



Notes From the Pea Patch

Foxtail Community Farm ~

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Farmer's Notebook

"Son, this is a cold, gray day, but spring is just around the corner"

~ Arnold Lobel, Frog and Toad All Year

If you are a reader of the beloved Frog and Toad series, you probably remember this tale in which Frog describes his hopeful search for the corner around which he will find spring. It's been a long and frequently discouraging search this year, but I think we may finally have turned that corner.

Grass has suddenly turned from brown to green, colorful buds are popping on tree branches and birds are furiously building nests in every available crevice. Mud has (mostly) dried. We have three brooder boxes full of peeping baby chicks. The greenhouse is full of babies, too – rows and rows of baby plants, just a few weeks old and already reaching out of their trays eager to be transplanted in the field. The perennial gardens have been cleared and raked, laying hens have moved from winter to summer quarters and fields were tilled today for spring planting.

Spring is also the time when the many projects and enterprises we planned over the winter get put to the test. The summer kitchen we started last year is nearing completion, but the same warmer temperatures needed for Eric to get the drywall taped are calling him out to the fields for planting. With summer CSA shares full, the inaugural winter CSA going into its final deliveries and our new greenhouse license approved, we are simultaneously harvesting, planting, bookkeeping and gearing up for the spring seedling sale.

We hope you'll come share in all this glorious spring flurry at our [Open House May 16 & 17](#). It's the unofficial transition from winter to summer CSA seasons and a great way to celebrate the start of another year on the farm! ~ Rachel

This Month's Harvest

Our best guess for what will be in this month's share boxes – subject to change at harvest & packing time.



Chili/Chile Peppers – dried in the fall from last year's harvest. Crush/mince them for “crushed red pepper”. Writing this I found

myself suddenly unsure which spelling of chili/e to use; a quick internet search revealed that this is actually a raging international debate (who knew?), so I guess you can take your pick.

Cremini/Crimini Mushrooms – we seem to have a theme going here - apparently either spelling is acceptable for this tasty brown



'shroom, also referred to as “baby bellas”. These are from Bulich Farm in Catskill, a multi-generational family farm and the only cultivated mushroom farm in New York State, growing several varieties of mushrooms using organic methods in vast temperature-controlled barns. Mushrooms are best stored in paper bags in the refrigerator – plastic bags are a sure way to get quick rotting.



Parsnips – Foxtail's first ever CSA harvest of parsnips! Closely related to carrots, parsnips have an incredibly long growing cycle:

they are direct-seeded into the field in the spring, grow slowly through the summer and fall, then are best left to sit through hard frosts and even over the cold winter, which sweetens their flavor. Can be used raw, braised, boiled, mashed, pureed and roasted.

Also...Black Beans ~ Carrots ~ Daikon Radish ~ Garlic ~ Lettuce ~ Potatoes ~ Rutabaga ~ Spinach

for additional crop storage and preparation instructions, see the archived December 14 2014 issue : foxtailcommunityfarm.com/MemberNewsletters.html



Recipe of the Week: Roasted Parsnips & Carrot “Fries” with Rosemary & Garlic

Parsnips are a surprisingly versatile vegetable, but nothing brings out their sweet flavor like roasting. This simple yet delicious preparation is adapted from a Bon Appétit March 2012 recipe.

- ~ 2 pounds parsnips and carrots
- 1 Tbs fresh rosemary or 1 ½ tsp dried rosemary
- 2 cloves garlic, thinly sliced
- extra virgin olive oil
- kosher or sea salt and ground black pepper
- ½ tsp ground cumin

Preheat oven to 450°F. Wash and gently peel parsnips and carrots, then trim into sticks about 3” long by 1/2” wide or other shape & size of your choice (try to make the pieces similarly sized to promote even roasting). Toss with olive oil to coat, then toss with the rosemary and garlic. Spread on a large rimmed baking sheet in a single layer. Season with salt and pepper.

Roast for 10-15 minutes. Turn with a spatula to promote even browning; roast another 10-15 minutes (times may vary by size of vegetable pieces). Check consistency – fries should be tender and slightly browned but not crispy on outside. If needed, turn and roast another 5-10 minutes. Sprinkle with cumin and, if desired, a little more rosemary. Season to taste with additional salt and pepper. Makes a great snack or a side dish with roasted meat.

Another recipe: Foxtail Black Bean Soup

We've been making this soup since we started farming in Wisconsin - loosely based on the original Moosewood Cookbook recipe.

- 2 cups dry black turtle beans
- 4 cups chicken or vegetable stock or water
- 2 tsp kosher salt
- extra virgin olive oil
- 1 onion, chopped
- 2-3 cloves garlic, minced
- 1-2 carrots, chopped
- ~1 cup other available root vegetables (parsnips, turnips, celeriac, rutabaga, etc)
- 1 ½ tsp ground cumin
- 1 tsp ground coriander
- generous pinch crushed red pepper flakes
- 3 tbs your preferred acid (try balsamic or red wine vinegar, lemon juice or lime juice)
- generous handful (or two) of fresh spinach greens, roughly chopped

Rinse and pre-soak the beans, fully covered by a few inches of water (either soak overnight or boil for 2 minutes, cover and sit for 60-90 minutes). Drain and rinse. Place in your soup pot with stock or water and salt. Bring to a boil, then reduce heat, cover and simmer until tender – about 60-90 minutes.

Meanwhile, in a separate pan sauté onion and garlic in olive oil until onion starts to soften. Add root vegetables, cumin, coriander and red pepper flakes and continue to cook, stirring often, until vegetables are just tender. Add to the beans while they finish simmering.

When beans are fully cooked to your liking, add the acid, cover and cook another 10 minutes. Check the soup and adjust seasonings and consistency to your taste (to thin add more water; to thicken puree some of the bean mixture and add back to soup). Toss in the spinach, stir and cook just a few minutes until greens are wilted but still vibrant. Serve as is or with a buffet of toppings (jalapeño wheels, sour cream, salsa, grated cheese, etc).

From the archives



Need more recipe ideas? Foxtail CSA newsletters back to 2010 are on our farm website.

www.foxtailcommunityfarm.com/MemberNewsletters.html

Here are a few favorites to re-visit this month:

March 25, 2012

~ Caramelized Onion & Mushroom Quiche
(take it over the moon by using duck eggs)

April 28, 2014

~ Gingery Lentil Stew