TWO SMALL FARMS
Community Supported Agriculture
June 2–4, 2010

Cilantro, by Andy Griffin

Cilantro is a strong herb that's always provoked strong reactions. What other food can you think of that's been compared by the most ancient and revered authorities to both manna from heaven and bedbugs?

Cilantro is the Spanish and American name for *Coriandrum sativum*, or coriander, an aromatic member of the *Umbelliferae*, or carrot family. Plenty of carrot family members, like dill, anise, caraway, and celery also have strong scents but their names don't have a pejorative odor. Coriander, on the other hand, may trace its name to the Greek *koris*, meaning stinky bug. Classical scholars seem divided as to whether the stinky bug that lent its name to the fragrant herb was a bedbug or a wood bug. In defense of coriander there's also a possibility that herb derives its name from the Greek word *koros*, meaning satiety, which is the root of the medical word *acoria*, meaning insatiable hunger.

Coriander evolved in the Middle East and has been used there for ages. Sanskrit texts that date back 7000 years mention the herb as do Egyptian papyri. Cilantro's defenders might be interested to know that the Bible refers to coriander in the Book of Numbers, chapter 11: 7, "The manna was like coriander seed..." Given that manna was also described as bread from heaven that appeared like flakes of frost and tasted like honey wafers it's difficult for me to understand how, except for sharing a color, manna could be anything at all like coriander seed. I think it's interesting, though, that the Israelites were commanded to gather only so much manna as they could eat. Some people disregarded this warning and tried to hoard the manna but on the following day the old manna had broken out in maggots. Bugs again!

Northern Europeans used the seeds of coriander as a spice to flavor foods and liquors but they never warmed to eating the herb's fresh leaves the way the Persians, Turks, Indians and Chinese did. Coriander leaves were frequently dismissed as having a soapy, stinky quality. When the Spaniards conquered South America they brought coriander with them and the fresh herb was readily accepted by the indigenous peoples. This was probably because Native Americans were used to the strong coriander flavor. They were already cultivating and eating another aromatic carrot family member with an almost identical smell to coriander called *culantro*.

It didn't take long for *culantro* to travel from Central America to Asia on the Spanish treasure galleons and be accepted into various tropical cuisines there that already were familiar with coriander. I wonder if the old world "coriander" picked up its Spanish name cilantro after its smell prompted association with the new world *culantro*. It's a pleasing thought but I don't have any word histories that can back me up.

European scientists named *culantro*, this "new" coriander impersonator they encountered, *Eryngium foetidum*. *Foetidum*, of course, means "stinking," as in the English word "fetid." I think both cilantro and *culantro* smell refreshing, invigorating, and inviting. Sometimes we have to look past science to find the truth. On my side are the billions of Indians, Chinese, Mexicans, Turks, Persians and other assorted jewels of humanity who find tasty reasons to enjoy cilantro with their meals. I hope you like it too.

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This Week

Cilantro HG
Arugula MF
Strawberries HG
Chantenay Carrots MF
Spinach OR Baby Chard MF
Red Butter AND Red Leaf Lettuce HG
Mystery HG
Mystery MF

Flowers: Mixed Bouquet TF

Recipes and Notes

(see www.mariquita.com/recipes)

How Julia Would Cook up This Box: I love pesto everything, so it's true I might be tempted to make either cilantro pesto and or arugula pesto. I saw Jonathan briefly this weekend (the chef who gives us recipes each week) and he teased me saying, "Girls always want to pesto-ize everything." Okay, I'm a girl, so it all makes sense. I can of course dress noodles, but I can also serve with crackers and cheese, spread on a sandwich, or freeze for future use in freezer jars (any canning jars that have straight sides) I would cook the chard or spinach because I loved cooked greens, but the spinach would also make a great salad. More salads with the lettuce, or perhaps some lettuce wraps. It looks like many of you will get summer squash! I would grill this either on a grill in my yard if it were already fired up, or on a grill pan on my stove. Then eat or use in composed or grain salads. I've been enjoying arugula salads recently too: wash and dress greens like you would lettuce salads.

Cilantro Lime Carrots, Recipe submitted by Bethany, adapted from *Ralph's Market*

6 medium carrots (about 1 lb.)	2 TBL olive oil, divided use
1 tbsp. chopped cilantro	½ TBL lime juice
Salt and freshly ground pepper	

Trim ends from carrots. Scrub and brush with 1 tbsp. oil. Grill over medium heat until crisp-tender, turning occasionally. Meanwhile, stir together remaining oil, cilantro and lime juice in a small bowl. Season to taste with salt and freshly ground pepper and brush on warm carrots before serving.

Strawberries, Strawberries, Strawberries!

The fields are full! It's time to make your strawberry jam, stock up on frozen berries for smoothies, or make strawberry shortcake for your end-of-school party. We have three ways to get a great deal on great strawberries this week!

(1) Strawberry U-Picks: at our High Ground farm in Watsonville, Saturdays, June 5th, 12th, and 19th, 9 AM - 1 PM. Berries cost $1.50 per pound. You can also buy prepicked flats for $20. The strawberries are at our home farm, (521 Harkins Slough Rd.), NOT at our Redman field. Check www.highgroundorganics.com/farmevents.html for directions.

(2) Strawberry Discount for CSA Members at Farmstand! Don't have time to pick them yourself? Now through the end of June, current CSA members can get flats of strawberries at our Redman House Farmstand (just off Hwy 1 at Riverside Drive in Watsonville) for $20 each (open Wednesday through Sunday, 10-6).

(3) Strawberry Pick Up in Palo Alto Friday, 4-6 PM: We'll have flats to sell at the Palo Alto/Ross Rd. pick-up site on Friday June 4th, from 4-6 PM. You need to pre-order by e-mailing Jeanne at csa@highgroundorganics.com, so we know how many flats to bring. Bring a check or cash to the site when you come to pick up (we'll send directions when we confirm your preorder). $20 for CSA members for a nicely packed full, heavy flat; $24 for non-CSA members.

Salad Ideas, from Chef Jonathan Miller

A spinach salad with strawberries, goat cheese and toasted sliced almonds, and a nice berry jam balsamic vinaigrette would be easy and delicious, but if I got chard I'd still have the salad but I'd use the lettuce! And Then I'd wilt the chard and serve it with brown rice and arugula pesto!

Arugula Pesto, adapted from *Epicurious* by Chef Jonathan Miller

4 cups (packed) arugula leaves	¼ cup pine nuts, toasted
¼ cup (packed) freshly grated Parmesan cheese	¼ cup olive oil

Blend arugula, pine nuts and Parmesan cheese in processor until almost smooth. With machine running, gradually add olive oil; process until well blended. Season pesto to taste with salt and pepper. (Can be made ahead. Cover and let stand up to 2 hours at room temperature or refrigerate up to 1 day. Bring to room temperature before using.)

I've been craving a nice arugula pesto lately to stir into brown rice or wheat berries. I'd have to shave big parmesan curls onto that, lay it down on a bed of lemony chard.

Frittata, from Chef Jonathan Miller

Olive oil	2 small shallots, minced
1 small handful baby chard or spinach, julienned	4 basil leaves or arugula, chopped
1 TBL butter	3 eggs, beaten
parmesan	

Heat your oven to 500. In a small skillet that can go in the oven heat a tablespoon of olive oil and sauté the shallots until soft, about 4 minutes. Add the chard and cook briskly, stirring, until the chard wilts. Add a tablespoon of water if necessary to keep things just a tad moist. Add some salt, the butter and allow the butter to melt, then pour in the eggs and basil. Stir lightly to mix everything, then stop stirring, lower the heat, and allow the bottom of the frittata to set over low/med-low heat. When just set on the sides and bottom (a few minutes), grate some parmesan on the top and put the skillet in the oven and cook through. It should puff up like a soufflé (unless your eggs are really old). This should take maybe 5 minutes. Pull it out and allow to rest for 2 minutes, then gently loosen the edges and slide the finished frittata on a plate. Finish with a dollop of sour cream and some more basil (or arugula) and serve warm or at room temperature. Note, if you get oyster mushrooms in your box this week they would be delicious in this. Just chop them and sauté them with your shallots at the beginning.

This recipe is for a "personal" sized frittata – I made it in a small, 6 inch cast iron skillet. Many people have an 8 inch sized skillet, and that will work, too. Even though it's on the small side it fed 3 people.

Carrot Soup, from Chef Jonathan Miller

Oil or butter	1 small onion, chopped
2" ginger, peeled and grated	1 lb carrots, chopped
2-3 cup veggie stock or chicken stock	¼ cup cream
cilantro, chopped	

Heat 2-3 TBL olive oil or butter in a pot and add the onion. Sauté until softened, about 8 minutes, then add the ginger and carrots. Lower the heat, stir to coat everything with some oil, then cover and cook for about 5 minutes. Add the stock – use just enough to barely cover the carrots – and the cream, bring to a simmer, cover again, lower heat and cook until the carrots are super tender, about 25-30 minutes, or up to 50. Allow to cool somewhat and then blend the soup in a blender. Add some salt and taste for seasoning. Reheat gently, then garnish with some chopped cilantro.

Summer Squash Pizza, from Chef Jonathan Miller

3 large summer squash	parmesan
olive oil	

If you get summer squash in your box, try this simple pizza. It's a different style in that it is basically one ingredient, used generously and fresh, to create a pizza that tastes nearly of just that ingredient. In this case it creates pizza slices that taste just of summer squash and a bit of parmesan. Use your favorite pizza dough or a pre-made crust. Try to make it as thin as possible. This recipe is for a small pizza, about 8 inches round.

Heat your oven to 500 (or 400 if using a pre-made crust). Grate the squash, toss it with a little salt and allow it to drain in a strainer set over a bowl or the sink for about 10 minutes. Squeeze the squash in your hands to extract as much water as you can, then toss it with a couple tablespoons of olive oil and a little parmesan cheese. Brush your crust with some olive oil, sprinkle some salt on it, then top it with the squash. Slide the pizza in the oven and bake until heated through and the crust is cooked, about 10-12 minutes.

From Mariquita Farm: *carrots, spinach, chard, arugula, mystery. From* High Ground*: strawberries, cilantro, lettuce, mystery. From* Thomas Farm: *flowers*.