ **SALAD MIX:** Toss with poppyseed dressing and sliced strawberries
- ♥ **SCALLIONS:** Use as a topping for tacos, burritos, and quesadillas
- ♥ **SPINACH:** Use to build a delicious sandwich
- ♥ **STRAWBERRIES:** Start your day off right with slices of strawberries on your favorite breakfast cereal
- ♥ **SUGAR SNAP PEAS:** See feature on back

recipe. Don't be afraid to alter recipes dependent on what ingredients you have available. Also, look to other cultures for some interesting uses for some of the unfamiliar vegetables you may be using. For instance, eggplant is a vegetable used extensively in Mediterranean cuisine. Greek, Lebanese, and Italian cookbooks offer numerous uses for this vegetable.

Being committed to eating locally may also mean planning ahead for the winter months when fewer foods may be available. Some vegetables in your box, such as rhubarb, spinach, and peppers require little work to prepare them to be frozen for use during the winter. You can also incorporate your vegetables into soups, stews, sauces, casseroles, and pestos that

can be made in large batches. Eat part of it for dinner now and freeze the remainder for another meal during the winter.

Below are some resources for information on vegetables, recipes, and cooking methods to help you get started. I hope you enjoy the bounty that lies before you.

#### **Cookbooks**

-*From Asparagus to Zucchini*—available at [www.macscac.org](http://www.macscac.org)

-*Farmer John's Cookbook: The Real Dirt on Vegetables* by John Peterson

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

#### **Websites**

<http://www.seasonalchef.com/>

[http://](http://www.worldcommunitycookbook.org/season/guide/)

[www.worldcommunitycookbook.org/season/guide/](http://www.worldcommunitycookbook.org/season/guide/)

<http://www.foodroutes.org/> (has online video cooking demos by a chef)

## Strawberry Festival!

**Father's Day, Sunday June 17th  
12:00-6:00PM**

Strawberry Day at Harmony Valley Farm is quickly approaching and we hope you will all make the trek out to our beautiful valley for our first celebration event of the year. CSA members are welcome to eat as many strawberries as you desire, and you may pick four pints to take home for free. You may pick additional strawberries for \$2.50 per lb. We ask that you bring a dish to share for our potluck meal (including a serving utensil) as well as table service for your family. This is your chance to experience HVF up close with a field tour and a chance to feed the animals.

If you plan on spending the night in our camping area, please call with a RSVP. Our campground is primitive with no hookups for campers or motor homes. You will be able to drive your car to the site to unload supplies. A portable toilet will be provided at the campsite, shower and restroom facilities are available in the packing shed. Feel free to use our picnic tables in the shop area.

## NAPA CABBAGE

Also known as Chinese cabbage or celery cabbage, napa cabbage debuts as the first head cabbage of the season from HVF this year. Napa cabbage grows in an oblong head with light green ruffled leaves and white stalks. The flavor of napa cabbage is sweeter and more delicate than traditional green head cabbages. Given it originated in China thousands of years ago, napa cabbage is often incorporated in Chinese and other Asian cuisines.

Napa cabbage is tasty tossed into stir-fry, or shredded raw for a mild, sweet cole slaw. The large leaves may also be used for stuffed cabbage rolls. Napa cabbage is also used in the traditional Korean condiment, kimchee. To store napa cabbage, keep in a large, sealed Ziploc bag in the refrigerator.

## Warm Napa Cabbage Slaw with Peanut Sauce

Serves 4

1 Tbsp vegetable oil  
8 cups Napa cabbage, sliced thin  
3-4 scallions, sliced thin  
3 garlic scapes, sliced  
1 tsp Salt  
3 Tbsp peanut butter  
1 Tbsp soy sauce

1 ½ Tbsp rice vinegar  
2 tsp honey  
1 Tbsp toasted sesame oil  
¼ tsp hot pepper oil (optional, or substitute ¼ tsp red pepper flakes)  
1 Tbsp warm water

-In a small bowl, combine peanut butter, soy sauce, rice vinegar, honey, sesame oil, hot pepper oil and water. Combine well and set aside.

-In a large sauté pan over medium-high heat, heat oil. Sauté scallions and garlic scapes for about 30 seconds, then add napa cabbage. Sprinkle with salt and stir to combine. Cook for several minutes, then add peanut sauce. Stir to combine and allow to cook until all the cabbage has wilted down and is tender. —Serve hot.

## SUGAR SNAP PEAS

Sugar snap peas are a variety of pea with an edible pod. When ripe, they are naturally very sweet and crunchy. The sugar content is greater in the afternoon, so we try to pick them at that time. After they are harvested, it is best to keep them very cold or ice them down so they retain their maximum sweetness and quality. Prior to eating, snip back the stem end and pull the string off the pea pod. They don't need much done to them to be delicious, in fact one of my favorite ways to eat them is just as they are. Also enjoy them in stir-fries, vegetable and grain salads, and lightly sautéed in olive oil. They pair well with eggs, lemon, and herbs such as mint and tarragon.

## Quinoa Salad with Sugar Snap Peas and Mint

Serves 6

¾ cup quinoa  
1 1/3 cups water  
1 cup fresh sugar snap peas, cut into ½" pieces  
Zest of ½ of a lemon

1 ½ tbsp fresh lemon juice  
1 tbsp extra-virgin olive oil  
2 tbsp fresh mint, chiffonade  
Salt, to taste  
Ground black pepper, to taste

-Put water and quinoa in a small saucepan on medium-high heat. Bring to a simmer, then reduce heat to low and cover the pan. Simmer for 10 minutes or until tender. Remove from heat, drain off any excess liquid. Spread out on a cookie sheet to cool.

-Once quinoa is cooled, add remaining ingredients and season with salt and pepper. Mix together to combine all ingredients. This is best if prepared at least one hour prior to serving to allow time for the flavors to develop.