



# Notes From the Pea Patch

Foxtail Community Farm ~ Vol. 11, No. 14 ~ June 13, 2016

## Farmer's Notebook

Well, back to April again today. High of 60° with strong winds. Yesterday we put another line on the pea trellis to make sure they are secure. They are now 3' high and just starting to flower, which means peas in 2 weeks! The tomatoes have not been trellised yet and will not be happy with this weather. The melons and summer squash also do not like cold, windy days. But all the spring crops will like today much more than the high 80s forecast for next weekend.

Spinach and beets are on the harvest list this week, two crops we have had poor luck with in recent years. Soil tests last fall indicated a lack of potassium and magnesium in the soil, two key nutrients for these vegetables. We applied a natural mineral fertilizer this spring and it has definitely helped. The beets look great, the spinach ok. Unfortunately, in organic agriculture there are few quick fixes.

Also on the menu this week (or next depending on your delivery date) is our first batch of broilers. These were hatched on April 13, making them 9 weeks old, our optimal processing age. These birds arrive to us in the mail as day old chicks. They spend their first two weeks in a large brooder with a heat lamp, the next two weeks in an open greenhouse, and their final 5 weeks in a movable chicken coop out on pasture in our back field. Throughout this time they had room to run, scratch for bugs, and interact as chickens do. Come visit and see how they are raised first hand!

Lastly, we received some unfortunate though not unexpected news that Fix Bros (and other local orchards) lost their peach crop to a late frost this year. Cherries are also questionable. We will check around to see if we can find replacements (possibly even checking with our sister farm in Pennsylvania). Otherwise we will fill in with an extra week of another delicious fruit. ~ *Eric*

## This Week's Harvest

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



**baby beets** - the naturally sweet, earthy flavor of beets makes them a CSA favorite. The first harvest thins the row to make space for larger roots to grow. These small tender beets are especially nice for a salad, roasted and mixed with their greens. Remove greens and store separately for up to a week; store roots unwashed in fridge for several weeks. Adding lemon juice or vinegar to cooking water, and leaving peels on until after cooking, helps retain color and nutrients.

**scallions** - also called green onions, scallions bring onion flavor and their own unique fresh crispness to many spring dishes. Refrigerate in plastic bag. Use white and crisp green portions.



**spinach** - this mild tender green is one of our most treasured spring crops. Use raw or cooked in a variety of dishes. Refrigerate in plastic bag, wash well in cold water before using.



*also...*

**bok choy ~ lettuce ~ radishes**

**Fruit Shares: strawberries!** This first delivery is from our neighbors at Stanton's Farm in Feura Bush. Eat strawberries quickly for best flavor, or store unwashed in fridge for 1-2 days. Wash before eating. *Conventionally grown.*



## Coming Attractions

- ◆ Napa Cabbage
- ◆ Pea Shoots
- ◆ More strawberries



## Recipe of the Week: Korean Spring Salad

*We love this salad; with some seasonal variations it shows up on our busy weeknight table regularly through the year. It has one serious flaw: its reliance on dried packaged noodles for the signature crunchy topping. The cheap commercial Ramen noodles – even after you throw away the gross chemical flavoring package – are not particularly good for you because they are chemically processed and deep-fried. I'm desperately looking for organic air-dried Asian noodles to replace them in my pantry, so please share if you have a good source for these!*

- 1 head bok choy, finely chopped & ribboned
- 1-2 carrots, finely julienned or grated
- 2-3 scallions, whites and crisp green portions, sliced
- a few radishes, thinly sliced
- ½ cup sunflower seeds
- ½ cup sliced almonds
- ¼ cup melted butter
- 6 oz dried Ramen noodles, broken up into good-sized pieces
- 3-4 tbs soy sauce
- ¼ cup cider or rice vinegar
- 2-4 tbs brown sugar
- 1/4 cup peanut, safflower or another mild (non-GMO) oil
- splash of sesame oil

Prep vegetables and set aside. You can add any other seasonal vegetables in combination with those suggested (when available, we love shredded napa cabbage, grated daikon or turnip, thinly sliced broccoli or a handful of snow peas).

Heat oven to 400 F. Combine sunflower seeds, almonds, butter and noodles. Spread on a baking sheet and toast in oven, stirring frequently, until golden but not too dark, about 8-10 minutes. Remove from oven and let cool (you can also do this step on stove-top in a frying pan).

Combine remaining ingredients, whisking well. Add vegetables and noodle mixture, toss to combine thoroughly and serve immediately.

## On the Farm



We've always got a lot going on here, and as a community farm that's just the way we want it. We love to share the farm with CSA members, neighbors and new friends. While growing good food remains the heart of our mission, we also strive to provide a place where people can learn, work and reconnect - with food, with each other and with the natural environment missing from so many people's daily lives. It's this ideal that prompted us to include the word "community" in our farm name when we chose it 12 years ago.

Going beyond growing and selling food makes good sense for small family farms financially as well. Agritourism – activities that bring visitors directly to farms – helps raise awareness of family farming, increases exposure to farm products and provides farmers with more diversified sources of income. Agritourism has been a quiet but growing trend among small farms in Europe, Australia, Asia and North America over the past several decades. As farmland and food production are consolidated in the hands of a shrinking number of giant agribusiness corporations, while more and more small farms go out of business every year, this type of innovation may be critical to the financial viability of farms like ours.

In keeping with our approach to sustainable farming and living, we strive to develop new ventures as natural extensions of our homesteading and farming systems. Our weekend [farm store](#), new camping [farmstays](#), volunteer activities, farm tours and workshops offer many opportunities for folks to connect - whether for a quick shopping trip, an afternoon visit or a weekend-long stay.

We invite you to engage in [farm activities](#) throughout the season. Follow our new weekly "On the Farm" emails, check the website regularly or contact us to plan a customized activity for your group. As CSA members you'll receive significant discounts on farm tours, workshops and farmstays. So go "beyond the box" and experience all your farm has to offer you!