



TWO SMALL FARMS

Community Supported Agriculture

June 9-11, 2010

Lacinato Kale, by Andy Griffin

The kale in your harvest box this week is Lacinato kale, an heirloom Italian kale. One way to think about kale is to picture a cabbage plant that turns its emerging leaves outward to form an open rosette, instead of curling its leaves inward to form a tight ball. Look at Lacinato kale's blistered, puckered leaves; don't they look like darker, straighter Savoy cabbage leaves? Both kales and cabbages are classified by scientists as Brassica oleracea, and if they're planted together in the garden, with the help of some lusty bees, kales and cabbages will eagerly cross.

Kale is a favorite early crop for farmers because kale is less problematical at this time of year than cabbage. Nature is restless in the spring. At the heart of every cabbage that's spent the winter curled up tight in a muddy field there's a swelling flower stalk aching to break out into the sunshine. As the days get longer in late spring over-wintered cabbages must bust wide open and let their flower stalks emerge. Kale, by contrast, can be harvested over a longer season than cabbage. As harvesters can pluck the largest leaves from the kale stalk while the plant is still young and new, tiny leaves will keep emerging from the heart. Eventually the kale must go to seed too, but not before affording the farmer multiple pickings.

I've grown quite a number of different kinds of kale but Lacinato kale is my favorite. You may already be familiar with this green by a different name. I've seen it appear on restaurant menus as Cavolo nero, for example, which is its Italian name. Cavolo nero means "black cabbage," and it's a good name for this plant because it alerts us to the plant's membership in the cabbage clan, gives us a sense of the breed's Italian heritage, and speaks to the crop's characteristic dark coloration. The English call this kale "Black Tuscan kale," which is a good name too since it informs us of the color and provenance of the crop. "Tuscan Palm Tree kale," another English name, also gives us an understanding of the crop's "roots" as well as offering up a poetic description of the plant's shape. Lacinato kale, the name I favor, comes to us from Italian and Latin and refers to the blistered, or lacinate, texture of the leaves.

Sometimes I've seen Lacinato kale advertised in Farmers markets and food stores as "Dinosaur Kale," or even "Dino kale." The logic behind this silly name is obscure but I've been told that it refers to the "prehistoric" aspect of the plant's "look" and the similarity of its texture to the skin of a

dinosaur. I smell a crass marketing ploy. Nobody's ever seen a dinosaur, so who's to say what color and texture they were? I reject the cutesy moniker, "Dino kale," as a distasteful and opaque assault on clear English and tradition. Lacinato kale has been cultivated and appreciated for millennia, and during that time it has picked up many names that inform as well as signify identity, so why not use one of them?

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Veggie Notes

Everything into your fridge as soon as you return home, except the avocados and the cherry tomatoes (if you get them)

-- leave them on a cool spot on your kitchen counter. The strawberries are picked ripe from the fields so they should be stored in the warmest part of your fridge (usually on the door) and eaten within a day or two.

How to store avocados: They can be stored on your counter until ready to eat. Only refrigerate once they are soft enough to eat. A firm avocado will ripen in a paper bag or in a fruit basket at room temperature within a few days. If you have used a portion of a ripe avocado, it is best to store the remainder in the refrigerator. Store in a plastic bag, wrap with plastic wrap, or place on a plate and cover with plastic wrap. Sprinkling the exposed surface(s) with lemon juice will help to prevent the browning that can occur when the flesh comes in contact with oxygen in the air.

This Week

Lacinato Kale MF

Parsley MF

Strawberries HG

Bacon Avocados *

Romaine OR Red Leaf

Lettuce HG

Mystery HG

Mystery MF

Flowers: Mixed Bouquet TF

Dinner/Cooking Class

June 23rd in SF at Local Mission Eatery

Price: \$60 (food and class and tip inclusive, beverages extra: they will have house-made soda, water, beer and wine by the glass and likely other choices too!). Jake from Local Mission Eatery will prepare a three course meal with large emphasis on vegetables—all from Mariquita Farm and High Ground Organics. Andy and Julia (at the least) will be there. One course will be a 'teaching' course where everyone watches the chef and pitches in to chop and cook and learn. To reserve your spot, please email Shelley at csa@twosmallfarms.com and send your check made payable to Two Small Farms to Two Small Farms, PO Box 2065, Watsonville, CA 95077. Current CSA members have priority if this fills up fast. Email Shelley if you're interested in any case.

This dinner/class benefits Martin de Porres House of Hospitality, a local food bank ("free restaurant"), which serves breakfast and lunch six days a week, and has a beautiful garden.

How to Get More Strawberries!

We're swimming in strawberries! Time to make your strawberry jam, freeze berries for smoothies, or make strawberry shortcake. Here's how you can get some:

(1) Strawberry U-Picks: at High Ground Organics in Watsonville, Saturdays, 12th, and 19th, 9 AM - 1 PM. \$1.50 per pound. The strawberries are at our home farm, (521 Harkins Slough Rd.), NOT at our Redman field. Check www.highgroundorganics.com/farments.html for directions.

(2) Strawberry Discount at our farmstand 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 Blossom Hill this Friday, June 11th, 4-6 PM: Buy flats of strawberries off the truck at a CSA pick-up site. You need to pre-order by e-mailing Jeanne at csa@highgroundorganics.com. 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.

(4) Strawberry Pick Up in San Francisco next Friday, June 18th, 4-6 PM: We'll have flats to sell at our Folsom St. CSA pick-up site. You need to pre-order by e-mailing Jeanne at csa@highgroundorganics.com. Bring a check or cash when you come to pick up (we'll send directions when we confirm your preorder). \$20 for CSA members; \$24 for non-members.

Spicy Tomato and Avocado Salad, from Chef

Jonathan Miller

1 jalapeno, minced	¼ cup lime juice
½ cup olive oil	1 small garlic clove, minced
1½ lb cherry tomatoes, halved	1 small sweet onion, sliced in thin rings
2 avocados, sliced	cilantro

Combine the jalapeno, lime, oil, and garlic with a generous pinch of salt and mix well. Fold in the tomatoes and onion until well coated, then fold in the avocado. Season with salt and pepper and serve with whole cilantro sprigs. Have some bread on hand to mop up the liquid. If you don't prefer things spicy, be sure to seed and de-vein your jalapeno.

Kale-Potato Soup, from Chef Jonathan Miller

1 cup dry cannellini beans, soaked overnight	olive oil
1 onion, chopped	1 carrot, chopped
½ fennel bulb, chopped	3 garlic cloves, chopped
1 cup spelt berries (or wheat berries)	1 lb potatoes, diced
1 bunch kale, stemmed and finely chopped	1 lb tomatoes (ok to use canned), chopped
½ cup parsley, chopped	

Heat a few tablespoons of olive oil in a large soup pot and add the onion, carrot, and fennel. Cook to soft, but not brown, about 8 minutes, then add the garlic until the onion begins to brown, a few more minutes. Drain the beans, rinse them and add them to the pot with 8-9 cups water. Bring to a boil, cover, lower the heat and simmer gently until the beans are nearly cooked through, 45-50 minutes. Add the spelt berries, the

tomatoes, and a good amount of salt, up to a tablespoon at this point. Simmer, covered, for another 10 minutes. Add the kale and potatoes, cover and cook until the kale is fully cooked, at least 20 minutes. Finish with the parsley and a generous drizzle of olive oil and pepper. Check for seasoning and serve hot.

Raw Tuscan Kale Salad with Pecorino, from the NYT submitted by CSA member Mary Ellen P.

1 bunch Tuscan kale	½ garlic clove, finely chopped
¼ cup finely grated pecorino cheese, more for garnish	1 thin slice country bread (part whole-wheat or rye is nice), or ¼ cup coarse bread crumbs
Freshly squeezed juice of 1 lemon	3 TBL extra virgin olive oil, more for garnish
1/8 tsp. red pepper flakes	¼ tsp. kosher salt
Freshly ground black pepper, to taste.	

Trim bottom 2 inches off kale stems and discard. Slice kale, including ribs, into 3/4-inch-wide ribbons. You should have 4 to 5 cups. Place kale in a large bowl. If using bread, toast it until golden on both sides. Tear it into small pieces and grind in a food processor until mixture forms coarse crumbs.

Using a mortar and pestle, or with the back of a knife, pound garlic into a paste. Transfer garlic to a small bowl. Add ¼ cup cheese, 3 TBL oil, lemon juice, salt, pepper flakes and black pepper, and whisk to combine. Pour dressing over kale and toss very well to thoroughly combine (dressing will be thick and need lots of tossing to coat leaves).

Let salad sit for 5 minutes, then serve topped with bread crumbs, additional cheese and a drizzle of oil.

Summer Squash with Quinoa, from Chef Jonathan Miller

1 cup quinoa	1 TBL balsamic vinegar
3 anchovy filets, minced	olive oil
1 garlic clove, minced	1 lb summer squash, grated
½ lb oyster mushrooms, sliced	¼ cup basil leaves (or use your parsley), chopped

Cook your quinoa how you like it. My favorite method requires a little more labor, but tastes great. Here it is: rinse the quinoa thoroughly and drain it as well as possible. Heat a medium saucepan and add the rinsed quinoa and toast it, stirring occasionally, until it begins to color and pop. It will be very aromatic at this point, too. Add 2 cups cold water and a generous pinch of salt, stirring, and bring to a boil. Cover, reduce the heat to low, and steam for 15 minutes. Remove from heat and allow to rest for another 5 minutes before fluffing with a spoon, and allow to cool.

While the quinoa cooks, combine the anchovy and balsamic vinegar in a small bowl. Heat some olive oil in a large skillet and add the garlic for 30 seconds, stirring constantly. Add the mushrooms, squash and the anchovies and cook, uncovered to cook off some of the water from the squash, until cooked through, about 5-8 minutes. Remove from heat and fold in the quinoa and the basil (or parsley) and season generously with salt and pepper.

From Mariquita Farm: lacinato kale, parsley, mystery. From High Ground: strawberries, lettuce, mystery. From Marsalisi Farm: bacon avocados. From Thomas Farm: flowers.