



Harmony Valley Farm

An update for our Community Supported Agriculture Members - Since 1993

November 18-19, 2011

CSA Value by Terri

Have you ever wondered if it's worth it? Is our CSA a good value?

Well, that depends on what is most important to you and what value you place on the practices we employ:

Do you most value the fact that your CSA veggies are clean, fresh, safe and wholesome? Our farm, our land, and our veggies are all certified organic and grown with care in mineral rich soil. Is the fact that we have food safety and sanitation certification important to you and your family? Not only do we send you very clean and well-chilled produce, but it is also washed and stored in a very clean facility! Every day we have checklists and routines that we follow to insure that your food is safe, from the field to the wash tank to the cooler, right into your box. We harvest produce at the peak of freshness and deliver to you within a day or two.

Is the variety of produce what you most enjoy and value? We carefully plant a mix of kitchen staples: onion and garlic in every box, all season long; seasonal favorites such as spring peas, ramps, asparagus, overwintered spinach, strawberries and garden herb packs; summer beans, cukes, zucchini squash, peppers, melons, tomatoes, sweet corn, and potatoes; greens such as kale, tat soi, amaranth, chard, bok choy, arugula and salad mix; fall favorites such as sweet potatoes, leeks, carrots, broccoli, cauliflower, parsnips, and winter squash; along with surprising, perhaps new to you, fun to try items like nettles, fennel, celeriac, Portuguese Kale, burdock, cardoon, radish pods, sunchoke, broccoli Romanesco and kohlrabi.

Do you enjoy cooking and eating with the seasons? Farmer Richard has nearly 40 years experience growing organic vegetables! He knows what grows well on our land and how best to store it and prolong the season. This means we can pack boxes from May to January – here in Wisconsin! This long season is practically unheard of in Midwest CSAs. Along with all that experience, we have an extensive archive of past newsletters and recipes created, tried and tested over the years. You can access all this experience in each week's newsletters, posted online. Each delivery, whether it is veggies, fruit, coffee or cheese will arrive with a newsletter containing descriptions, stor-

THIS WEEK'S BOX

SUGARLOAF RADICCHIO: See Vegetable Feature on the back

TAT SOI ROSETTES: See Vegetable Feature on the back

FLOWERING KALE: We've kept this beautiful veggie in the field as long as we could, but now it's time for you to enjoy it! Cook this kale just like other varieties.

CARROTS: We hope you are enjoying these crispy, sweet carrots as much as we are! Use them raw to make interesting salads this winter or turn them into soups – try a creamy curried carrot soup.

BEAUTY HEART RADISH: The Beauty Heart (aka watermelon) radish is one of our winter storage radishes. It has a white to light green exterior, a gorgeous bright pink interior and a mild, sweet flavor. No need to peel it unless you find the outer ring to be more pungent. While often eaten raw, it's also great in stir-fries and Asian flavored soups. Try it in a salad with Tat Soi!

SWEET POTATOES: Store in a cool, dark place at about 55°F. Sweet potato fries are one of Captain Jack's favorite ways to prepare sweet potatoes!

YELLOW ONIONS: Caramelize and top a sandwich or burger. Use raw on tacos or spicy chili.

GARLIC: Roasted garlic mixed with mayo makes an awesome spread on those post-Thanksgiving turkey sandwiches.

SALAD MIX: This is it! We've kept it covered to try for one more week of salad and we made it. We hope you enjoy this last taste until spring!

FESTIVAL SQUASH: This is one of Farmer Richard's favorites. Cut the squash in half, remove the seeds and bake in a medium hot oven till tender. Season with salt and pepper and butter, or a mixture of honey and fresh ginger.

BROCCOLI OR CAULIFLOWER OR ROMANESCO: Use any of these three vegetables in a similar fashion. They can be eaten raw or cooked by boiling, steaming, sautéing, roasting or frying. All three make a great addition to a fresh salad. Keep refrigerated and wash just before using.

PARSNIPS: This creamy white root vegetable has become an American favorite. The first frost of the year converts the parsnip's starch to sugar and gives it a pleasantly sweet flavor. Cooking methods include baking, boiling, steaming, and sautéing. They are especially good when cut in bite size pieces tossed with a little olive oil, salt and pepper and roasted till tender.

age tips, recipes and preparation ideas. Even if something is new to you, we're here to give you a hand and ideas on how to best enjoy your CSA shares! We are fortunate to employ a Summer Farm Chef each growing season to both feed our bodies and inspire our palates. Our chef comes up with recipe ideas and tests them for you, our home cooks.

How important is the opportunity to know where your food is grown and visit your farm?

Come see for yourself the field where your tomatoes grow, pick some strawberries, or wade in the creek where our cows water. Come tour the fields, pulled on a wagon behind a tractor. Disabuse your children of the idea that vegetables grow in grocery stores or that meals come fully formed and ready to eat out of a box. Let your kids dig a carrot or turnip right out of the dirt. Brush off the soil and give it a taste. Camp in the valley, build a fire and watch the

stars. Or join us for lunch someday and meet the crew that tends the fields! The CSA is your chance to truly connect with your food.

Besides all these rather intangible values, perhaps what is most important to you is getting your money's worth.

Even though there are no guarantees with CSA, since we ask you to share the risks inherent in farming with us, season after season we have delivered a high dollar value to you. Despite the challenges of floods, cold and late spring weather delaying our entry into the fields, hot and dry summers taxing our irrigation abilities, plant pests and diseases, you have received an amazing bounty this season and each season! Even though each season is different and we can't promise that you'll have the same experience and same bounty again next year, we do promise to do our very best to send you a beautiful box with each & every delivery.

Perhaps you're wondering if you can do better shopping for your fresh produce. First, you'll have to go through a middle man rather than buying directly from your farmer. This alone will increase cost and decrease freshness. (You could shop at the farmer's market to eliminate some of this problem, but you'd have to get up pretty early in the morning to insure you get the full selection available at market each week.)

Sure, you can go to the store/co-op/market and you can pick out just what you need that week for each recipe or meal. But if you're like me, you might play it safe and buy pretty much the same items each time. Your CSA box guarantees some surprises and some challenges to your comfort zone. Then, you might also be tempted to buy those tomatoes from Central America in May or that salad from California in December. But how fresh can those things be? How long did it take to get to that store in MN or WI? And at what cost?

Finally, when you shop at the store, can you even find everything we grow? Is it certified organic? How many stores would you have to visit to find the best price for each item? **How much would purchasing everything in your CSA box actually cost you? We have a Secret Shopper to find out for you – add that to your list of CSA membership benefits!** In the Twin Cities, Karen & Walt weigh out each item in each week's veggie box then go to 3 different stores to find out if those items are available, are organic and local, and how much the same quantity of each item would cost to buy. In Madison, Bob & Carol go through the same process with each Fruit Share box. Our shoppers compile their results and send them to us to analyze. Read the next newsletter to find out the cold, hard facts about how much tangible, measurable value your CSA boxes contain.

Upcoming Delivery Dates:

Brown, Green & Weekly Veggies:

December 1/2/3

December 15/16/17

Full & Winter Fruit:

December 1/2/3

December 15/16/17

January 5/6/7

January 19/20/21

Extended Season Veg:

January 5/6/7

January 19/20/21

Coffee & Cheese:

December 1/2/3

December 15/16/17

January 5/6/7

January 19/20/21

2012 CSA Info Coming Soon!

Vegetable Feature: Tat Soi and Sugarloaf

Tat Soi is a popular Asian vegetable, also called flat or spoon cabbage. This variety of tat soi is like the tat soi we grow for our salad mix, however in the colder weather it grows close to the ground for warmth and forms a beautiful, big rosette. It's lush, dark green, spoon shaped leaves are mild in flavor with a hint of earthy sweetness. The stems are edible but will require a little longer cooking time than the leaves.

Paying homage to its native land, tat soi is especially good with Asian flavors and dishes. Sautéed with soy sauce, sesame oil, brown sugar, ginger, garlic and topped with sesame seeds, tat soi makes a great side for chicken, seafood or tofu. Or, break the traditional rules and serve it wilted in a pasta with brown butter sauce, shaved Parmesan and a squeeze of lemon juice. It can also be used raw in salads, poached, steamed or added to soup and stir fries. Tat soi can easily be substituted in recipes that call for kale, bok choy or spinach.

Sugarloaf, also known by its French name pain de sucre, is a type of salad chichory that grows in upright heads and looks much like romaine with large leaves. It is the most mild of the radicchios and is slightly sweet with a pleasant bitterness that gives salads an instant boost! It is a handy green to have around when preparing winter comfort food and pairs well with pork and winter squash. Chopped leaves can be poached in seasoned broth or soup, or simply sautéed with olive oil, onion and shitake mushrooms for a healthy side dish.

Like any leafy green, both tatsoi and sugarloaf are loaded with vitamins, minerals and health promoting antioxidants and low in calories. Sugarloaf is especially high in vitamin K, fiber and potassium. Store these greens wrapped in a plastic bag in your crisper drawer and use within 1-2 weeks to ensure the leaves stay crisp!

Seared Sugarloaf with Balsamic Vinaigrette

1 head sugarloaf, outer leaves removed and quartered

2 T plus ¼ c olive oil

2 T balsamic vinegar

1 t honey

1 t fresh thyme

½ t Dijon

S&P

-Heat 2 T of olive oil in a skillet. When pan and oil are hot, lay quartered sugarloaf, cut side down and sear until nicely browned, about 2-3 minutes. Turn to other cut side and sear in the same way.

-To make the vinaigrette, whisk vinegar, honey, thyme, Dijon and ¼ c olive oil. Add S&P to taste.

-Drizzle vinaigrette over warm sugarloaf and serve with roasted beef or chicken.

Beans with Tatsoi and Crispy Bacon

Great with chicken, fish or 'breakfast for dinner' with latkes and poached eggs.

1 can cranberry or adzuki beans

½ c beef or pork stock

1 T garlic, minced

¼ c onion, minced

S&P

1 bunch tatsoi leaves, julienned

2 T red wine vinegar

4-6 strips bacon

-Cook bacon in a frying pan or bake in the oven at 400° until crispy (10-15 minutes). Allow to cool on a paper towel and chop.

-In a large sauté pan, sauté onion until translucent. Add garlic and sauté another minute.

-Add beans and stock and cook until liquid reduces.

-Add tatsoi and red wine vinegar and cook until tatsoi is wilted. Season with salt and pepper.

-Add beans and tatsoi to a medium mixing bowl, discarding any excess liquid, toss with crisp bacon and serve.

Produce Plus

<http://www.harmonyvalleyfarm.com/SpecialOffer.pdf>

**Winter Squash, Sweet Potatoes, Orange Carrots
Plus Garlic, Onions, Shallots, and Garlic Braids!**