



Westfield CSA Newsletter

Farm News

Hi Everyone,

We have finally arrived at the week you have all been waiting for - the first delivery. It will be a small one as the first delivery usually is, but there's lots of good stuff on the horizon. Due to the cool spring weather many crops grew very slowly and that is the reason for beginning the deliveries later than planned. We have begun picking peas, both English (shell) and sugar snaps. The broccoli has begun to head up, but unfortunately the plants are still rather small and hence will produce small heads. The quality looks good though, and it just means that we will need to put 4 or 5 in a bunch instead of 2 or 3. This was caused by 2 very cold nights (25 degrees) in early May that burned the outer leaves of the plant and set back its growth. Extreme cold stresses plants and stress induces flowering. I am having a similar problem with the escarole and the red spinach.

I was delayed in

writing this update because I wanted to address the issue of the current salmonella outbreak in tomatoes, and have been doing some reading on the subject to be better informed on the mechanism of the contamination. Unfortunately, the FDA and the CDC don't seem to have a very good handle on this subject at this point, even though these outbreaks have been occurring since the early 90's and there was a serious outbreak in 2004. I just received a letter from the NJ Dept. of Ag. stating that NJ has been added to the list of "safe" states. However, since they have not been able to pinpoint the source of the contamination the concept of determining safe states or regions seems rather dubious and contrary to the norms of epidemiological investigation. From what I have learned so far it seems probable that the source of the contamination is in the post harvest end of the industrial food chain. Large wash tanks that are used in the packing houses may be implicated in cross contamination

of the tomatoes. I don't expect to begin delivering tomatoes for another 6 or 7 weeks, so hopefully there will be better information available by then. I will plan to write more on this subject when we begin the tomato harvest.

The share for this week will be Red lettuce, choice of Sugar snap peas or English peas, broccoli, broccoli leaf, red spinach, garlic scapes, and choice of oregano or cilantro. The broccoli leaf can be used the same as Kale, steamed or sautéed and also makes a great base for cream of broccoli soup. (Sauté the leaf with onion adding some water at the end to finish cooking, then put into a blender with milk or cream.) The garlic scapes can be grilled or chopped finely and sautéed to add garlic flavor to a dish, such as the spinach or broccoli. They keep a very long time in the fridge, so don't feel like you need to use them up quickly.

Enjoy!

Farmer John

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CSA Update

Shift assignments for next week will be posted here in future newsletters.

All extra food this year will be donated to the families of the Faith in Christ Center in Elizabeth. Over 40 families from Elizabeth, Newark, Hillside & Irvington will benefit from our extras!



John Kruegar, Owner / Operator,
Starbrite Farm

Garlic Scapes

You are no doubt familiar with the hardneck bulbous garlic, but may not know about its previous attachment, the garlic scape. Garlic grows underground, where the flower stalk begins its journey, curling upward as it grows. As the bulb gets harder, its green shoot pokes its way through the ground. There is a two-three week

window when this pliable tendril can be pulled off and harvested as a delicacy for the hard-core and the occasional garlic consumers among us.

When garlic scapes are still in full curl, they are tender and delicious. They provide a subtle garlic flavor and crunchiness if added to salads, soups, and stir-frys, and are most of-

ten utilized in creating a very pleasing pesto sauce. The garlic flavor is fresh and light rather than pungent and enduring, which means you can spread the pesto on toast and no one will know what you had for breakfast. Therefore, the risk in adding it to your favorite dishes is low.

Quick Tips

Even organic foods need to be washed thoroughly before eating.

Store your Garlic Scapes in a brown bag in the crisper—they will last for weeks!

Garlic Scapes can also be chopped and frozen.

Garlic Scape Pesto

Ingredients:

1 cup garlic scapes (about 8 or 9 scapes), top flowery part removed, cut into ¼-inch slices
 1/3 cup walnuts
 ¾ cup olive oil
 ¼-1/2 cup grated parmigiano
 ½ teaspoon salt
 black pepper to taste

Method:

Place scapes and walnuts in the bowl of a food processor and whiz until well combined and somewhat smooth. Slowly driz-

zle in oil and process until integrated. With a rubber spatula, scoop pesto out of bowl and into a mixing bowl. Add parmigiano to taste; add salt and pepper. Makes about 6 ounces of pesto. Keeps for up to one week in an air-tight container in the refrigerator.

For ½ pound short pasta such as penne, add about 2 tablespoons of pesto to cooked pasta and stir until pasta is well coated.



Universal Salad Dressing

Place the following ingredients into a food processor and blend until desired consistency:

1 Cup “Base”: Mayonnaise or Buttermilk (or a blend of both). Or - replace 1/3-1/2 cup with Sour Cream or Plain Yogurt.

¼ Cup Fresh Green Herbs (Parsley, Cilantro or Dill work great but try with your favorites!)

1-2 TB Lemon Juice, Lime Juice or Vine-

gar (Red Wine Vinegar works great but experiment with White Balsamic, Sherry Vinegar, etc.)

1-2 Garlic Scapes (or fresh Garlic once the Garlic Scape season is over)

Salt & Pepper to taste

Optional - Red Pepper flakes or a few dashes Worcestershire for some kick!

Store in the fridge for use throughout the week!

We had a lot of fun with this dressing last year. Feel free to play around with it and find the flavor or consistency that works best for you. You can adjust any seasoning to taste – add more or less Base, use more or less Herbs, etc. Don't be afraid to experiment! We used the dressing both on salads and as a raw veggie dip.

Question of the Week: Beyond Salad

Here are the results from our first “Question of the Week”: ***Beyond Salad—What to do with Lettuce.***

Tip #1: Lettuce Wraps. Many cultures use lettuce in place of tortillas or bread for wraps. Roll lettuce around the same items you would a burrito, or experiment with your own combination, hot or cold. This is a great solution for leftovers. Chop up last night's cooked veggies or meats (re-warm if you prefer) and let everyone make their own wrap. Jazz it up with the Universal Salad Dressing (above) or the sauce of your choice.

Tip #2: Danielle says that she has sautéed lettuce just like other greens. While some

varieties can be bitter, the bitterness can be alleviated in any bitter green by par-boiling it in very salted water first, before sautéing.

Tip #3: Danielle has also used this sautéed lettuce in baked ziti.

Tip #4: Organic lettuce needs to be washed carefully. Don't be surprised if you take a few friends home with you. It is a sure sign that the product is pesticide free!

Next Week's Question: **What do you do with all those Turnips???**

Let us know what you think! Here is

your chance to share any recipes, storage tips or ideas you may have. Email Andrea (alpolonsky@aol.com) or Katie (katieb430@verizon.net). We'll post the responses in next week's newsletter.

Check us out on the Web!!! Visit: www.westfieldareacsa.com

Fun Farm Fact:

Farmer John started the onion and leek plants in February, in a spare room in his house, under florescent lights!