



June 24, 2010

Greetings CSAers,

I am writing from Detroit, where I've been attending the US Social Forum and visiting with cousins. I've met some very interesting and inspiring people in this city doing some wonderful things. The projects I'm most interested in are of course urban farming. Close to half the homes in Detroit are abandoned, and there is an abundance of vacant land. The city hosts about 900 community gardens, and the oldest continuously operating public market, Eastern Market in downtown Detroit. It is a city of incredible blight and at the same time incredible spirit and innovation. I will be coming home with renewed confidence that our little project contributes to a much larger movement of people who are taking the control of their communities, and their economies, and their food into their own hands, and finding hope in growing things.

What's in Your Box

- Baby beets with greens
- Garlic tips—use them just like garlic or green onions, fresh or in cooking
- Lettuce—oak leaf shown here
- Kale—Siberian shown here
- Mustards (Green Wave shown here, on the far right) or Chard



Beth's Farm News: What's Growing On

Last week I heard an interesting meteorological statistic that I chose to laugh at so I wouldn't get depressed: for the past 60 days, we have had only 5 days of "normal" temperature. The other 55 days were 10 to 11 degrees below normal. The "facts" confirmed my experience and I imagine yours: it has been cold and wet this late spring!

Since we can always look at the glass as either half-empty or half-full, there are pros and cons to these cool, mild conditions. On the one hand, it has made for great transplanting weather! I haven't panicked watching seedlings wilt when we transplant and hurriedly lay out drip tape. A small group of volunteers came out last Saturday and helped transplant mustard greens, mizuna, and spinach. There was no need to worry about watering since it all came from the sky while we planted. The cold-loving brassicas -- kale, mustards, and cabbage -- flourish in this weather, as you may have noticed from the large tender kale leaves you have received. On the other hand, the sun-loving crops are not as happy. I'm nervous that many of the corn seeds I sowed earlier this month have rotted away in our higher-than-normal rainfall.

These fluctuations in weather patterns make up some of the risk that farmers take in producing food for people. The CSA (Community Supported Agriculture) model that you have chosen to participate in makes you a willing partner in sharing that risk. We do our best to grow a wide



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variety of crops, and then the weather makes the decisions for us.

Right now we get to enjoy lush greens that come in a variety of colors, flavors, shapes, and textures. I spied some white pea flowers, so I hope we will be munching on peas by Independence Day. Thank you again for investing in your local food system!

Recipes

Beet Slices in Creamy Mustard Sauce *Angelic Organics Kitchen* (adapted from *Greene on Greens*)

For this recipe, tender cooked beets are sliced and warmed in a creamy and delicious mustard sauce. If you cook the beets ahead of time, this becomes a low-fuss, high-impact side dish you can prepare and serve almost instantly.

1 1/2 pounds beets, scrubbed, trimmed
3 tablespoons unsalted butter
1/4 cup chopped shallot or red onion
1 tablespoon all-purpose flour
1/2 cup vegetable or chicken stock
1/4 cup milk
3 tablespoons prepared Dijon mustard
salt and freshly ground black pepper
chopped fresh parsley

Preheat the oven to 400°F. Place beets in a small roasting pan with 1/2 cup water. Cover with foil and bake until beets are easily pierced with a sharp knife, 45 minutes to 1 hour depending on size. Allow beets to cool slightly, then run under cold water and slip off their skins. Slice the beets in half; cut each half into 1/4-inch wedges. Melt the butter in a large skillet over medium-low heat. Add the shallot or red onion; cook, stirring, for 4 minutes. Add flour and stir constantly for 2 minutes. Whisk in the stock, milk, and mustard. Cook and stir the mixture until slightly thickened. Add the beets, continuing to cook and stir until they are warmed through, about 10 minutes. Remove the skillet from heat. Season with salt and pepper to taste and garnish with parsley.

Fettuccine with Swiss Chard, Garlic and Parmesan Cheese

3/4 pound fettuccine
1 tablespoon olive oil
1 large onion, chopped
pinch salt
freshly ground black pepper
4 garlic curls, sliced small
2 pounds Swiss chard, washed (could substitute any leafy green)
a pinch nutmeg
2 tablespoons low-fat sour cream
1/4 cup Parmesan cheese



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Place a large pot of water on to boil. Add the fettuccine and cook about 12 minutes until al dente. Drain. Meanwhile, cut the Swiss chard into 1/4-inch wide pieces. Heat the olive oil in a large sauté pan over moderately high heat. Add the onions, salt and pepper and cook until the onions start to soften, about 5 minutes. Add the garlic and cook 1 minute more. Add the chard and nutmeg to the skillet and cook for 5 minutes more. Stir in the low-fat sour cream. Toss the fettuccine with the Swiss chard mixture. Divide the fettuccine among 4 warmed serving plates and sprinkle with Parmesan cheese. Serve immediately.

Enjoy!