

Two Small Farms Newsletter

Issue Number 381, Nov. 1st, 2006

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This Week's Newsletter as a pdf: (click on Nov. 1st)

<http://www.twosmallfarms.com/Newsletters.pdf/newsletter.index.html>

1) In your box this week: Radishes, Fuji Apples, Purple Carrots, Chioggia Beets, Tomatoes, A Bunched Cooking Green (likely kale or collards), A Stephen Mystery, An Andy Mystery

[This week's vegetable list: I try to have it updated by Monday night, sometimes by Mon. am; If I get more "mystery" information I'll add it to this page:](#)

<http://www.twosmallfarms.com/CSAinfo/thisweekslist.html>

2) **Bull's Eye**

This week your harvest share includes a bunch of pink skinned beets. If you slice these beets in half you'll see a distinctive target-like pattern of alternating pink and white rings marking the flesh. This curious coloration has prompted some retailers to call these beets "candy stripe" beets but the correct name is Chioggia beet. Chioggia, pronounced "key-oh-jah" is a city of Northern Italy near Venice. The surrounding region is known as the Veneto and it's famed for it's vegetable production. Besides the beet, Chioggia has lent its name a number of other vegetables. The round, red radicchio that has become a standard ingredient in the mesclun salads is Chioggia radicchio. There's also a warty blue hard squash called the Marina di Chioggia. We didn't grow these beets for the novelty of their internal appearance. They taste good, and many people think they're even sweeter than the typical red blooded American beet. Chioggia beets grow well here,

too. People who travel have told me that there are a lot of similarities between the Veneto and the Monterey Bay area. Some day I'd like to visit Chioggia and see for myself since I think agriculture is as worthy of being appreciated as any other aspect of culture like painting or dance. In fact, given a choice between a perfect roasted beet salad and a still life painting of a beet, I'll eat the salad any day .

I was standing behind my Chioggia beets one day at the farmers market when an older gentleman who was passing by announced that when he was in Chioggia he hadn't seen any beets. It turns out he'd entered Chioggia in a Sherman tank in the closing days of the Second World War. He was part of the American Fifth Army that flogged the Nazis all the way up the boot from Monte Casino and over the Alps. As important as liberation day was in Chioggia it probably wasn't the best moment for a tourist to appreciate the agricultural riches of the Veneto. After years of war economy and bombs the natives of Chioggia had been reduced to eating Chioggia rats.

Chioggia beets remind me of an Italian-American fellow named Louie Bonhommie that I knew when I worked on a farm in Bolinas during the 1980's. Louie delivered used wooden crates to the farm every Sunday morning and I used to help him unload his truck. Since his route took him to all sorts of small farms in Marin and Sonoma counties he was better than a newspaper for the latest gossip. One day Louie took a break from the scandals of the day and told me about his experiences in the army during the Second World War. Louie never saw combat. Instead, because he could speak fluent Italian, Louie served as a guard over Italian prisoners of war. The prisoners were shipped around California by bus or train from farm to farm, and they harvested fruits and vegetables or pruned fruit trees while Louie stood around with a gun. A lot of Louie's wartime service was right around the Santa Rosa area where he'd grown up.

I asked Louie if it was dangerous standing guard over trainloads of Italian prisoners of war and he laughed. These men had been captured by the Americans in North Africa on the outskirts of Tunis. Most of them had originally come from tiny farms in Italy that were poverty stricken even before the war. After being drafted into the fascist military they were stationed out in the middle of the Sahara in the Italian colony of Libya. With the outbreak of hostilities war was added to their ration of miseries. When they weren't being shot at by the Allies or being ordered around by the Germans they had armies of flies to contend with, and thirst and hunger and scorpions and disease. After years of stress and privation being captured was a blessing. As the Italian Prisoners of War picked plums in California they looked around from atop their ladders at the orchards, the vineyards, and the ordered rows of vegetables in the Santa Rosa Valley and they murmured and conspired amongst themselves.... Their devious plot? Certainly they didn't have sabotage in mind. No. They were concerned that the war might end and they'd be shipped back home to Italy. One by one the prisoners came to Louie and asked him how they might get introduced to some nice Italian -American farm girls so they could make love, not war. Louie did what he could, and some of those men ended up as successful farmers around Santa Rosa with big families and lush fields, and they became good friends and loyal customers for Louie and his wooden boxes. I still love this story. It reminds me that, while they made a mistake with Fascism, from art and women's shoes and wine and race cars all the way to bunched beets, when it comes to cultural

values the Italians are right on target.

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3) We have three deliveries left (including this week of 11/17 11/2/06). Please pay your account up if you've not done so. You can look at the pick up sheets to find out if our system says you've paid or not. If you have questions, call Jenny at 831 786 0625. Thanks!

4) Photos and Other Vegetable Notes

Chioggia Beets, Cut open: Andy and I don't have a cut-open chioggia beet! So I found this using Google Images from the U of Wisconsin:

<http://www.hort.wisc.edu/mastergardener/Features/vegetables/chiogbeets/cbeetvariation.jpg>

Purple Carrots! These are new for Andy to grow, they are a sweet carrot for either eating raw or cooking:

<http://www.mariquita.com/images/photogallery/vegetablesatoz/carrots/purplecarrot1.JPG>

Box Notes from Julia: The beets will look like red turnips or other bright pink/light red root: they are true beets and can be grated raw or cooked up just like you would any blood-red beet. I like them tossed lightly with some olive oil and S and P then roasted in the oven. I often quarter or even eighth them up before I do this: they cook more quickly this way.

The carrots are purple outside, and yellow/orange inside. They are a great eating carrot raw or cooked. Proceed as with any carrot. Radishes and apples? I can't ask for much more in raw snacks/easy prep. Wash and eat! To get fancier/recipes/cooking ideas see their individual recipe links below. If your family isn't a raw radish family pretend like they are turnips and cook them up.

Tomatoes? I'm enjoying the easy dinner right now of whole wheat pasta cooked up and then tossed with freshly cut up tomatoes (any variety), green onions (raw cut up) or other cooked up onion, fresh parsley or cilantro... you get the idea. It's a bit like a hot pasta salad. Nearly anything goes! I dress it with great olive oil at the end. That's it. But then again, I hope/imagine most of you are far more creative with these great vegetables. I'll start 'cooking' again after Thanksgiving! -julia

Recipe Index:

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

Photogallery:

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

5) Recipes from Julia

"The beet is the most intense of vegetables. The radish, admittedly, is more feverish, but the fire of the radish is a cold fire, the fire of discontent, not of passion. Tomatoes are lusty enough, yet there runs through tomatoes an undercurrent of frivolity. Beets are deadly serious."

Tom Robbins

Roasted Beets with Walnuts and Blue Cheese from *California Home Cooking* by Michele Anna Jordan

1 pound small beets, golden, white or chioggia (or red!)

1 T olive oil

1/2 cup walnuts, toasted

2 T extra virgin olive oil

preheat oven to 350 degrees

Wash and trim beets but do not peel them. Toss them with the olive oil in a bowl, and transfer them to a baking sheet. Roast them until they are tender when pierced with a fork, 40 to 90 minutes, depending on their size. Remove the beets from the oven and set them aside until they are cool enough to handle. Using your fingers, remove and discard the beet skins. Cut the beets into wedges, and place the wedges in a small serving bowl. Add the walnuts and extra virgin olive oil, toss ad several turns of pepper (from a pepper mill), and toss again. Scatter the blue cheese over the beets, and serve.

Beet and Blue Cheese Spread

Cooking Light magazine

2 beets

2 apples, cut into 8 wedges

1/4 cup blue cheese, crumbled
1 tbsp. horseradish

Preheat oven to 400°. Wrap beets in foil and bake for 1 hour or until tender. Cool and peel the beets. Place beets, apples, cheese and horseradish in a food processor, process until well blended. Serve with crackers or pita chips.

FRIED BEETS 'N CARROTS

From *Asparagus to Zucchini*, Madison Area CSA Coalition

2 tbsp. olive oil
2 tsp. dried cumin seeds
2 med. beets, scrubbed, quartered & sliced 1/4-inch thick
2 med. carrots, scrubbed & sliced 1/4-inch thick
tamari

Heat olive oil in skillet. Sprinkle in the cumin and cook about 1 minute. Add beets and carrots; fry until tender. Remove from heat, sprinkle on a little tamari and serve.

Beet Cooking Tips

From *Asparagus to Zucchini*, Madison Area CSA Coalition

- No need to peel, only scrub clean; trace minerals lie just below the surface of the skin.
- Grate into most any salad, cooked or raw.
- Cube beets into veggie soups or stews.
- Serve steamed beets sliced at room temperature tossed in olive oil with a dash of salt and pepper, or use a simple vinaigrette.

- To bake: cut off leaves and wash roots. Bake at 350 degrees for 1-2 hours or until easily pierced with a fork. Rub off skins and cut off roots. Serve whole or sliced.
- Young beet greens can be enjoyed tossed raw into a mixed green salad.
- Try beet greens steamed or sauteed, or in any dish calling for a mild, tender green such as spinach.

From Andrew Cohen:

the radishes; slice into 1/8-1/4 inch coins and gently saute in good butter. At the same time, saute some favas in a little olive oil and a few tablespoons of light stock until just done. Combine the two at service and sprinkle with some coarse salt.(my favorite for this dish is Maldon from England- nice big flakes that crunch)This dish is beautiful, pale green and light red/pink, and the flavors are subtle. I like this with simple roast chicken or fish, and I can see this with a pasta such as capellini.

Radish Option #1:

You like radishes and are delighted to throw them into salads or trim and eat as is. Special treat: slice into three or 4 thick slices each radish and place on a piece of fresh, great baguette or other 'fancy' bread that's been buttered and salted. YUM.

Radish Option #2:

You and your family are not fond of raw radishes. Presto! You now have 'ruby turnips' and you are welcome and encouraged to throw them into that vegetable soup or stew. Or braise them on their own, then add in their greens.

Radishes: I imagine if you google 'radishes, recipes' you'd come up with a million webpages, and below is our radish recipe page. But I just like to eat them raw. I'll recommend you do the same. They can easily be cooked as well, cook like a turnip.

I found a recipe in "The Victory Garden Cookbook" 1982 edition, for Radish Top Soup. I didn't have enough radish tops, and had to substitute some Swiss chard for about 1/3 of the greens, and make about 1/3 of the recipe, but it was so delicious, I decided to send it in.

. I cooked the potato in chicken broth, cooked the onion and greens in a little canola oil and eliminated the butter and optional cream. Here is the recipe with the author's comments:

Radish Top Soup

Don't throw out your radish greens. Believe it or not, those fuzzy leaves can be transformed into a smooth green soup, with a hint of watercress flavor.

6 Tb butter

1 cup chopped onions or leeks

8 cups loosely packed radish leaves

2 cups diced peeled potatoes

6 cups liquid (water, chicken stock)

Salt

1/2 cup cream (optional)

Freshly ground pepper

Melt 4 tablespoons butter in a large saucepan, add onions or leeks, and cook until golden, approximately 5 minutes. Stir in radish tops, cover pan, and cook over low heat until wilted, 8-10 minutes.

Meanwhile, cook potatoes until soft in liquid along with 1 teaspoon salt. Combine with radish tops and broth, and cook, covered, for 5 minutes to mingle flavors. Puree finely in a food processor. Add cream if desired. Season to taste with butter, salt and pepper.

Submitted by Jean Pinard

Descriptions of the three types of radishes in Stephen's fields now, you'll receive one of these types:

Plum Purple - the largest, about 1/2 the size of a plum with a deep magenta color. Very mild. I would vote these the radish for the radish hater. Nice crunch without the spicy kick back.

French Breakfast - Oblong red with a white tip. Not too spicy with a mild radish taste.

Cherry Belle - Cherry tomato red and round. Typical radish flavor

Collard Greens Recipes:

SAUTEED COLLARD GREENS

Some people favor collard greens boiled until they are meltingly tender, while others prefer them to retain some bite. This recipe satisfies the taste of the latter group.

2 1/2 pounds collard greens
2 garlic cloves
1 tablespoon unsalted butter
1 tablespoon olive oil
1 teaspoon fresh lemon juice, or to taste

Remove and discard stems and center ribs of collard greens. Cut leaves into 1-inch pieces. In a kettle of boiling water cook collards 15 minutes and drain in a colander, pressing out excess liquid with back of a wooden spoon.

Mince garlic. In a 12-inch heavy skillet heat butter and oil over moderately high heat until foam subsides and stir in garlic, collards, and salt and pepper to taste. Sauté collard mixture, stirring, until heated through, about 5 minutes. Drizzle collards with lemon juice and toss well.

Serves 4. Gourmet December 1998

Collards are major players on the nutritional field, high on the list of vegetables thought to be cancer fighters. Add ribbons of tender leaves to salad.

Dressing for cooked greens: warmed walnut oil, red wine vinegar, and chopped toasted walnuts. (From Belk's "Around the Southern Table")

Another method for serving leftover collards: Heat in a skillet with roasted peanuts and crushed red peppers. Brown diced ham in the skillet first, then add the greens, peanuts, and peppers, and serve over rice.

Main dish salad idea: Mix drained cooked beans with cooked collards and dress with oil and vinegar.

Simple Collards:

Cook 3 cups (1/2 pound) collard leaves. Dress with 2 Tablespoons extra-virgin olive oil, 2 teaspoons rice vinegar, and 2 minced garlic cloves. Season with salt and cayenne or black pepper. Serve with rice and corn bread.

Greens with Tomatoes and Asiago

from Vegetarian Cooking for Everyone by Maida

1 bunch collard greens, stems removed, leaves cut
into large pieces

2 tablespoons olive oil

1 garlic clove, thinly sliced

2 tomatoes, peeled and diced

several pinches dried oregano

grated Asiago or Parmesan cheese

Simmer the greens in salted water for 5 or 10 minutes, or longer if you like your greens the traditional gooey style. Put them in a wide skillet with the oil, garlic and tomatoes. Season with the oregano, and cook over high heat until the tomatoes are heated through. Serve with the cheese grated over the top.

Tomato Recipes:

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

Leek Recipes:

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

recipe index:

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

Birth Announcement: Andy and Julia's Donkey Prima gave birth (at last!) On Monday morning, 10/30/06. Here are some photos of Sweet Pea the baby donkey:

<http://www.mariquita.com/images/photogallery/Donkey/donkeyoct06.html>

6) 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>

7) Veggie Notes

From High Ground: Flowers, Radishes, Kale/Collards, Summer Squash/Mystery
From Mariquita: Peppers/Eggplant, Purple Carrots, Beets, Tomatoes
From Billy Peixoto: Fuji Apples

To see a picture of the 2 farm families:

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

8) Unsubscribe/Subscribe From/To This Newsletter

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

9) Two Small Farms Contact Information

Two Small Farms

Mariquita Farm/High Ground Organics

Organically Grown Vegetables

831-786-0625

P.O. Box 2065

Watsonville, CA 95077

csa@twosmallfarms.com

<http://www.twosmallfarms.com>

<http://www.mariquita.com>

<http://www.highgroundorganics.com>