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This Week's Newsletter as a pdf:

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1) In your box this week: Artichokes, Scallions, Strawberries, Tomatoes, Spicy Peppers, Mystery, Spinach OR Chard, Lettuce OR Basil

This week's vegetable list: I try to have it updated by Monday night, sometimes by Mon. am:  
<http://www.twosmallfarms.com/CSAinfo/thisweekslist.html>

Keep everything BUT the tomatoes in the fridge: tomatoes get mushy and don't need to be refrigerated. If they get nicked/cut eat them up within a day.

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## 2) Andy's invitation and Ranch Dog Musings

This Saturday we'll be hosting the summer's first tomato u-pick day at Mariquita Farm. Some of you who've come before may remember Henry, a somewhat portly Doberman with a pleasant attitude who would welcome visitors and guide them around the farm. I'm sad to report the Henry recently passed away.

I'm more of a cat person than a dog person. All my life I've been around ranch dogs who had jobs to do and took their roles seriously, and I've got little use for the untutored, crotch-busting sort of hound that's always looking for limits. Henry wasn't much of a guard dog but he had the perfect manners of an experienced butler. He was trained to not beg. He would sit on the porch of the Beerli's house (they are our landlords and longtime c.s.a. members) and "guard" the house. When the sun moved the shade Henry would move too. Then, promptly at 9:55 in the morning

Henry would stretch, rise, and slowly amble over to the edge of the field where the workers park their cars. “Lonche,” or lunchtime, is always at ten o’clock, and when the employees arrived to unpack their meals Henry would be there. Henry never begged; that would be gauche. Instead he would point with his sharp nose towards the most savory aromas that issued from the thermos bottles and let his eyes do the talking. When lunch was over Henry would return to his post on the front porch. On occasion Chuck Lenzi, Rochelle Beerli’s father (and another of our landlord/c.s.a. members) would attempt to keep Henry from molesting the workers by ordering him back to the house. Henry would obey, but when he could see Chuck wasn’t looking he’d slip around the back of the house and show up at the lunch spot by a different route. When Henry suspected that Chuck was going to cause problems he would interrupt his regular routine and leave the porch early and slip all around the edge of the property through the tall thistles and hemlock so that Chuck couldn’t see him. The crew never minded that Henry joined them at lunch, and now that Henry has gone to the great taqueria in the sky we all miss him.

Another dog I’ll always remember is Sis, or Sister. My first job away from home when I was sixteen was on a cattle ranch near Montague in the Little Shasta Valley. I was paid four hundred dollars a month, and provided with a trailer to live in, meat, milk and eggs to eat, given a garden to tend, a horse to ride, and a pick up truck to drive. The truck came with a dog.

The first morning of my new job I left the trailer and jumped in the truck. I started off down the road and never even saw Sis flying after me. When I got to the gate she leaped in the back, took up her usual position, and tried not to look mortified at my bad manners. When I got to the alfalfa field I learned why I would never forget Sis again.

I was responsible to irrigate five hundred acres of alfalfa. The land was level, or very nearly so, and was divided into strips by a series of low “checks”, which are long, straight, rounded ridges in the earth like speed bumps. We’d put a temporary dam made out of a frame of sticks and a canvas tarp across the main irrigation ditch and let the water flow over the bank and into the field. As the water progressed down the field between the checks it was the irrigator’s responsibility to follow in and make sure that it wasn’t flowing into a badger hole. Moment that the water reached the end of the field the irrigator was supposed to move the water to the next check by building a new dam so that everything got watered and no water was wasted. Doing the job well could mean walking all day. Or....let Sis do the walking. She would run back and forth in front of the advancing water, killing every gopher she saw, while I sat in the truck. When she found a badger hole she’d bark, and I’d go fill it in to avoid losing water and drowning the badger. When the water reached the end of the field she’d bark and I’d move the water.

Best of all, when she’d find a trout she’d catch it and bring it to me, holding it gingerly in her mouth, and drop it at my feet flipping fresh and silver shiny. The water we used came from Lake Shastina, and getting a trout wasn’t at all unusual.

So, yes, dogs can be great, but please don’t bring yours to the u-pick day. Children sometimes feel threatened by dogs and I don’t want to be responsible if someone’s dog gets into a fight with

someone else's dog. Also, dogs can do a lot of damage in the pepper patch, and the sight of a dog peeing on a tomato plant doesn't do my sales any favors.

Please bring a hat because it can get hot in Hollister. We will have cardboard boxes for sale, but you're encouraged to bring your own. Besides tomatoes we'll have basil to pick. Peppers, cucumbers, beets, and other vegetables will be for sale in a little farmer's market stand. As a special treat this year we'll be selling honey from the hives on the farm. Greg, the honey man will be there with his honey. We hope to see you. If you can't make it this weekend we will have other u-pick days this summer.

Directions to our Hollister field:

<http://www.mariquita.com/events/hollisterDirections.html>

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3) The First Tomato Upick is THIS Saturday, August 26th, at Mariquita Farm from 9am to 3pm. Come earlier for cooler picking conditions. T-shirts will be available at the Upick. Read the end of Andy's piece above for more detailed upick information.

<http://www.mariquita.com/events/Events.upcoming.html>

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4) Two Small Farms T-shirts! 100% organic cotton. \$12.95 each (this includes tax but not shipping). We can ship via USPS or sell at events. We're not able to deliver with CSA boxes, the details to too many, sorry about that! For photos and more details:

<http://www.twosmallfarms.com/Gifts/T-shirts-TSF.html>

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5) A few Photos & What to eat first and what can keep

spinach:

<http://www.mariquita.com/images/photogallery/spinachloose.jpg>

basil:

<http://www.mariquita.com/images/photogallery/basilgeno.jpg>

Photo Gallery:

<http://www.mariquita.com/images/photogallery/index.html>

Everything but tomatoes and basil should be kept in the fridge. Eat the berries in the first 1-2 days. Basil storage? So many theories, it depends on YOUR fridge: if the basil gets too cold it will turn black in minutes. You can try the door of the fridge, but the best bet is to use it up. If you want to nurse it along to have it for salads for days try treating like a bouquet of flowers, but change the water every day.

To eat first: the strawberries! Eat the spinach within 3-4 days for best results, the rest should keep at least 3-6 days.

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## 6) Recipes from Julia and Juliette: (recipes are below Juliette's notes)

Juliette F. from Stanford wrote us the following for the box 2 weeks ago, much of it applies this week and every week. You might still have some basil or you might get some in your box.

Thanks to Juliette!

The haul this week sounds like time to make more Thai basil chicken, or as my relatives from Thailand call it "ka paow". Our family has just gained three new members, my three very young cousins born and raised in Thailand, and now living with my ageing parents in Saratoga. I have them over for weekends, and try to prepare some sort of version of Thai feast California style. This usually entails choosing numerous extremely simple dishes. We have prepared the thai basil chicken recipe from your newsletter several times now, and they find it has enough of an authentic taste to want 3, 4 or 5 helpings if I make enough of it.... The main problem is the peppers are never spicy enough for them, even when I buy at the local Asian grocery. I thought I'd leave the feedback that it's a really simple dish to make, and certainly goes over well with the natives.

Personally, I don't much like scallions, but hey, now I can use up a whole bunch and transform them into something that gives an enlarged family of 7 a special treat. So whenever there is an abundance of peppers, scallions and the hope of basil hanging around, please remember to re-advertise your special version of that recipe. For the other Thai dishes, I try to sneak in veggies that are still in the fridge. Once I made a fish curry with eggplant from an authentic recipe, amazingly! In an initial exploration, I tried cooking summer squash with a bit of Thai green curry paste: they ate it. This was the first time they would swallow zucchini or any other squash. I improved on it later: thai green curry with fish and green patty-pan squashes. Not bad. Your special new potatoes (in the box 2 weeks ago -julia's note) have been put to service in Massaman beef curry too (which Anuchit had 4 servings at dinner and again had it for breakfast...), and also offered sauteed in olive oil with salt and pepper and garlic.

Some time in my rushed life of work and two kids, I'd like to offer how I look at a "this week's box". It would go something like this:

greens; Thank god they're washed. Stuff in tupperware, top with

tomatoes and dressing and get to work. Greens: Ticket to super fast

dinner. Put water on to boil whole wheat penne, slice any style of chicken sausage from Trader Joes into skillet (all have different seasoning, but somehow all taste the same). Saute sausages while chopping greens. minutes before pasta is done, toss greens with sausage and grate cheese (romano, asiago etc). Serve kids sausage on side and pasta with cheese. Serve mom and dad the mixture of sausage and greens on pasta (with tad of olive oil). This

way we don't waste the greens that the kids just won't eat. To eat up Cauliflower, cut in pieces and dip in Trader Joe's Indian Curry Simmer Sauce. Yum. Or put in Tupperware, top with Curry Sauce and microwave at lunch time.

You can see for me, the concept of "slow foods" is only a distant vague fantasy. Long gone are the days when I mused over Alice Waters' writings in the various Chez Panisse cookbooks. Life is too busy now.

But the Organic box is really important to the family for fast food- I don't need to shop, I don't need to make a menu plan in advance. I just try to cook what's there before more comes next week, and in the process we get that oh so important variety of vegetables. Sometimes this means marathon cooking Wednesday night after the kids are in bed (last week's veggies). cooking up any spare roots in the fridge that are taking too much space. These too can be smashed into a Tupperware on top of greens for yet another fast workday lunch.

Juliette

### **Creamy Salad Dressing**

from *Full Moon Feast* by Jessica Prentice

you can make this a blue cheese dressing by adding 1/4 cup crumbled blue cheese to it before tossing the salad

1/4 cup creme fraiche

1 egg yolk (optional)

1/4 cup olive oil

1/2 teaspoon vinegar (white wine or apple)

generous pinch of salt

fresh ground pepper to taste

In a large bowl, whisk the creme fraiche into the egg yolk, and then whisk in the olive oil. Add the vinegar, salt and pepper. Put the cleaned lettuce leaves directly into the bowl and toss before serving.

### **ARTICHOKES WITH LEMON-GARLIC BUTTER**

4 fresh artichokes

1/4 cup olive oil

6 large garlic cloves, minced

4 teaspoons minced fresh thyme or 2 teaspoons dried

1/2 cup fresh lemon juice

1/2 cup (1 stick) butter

Place steamer rack in large pot. Fill pot with enough water to come just to bottom of rack. Cut stems and top 1 1/2 inches from artichokes. Cut away first outside row of artichoke leaves. Using scissors, cut off pointed tips of leaves. Arrange artichokes on rack. Bring water to boil over high heat. Cover pot; steam artichokes until knife pierces base easily, adding more water if necessary, about 45 minutes.

Meanwhile, heat oil in heavy medium saucepan over medium heat. Add garlic and thyme; cook 1 minute. Add lemon juice and butter; whisk until butter melts. Season with salt and pepper. Serve artichokes warm with seasoned butter.

Serves 4.

Bon Appétit April 1996

### **Shrimp Sao Paulo**

from *More Recipes from a Kitchen Garden* by R. Shepherd and F. Raboff

Marinade:

2 T olive oil

zest of 2 limes (reserve)

1/2 cup fresh lime juice

1/2 cup dry white wine

2 large garlic cloves finely chopped

3 jalapeños, seeds and veins removed

1/2 teaspoon salt

1/2 cup chopped cilantro leaves

1 1/4 pounds med to large raw shrimp, peeled and deveined

2 T olive oil

1/4 cup chopped scallions

2 large tomatoes, seeded, diced and drained

Combine all the marinade ingredients except zest, in a bowl. Add shrimp and marinate for just 30 minutes. In a skillet, heat the additional 2 tablespoons of olive oil, add scallions and saute until softened. Add drained shrimp (reserving marinade) and saute quickly for 2 to 3 minutes until shrimp become firm and turn pink. Add tomatoes and reserved zest and heat through. Set aside

on a warm platter. Add reserved marinade to skillet. Cook over high heat for 3 to 5 minutes until marinade is reduced by half. Pour over shrimp on platter. Garnish with cilantro leaves if desired. Serve over rice.

### **Chard and Tomatoes**

from *Too Many Tomatoes, Squash, and Other Good Things* by L. Landau and L. Myers

2 T olive oil

1 onion, diced (or ½ bunch scallions, chopped, including at least have the green part)

2 cloves garlic, minced

3 large tomatoes (or equivalent with different sized tomatoes), peeled and diced

1/2 cup cooked ham (optional)

2 cups cooked chard (easy to blanch: just immerse roughly chopped leaves in boiling water for 1-2 minutes)

butter

S & P

Nutmeg

1/2 cup grated parmesan cheese

Saute the onion and garlic in the olive oil until golden. Stir in the tomatoes, ham if using, and chard and heat until bubbly. Add butter, Salt and Pepper and nutmeg to taste. (This dish can be kept 'lighter' by skipping the ham and the butter!) Serve, sprinkling with the parmesan cheese.

### **Orange Balsamic Dressing**

Wonderful dressing tossed with grilled chicken and salad greens.

3/4 cup orange juice

3 tablespoons balsamic vinegar or red wine vinegar

3 tablespoons grated orange peel

1 to 2 teaspoons packed brown sugar

1 teaspoon ground cumin

1/2 cup olive oil

Salt and freshly ground pepper to taste

Place the orange juice, vinegar, peel and cumin in a blender. Blend for a few seconds. While the motor is running, slowly add the oil in a small stream until mixture is emulsified. Season to taste with salt and pepper.

Makes about 1 1/2 cups dressing.

Strawberries:

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

Tomato Recipes:

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

Summer Squash:

<http://www.mariquita.com/recipes/summer%20squash.html>

recipe index:

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

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#### 7) Veggie Notes

From High Ground: Flowers, Artichokes, Scallions, Berries, Chard, Spinach

From Mariquita: Tomatoes, Mystery, Tomatoes, Peppers, Basil, Lettuce

To see a picture of the 2 farm families:

<http://www.mariquita.com/images/photogallery/twosmallfarmers.hg.jpg>

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#### 8) Unsubscribe/Subscribe From/To This Newsletter

<http://www.mariquita.com/news/newsletter.signup.html>

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#### 9) Two Small Farms Contact Information

Two Small Farms

Mariquita Farm/High Ground Organics

Organically Grown Vegetables

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