



Notes From the Pea Patch

Foxtail Community Farm ~ Vol. 11, No. 11 ~ May 16, 2016

Farmer's Notebook

There is a phenomenon I've observed, in which things seem to move faster as they get closer. A slow-setting sun suddenly slips from view all at once; daylight hours lengthen faster just before the spring equinox; a free-falling apple accelerates on its way to bonking a philosophic mathematician on the head. These events have scientific explanations learned in long-ago physics classes – having to do with angles of refraction and sine curves and good old gravity.

Whether it's physics or just human angst, this is how the entire month of May feels to me on the farm. All the enterprises and activities we've been planning in the off season suddenly are racing toward us at full speed – a mounting tidal wave that only gets faster as it advances. Over the next three weeks we'll have hosted our spring seedling sale, opened the weekend farmstand, launched our new farm stay campsites, transplanted 6,000 onion seedlings, transitioned 100 baby chicks to from brooder to pasture, moved 10,000 honeybees into the empty hives, closed out the winter CSA and rolled into summer shares.

Lucky for me, Mother's Day also comes in May. I took full advantage of the good will of this day, in which everyone has to say “yes” to my requests without grumbling. Outfitted with brooms, measuring tapes, a weed-whipper and good ol' family spirit we spent the day working on the camping area. By mid afternoon the camp kitchen and glamping tent were set up (just in time for me to switch from “mom mode” to “daughter mode” as the grandmas arrived).

In the tidal wave of May, it's wise to follow little Dory's advice: “just keep swimming”. I know everything will get done, and soon enough we'll be bobbing on the other side. I hope you'll stop by for our Open House this weekend to say hello, buy a few plants, sample some baked goods and make sure we're all still afloat. ~ Rachel

This Week's Harvest

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



asparagus – a perennial plant in the lily family that produces edible shoots from an underground “crown” (stem) for about six weeks each

spring. To store wrap ends in a damp paper towel and store bunch in a plastic bag in fridge within drawer or stand bunch upright in about an inch of water in fridge. Steam, grill or sauté for just a few minutes to retain crispness.

chives – the smallest and earliest allium (onion), usually used as an herb for spring cooking. Mince for salads, quiche, or to top baked potatoes. Refrigerate in a sealed plastic bag.



lettuce – just a little bit, a first taste from the fields. Wash, spin dry and refrigerate in a plastic bag.

microgreens – a gourmet and high-priced farmers' market item, these are simply itty bitty mixed-variety seedlings harvested only 2 weeks after sowing. Lots of flavor in a tiny package! Lovely addition to salad. Refrigerate in sealed bag.



potatoes – one last serving from our winter stores. These small sized spuds a mix of varieties, are great for boiling or roasting.

sorrel - this lemony-tart leaf is a cool-weather crop that we see in early spring and again in the fall. Can be used as a salad green or an herb. Good mixed with lettuce in a salad, or brings nice flavor to dishes featuring sweet or rich ingredients.





Recipes of the Week: little tastes of spring

When the first spring crops appear, we celebrate little tastes of fresh flavor. An in-season May dinner might featuring several small green dishes to nibble alongside some cooked grains or pasta, hard-boiled eggs and other simple fare

a little green salad with lemon vinaigrette

in a salad bowl mash together 1 clove minced garlic + a pinch of sea salt into a paste. Squeeze in juice of ½ lemon. Whisk in ~2-3 tbs extra virgin olive oil. Add some minced chives and a grind of black pepper. Add fresh lettuce and sorrel leaves, toss to coat. Add microgreens and toss again.

asparagus with garlic and red pepper

In a skillet, heat a splash or two of extra virgin olive oil. Slice 2-3 cloves of garlic and add to pan along with a pinch of crushed red pepper flakes. Quickly add whole asparagus spears. Cook, turning once or twice, until spears are just tender and glossy. Sprinkle with sea salt.

sorrel puree

Gently steam fresh sorrel leaves in a sauce pan with 1-2 Tbs. of water until wilted. Remove from heat and add a pat of butter or drizzle of olive oil and season with salt and pepper. Purée in a blender. Drizzle over roasted root vegetables, meat or cooked grains.

noodles with spicy peanut sauce & microgreens

cook rice or soba noodles per directions. Thinly slice seasonal vegetables of choice and steam until crisp-tender. Whisk together equal amounts of natural peanut butter & soy sauce; stir in a little grated fresh ginger, sriracha and natural sweetener (honey/ brown sugar/ agave). Toss noodles with sauce. Sprinkle each serving with lots of microgreens and some chopped peanuts.

roasted baby potatoes with herbs

Heat oven to 400°F. Scrub and pat dry ~ 16 small potatoes (leave skins on). Rub with olive oil and sprinkle with good salt and pepper. Place potatoes and 2-3 smashed unpeeled garlic cloves in a baking dish with a few sprigs of fresh or dried herbs. Roast until tender and slightly crispy - start checking after ~15 minutes, and shake the pan periodically to turn.

boiled potatoes with chives & crème fraîche

Gently scrub unpeeled small potatoes. Place in a pot and cover with cold water plus a pinch of good salt. Bring to a boil, reduce heat and simmer until fork-tender. Drain. Slice potatoes in half or partially smash each with a fork. Drizzle with olive oil or melted butter, sprinkle with minced fresh chives, and top with a dollop of crème fraîche or sour cream.

FOXTAIL COMMUNITY FARM

Spring Open House & Seedling Sale

Saturday May 21 & Sunday May 22

9 am – 4 pm

farm-raised vegetable, herb & flower seedlings for your home garden

many heirloom & organic varieties

farmstand ~ hayride tours ~ kids' crafts

all are welcome!