

Two Small Farms Newsletter

Issue Number 268 - March 17th, 2004

In your box this week:

Spring Garlic
Chantenay Carrots
Red Beets
Parsnips
Soup Celery
Arugula
Orach (purple spinach) or Chard,
Lettuce

THANKS to our Adobe Employee CSA members that helped us get Acrobat!

Initial Veggie Notes from Julia

The orach (bright purple spinach) can be eaten in a salad or cooked like you would spinach. My favorite chard preparation is below. Garlic! This spring garlic can be used in many of the places that clove garlic is used...you can saute it on it's own and put that onto a pizza or onto a sandwich. Soup Celery!! Our children enjoy having a little trough of peanut butter in the thin celery stalks, it can be chopped raw or used in cooking like you would supermarket celery. Make sure to use the leaves, that's where the flavor is.

The parsnips are the white carrot-looking things. They are best cooked, they can be mashed along with potatoes or made into a soup with just a few potatoes or carrots as a soup-partner. The beets are great raw and grated into a salad or cooked up as you would a familiar round beet.

A Note from Jeanne and Steve at High Ground Organics

Welcome to the spring 2004 CSA season! We're all refreshed and ready to launch into another farm year. At High Ground we're delighted to have most of our field crew back from last year.

We kept Aurelio, Amos, Javier, and Felix on part-time through the winter, and have hired back Edilberto and Paula. They'll be joined by Felix's uncle Neemias this year. With Katie working on

administration for a 2nd year, things are running very smoothly in the office. We (and especially our kids) are enjoying our first tastes of spring strawberries, which should be producing abundantly in a few weeks. We're planting 10 types of potatoes this year; some early varieties should be ready soon, and we're looking forward to harvesting salad mix, spinach, baby turnips, and scallions for you in the coming weeks. Meanwhile we're planting, planting, planting!

From Andy at Mariquita Farm

Welcome to a new season of CSA produce deliveries. This will be Mariquita Farm's third year with the Two Small Farms community supported agriculture program, and our eighth year doing CSA deliveries. Before joining forces three years ago Julia and I were in a good natured competition with Jeanne and Stephen of High Ground Organics. Four heads thinking together have proven to be better at problem solving than two sets of two heads ever were and we are all very positive about the 2004 season.

While you will be receiving your first boxes this week on March 17th and 18th, actual planning and planting started way back at the end of June 2003. It was in June of last year that we planted the parsnips destined to make up a part of this week's box. Parsnips grow slowly all summer and fall. During the winter the foliage dies back even as the roots swell and sweeten. The parsnip, like most other roots, converts starches to sugar during the cold winter months so as to lower the effective freezing point and protect itself. Beets are at their best during the cooler months too. Your beets were planted back at the end of August 2003. The soup celery is making its second CSA harvest this first week of the new season. Last year I planted soup celery in August so that harvest shareholders could have a bunch in November for soups and stuffings. The soup celery grew back in time for a spring recutting. If stuffing for turkey isn't seasonal and soup isn't on your menu mince the stems into salads; they're great. The spring garlic was planted in October 2003 to be ready this week. The orach that some of you will get this week we planted in January. Those of you who receive

chard instead this week will get orach next week from our February planting. See, the CSA program doesn't stop when deliveries do. Thanks for your support. It helps us all year long.

Read more of Andy's writing at www.ladybugletter.com

Recipes

Parsnips! The easy thing is to roast them with other veggies in the oven, with carrots, lengths of spring garlic, beets, potatoes and onions if you have them around. If you're not a parsnip fan but you like to bake, try this cake, it really is good! (You can do 1 1/2 cups grated parsnip and 1 1/2 cups grated carrot if you like.)

PARSNIP-PECAN CAKE

from: Marian Morash's
VICTORY GARDEN COOKBOOK

Yield: 1- 10" Tube pan

- * 1 1/4 cups salad oil
- * 1 1/4 cups sugar
- * 2 cups flour
- * 1 Tb baking powder
- * 1 Tb baking soda
- * 2 tsp cinnamon
- * 1/4 tsp salt
- * 4 eggs
- * 3 cups grated raw parsnips
- * 1 1/2 cups finely chopped pecans

Preheat oven to 325 degrees F.

Thoroughly combine oil and sugar. Sift together dry ingredients and add to oil and sugar, alternating with eggs. Beat well after each addition. Mix in parsnips and then pecans. Pour into buttered tube pan. Bake in a preheated 325 degrees F oven for 1 hour and 10 minutes. Cool in pan for 10 minutes before removing.

Parsnips and Carrots with Orange Sauce

adapted from epicurious.com

- 2 cups water
- 1 pound parsnips, peeled; halved lengthwise, and cut crosswise into 1/4-inch-thick pieces
- 1 pound scrubbed carrots, halved lengthwise and cut crosswise into 1/4-inch-thick pieces
- 2/3 cup fresh orange juice
- 1/4 teaspoon freshly grated orange zest (try to find unwaxed oranges....)
- 2 tablespoons butter

In a skillet combine the water, the parsnips, the carrots, and salt to taste, simmer the vegetables for 15 minutes, or until they are just tender, and stir in the orange juice. Simmer the mixture for 5 minutes, or until the vegetables are tender, and transfer the vegetables with a slotted spoon to a bowl. Boil the liquid until it is reduced to about 4 tablespoons, remove the skillet from the heat, and stir in the zest and the butter, stirring until the butter is melted. Spoon the sauce over the vegetables.

Ginger Parsnip Soup

adapted from [Bon Appetit 2/2001](#) Julia's note, to make this a lighter, weeknight affair I would use olive oil instead of butter and milk instead of half and half.... I've done just this and it's still delicious, if not decadent.

- 2 Tablespoons butter
- 2 cups chopped onions
- 1/2 cup chopped celery
- 2 tablespoons minced peeled fresh ginger
- 1/8 teaspoon cayenne pepper
- 3 cups chicken broth
- 3 cups parsnips, peeled and coarsely chopped (about one pound)
- 1 cup half and half

Melt butter in heavy large pot over medium heat. Add next 4 ingredients and saute until vegetables are tender, about 5 minutes. Stir in broth and parsnips; bring to boil. Reduce heat to medium-low and simmer until parsnips are tender, about 20 minutes. Cool slightly. Puree soup (immersible blender or a traditional blender or

food processor). Strain into another large pot; discard solids in strainer. (I would skip this step.) Whisk in half and half. Season with salt and pepper.

For more parsnip recipes, click here:

<http://www.mariquita.com/recipes/parsnips.html>

Orach Salad

This tender purple cooking green can also be enjoyed in a salad on its own or with a green lettuce for dramatic presentation.

Dressing:

Whirl in a blender:

1 stem roughly chopped spring garlic (white and light green parts)
pinch salt
1 teaspoon (scant) dijon mustard
2 teaspoons plum jam or any other jam available
4 Tablespoons rice wine vinegar
1/2 cup extra virgin olive oil

Dress washed orach leaves with dressing. Add other chopped vegetables as desired.

More about orach:

<http://www.mariquita.com/recipes/orach.html>

GREEN GARLIC:

<http://www.mariquita.com/recipes/green.garlic.htm>

Cutting or Soup Celery:

<http://www.mariquita.com/recipes/cuttingcelery.html>

BEETS:

<http://www.mariquita.com/recipes/beets.html>

Arugula:

<http://www.mariquita.com/recipes/arugula.html>