



# Notes From the Pea Patch

Foxtail Community Farm ~ Vol. 13, No. 4 ~ February 19, 2018

## Farmer's Notebook

January and February are a bit paradoxical for me. During these months, when the wind is blowing and snow covers the ground, I spend my time sitting at a computer with the woodstove blazing and a cup of coffee by my hand. While this sounds enjoyable and relaxing, after a week it gets old, and by now I'm going stir crazy. Sitting down at the computer in late February is a more onerous task than anything July or August can throw at me.

That being said, things are wrapping up. Seeds are ordered, supplies (like fertilizer and seeding trays) too, and the tax numbers are in, though the forms still need to be filled out. Now our attention turns to the season ahead and one of the first tasks is to find some workers!

Originally, CSAs relied heavily on member workers. In fact the first CSAs in the 1960s and 70s were begun by groups of people who hired a farmer to grow food for them and they provided much if not all of the money and labor. However member labor is a rarity today. When we started farming here, we were the only CSA serving Albany that had a work requirement. Four hours a season was what we asked people to work, either by the task or at one of the many work parties we held throughout the season.

We still have a few members left who were here those first few years and may remember coming down to fulfill their hours. Unfortunately, over the years this work requirement was wittled away. First we shortened the hours to 2, then offered a "buy out" option, and finally we removed the requirement altogether but offered share discounts to those still interested in working. The last two years we have simply offered volunteer opportunities on weekends. While we have replaced this labor with more

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## This Week's Harvest

*our best guess for what will be in this week's share boxes – subject to change at packing time:*

**Green Cabbage** – We have had red cabbage and savoy cabbage and here is the third variety we have put away in the cooler, a green storage cabbage. Remove any soft or discolored leaves and store in the refrigerator for up to 2 weeks.



**Daikon Radish** - these special radishes are distinguished by their white color, mild flavor and large size (the English name "daikon" is derived from the Japanese term for "large root"). Often pickled or shredded, these can also be diced with other root vegetables for roasting or in soups and stews. Peel away any discolored areas and store in plastic bag in refrigerator for up to 2 weeks.



**Spinach** – more spinach this week. It has been holding up well during this coldest, darkest time of the year. Unfortunately the same is not true of the lettuce, which is growing slowly while waiting for longer days. But March is right around the corner and both crops should take right off by the equinox.

**Also...**

**carrots ~ onions ~ potatoes**



## Recipes of the Week: Crispy Daikon Pancakes

An Asian spin on the latke. Try these with a sriracha mayonnaise or spicy apricot sauce.

- 1 1/2 cups grated daikon
- 2 tsp salt
- 1 clove garlic, minced
- 1/2 onion, chopped
- 1 egg, beaten
- 1/2 cup bread crumbs
- 1/2 tsp ground black pepper
- 1/2 tsp paprika
- 1/2 tsp [chili-garlic sauce](#)
- 1/2 cup oil for pan frying

Place the daikon in a colander placed over a bowl. Sprinkle with salt and toss well. Refrigerate for 30 minutes. Remove and discard drained liquid.

In a bowl combine daikon with garlic, onion, egg, bread crumbs, pepper, paprika, and chili garlic sauce. Mix well. Form into 8, small round patties.

Heat oil in a large skillet over medium heat. Fry patties in hot oil until firm and browned on both sides, ~3 minutes per side. Drain on paper towels.

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hired help, it is impossible to replace the connection that working on the farm gives to our members.

I think the lack of member participation in CSAs is one of the main reasons we are seeing a reduction in CSA enrollment across the country. CSAs have become one dimensional and are competing with farmer's markets and grocery stores for peoples food dollars. But the CSA concept is more than access to fresh local food, it is about reconnecting with that food. As you have heard us say many times, at the turn of the 20<sup>th</sup> century half the population lived on farms and nearly everyone had a direct connection to a family farm. Today less then 1% of the population farm and the average American has little to no idea how their food is produced.

Being part of a CSA gives you a unique opportunity to become better informed and involved with the production of your food, even if you don't have the land, time, or interest to raise it yourself. The first step is joining a CSA, which if you are reading this you have already accomplished. The next step is to visit the farm at least once a season. Whether it's a self guided crop walk, a visit to the weekend farm stand, or attending one of our farm festivals, our fields are always open. You can even make it a weekend event and pitch a tent in our campground.

But the best way to get the most from your CSA membership is to actually participate in growing your food. Most weekends this summer we will have volunteer work opportunities for 2 hours on Saturday or Sunday morning. For those who are a little more ambitious, we are once again offering share discounts for work hours at \$10/hr. And if you have some real time on your hands and are looking for a part time job, we are just about to start hiring field hands for the 2018 season. So come out to the farm this summer and get your hands dirty. Who knows, you might actually enjoy it!



**Foxtail Farm...  
pass it on**

We still have some CSA shares available for the upcoming summer season. Our goal is to be full by April 1<sup>st</sup>. Word of mouth from current members is our best advertising, so please spread the word! If you send someone our way, ask them to let us know that you referred them – you'll receive a \$10 thank you credit from us for each new member enrolled! Please direct anyone who may be interested to our website:

<http://foxtailcommunityfarm.com/CSA.html>