

# Two Small Farms Newsletter

Issue Number 382, Nov. 8th, 2006

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## Table of Contents:

- 1) In your box this week
- 2) Winter on the Farm
- 3) 2 Deliveries left for 2006
- 4) Photos and other Vegetable Notes
- 5) Holiday Shopping
- 6) Recipes
- 7) Two Small Farms T-Shirts
- 8) Veggie Notes
- 9) Unsubscribe
- 10) Two Small Farms Contact Information

This Week's Newsletter as a pdf: (click on Nov. 8th)

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

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1) In your box this week: Carrots (at least two colors), Fennel, Arugula, Red Cabbage, Leeks, Tomatoes, Swiss Chard, Rapini Greens, Red Beets

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>

2 different "What I'd Do with This Week's Box" are below in the recipe section.

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## 2) Winter on the Farm

With the end of the 2006 delivery season drawing near a number of c.s.a. members have asked me why we don't do wintertime deliveries. Basically, the one word answer is "weather".

Yes, we do continue farming all winter long because a farmers job is never really done. During the winter months there are cover crops to plant so that the fields are enriched for the year to come, there are ditches to be dug so that the rainfall drains away without damaging the fields, and there are cover crops to turn under and beds to prepare for early spring sowing. We even do a lot of harvesting, since there are some crops that do well here in the winter, and we want to keep

our crews employed. And it rains off and on the whole time, so you know we're not made of sugar and we're not going to melt in the rain.

But we hate to make promises we can't keep. In the winter we can ask for your support, we can cash your checks, and we can spend your money in an honest effort to produce crops for you and then lose everything in a flood. That's what happened back in 1996 during the first winter of the c.s.a. when El Nino washed away much of what we planted. I certainly don't want to repeat that experience. We honored every shareholder's investment and shipped every box but it was no party. Sometimes in the winter the conditions get so bad that I simply don't want to ask the crew to go into the field and pick. I pride myself that I never ask any of my employees to do anything that I won't do, and I've got my limits. And then there's the field to consider. Sometimes it's just too muddy to do field work with the tractors or even on foot because we don't want to compact the soil. The easiest and best policy for us is to back off from deliveries during that period when it is the hardest for us to guarantee the quality and consistency of our harvest.

Now that we're at the end of a season I thought you might be curious to know how the roller coaster weather patterns of the weather affected what you received from Mariquita Farm during 2006. Think back to the early part of the season in March, April, and May when we had a significant amount of late rainfall. The fava beans did great, since I was growing a variety called Windsor Long Pod and the weather was very "English". But the constant rain kept us out of the fields and I missed all of our onion planting dates. Every onion is an alarm clock that is set to bulb, or "go off" under the appropriate day length conditions. If you can't plant an onion at the correct time it may grow but not bulb up. Faced with late planting dates I chose to not plant. "Better late than never" is not a winning strategy with onions.

When we finally could plant we had such a dramatic backup of work to get through that some crops, like cucumbers, were only planted one time, rather than three or four times, and other, more experimental crops, like okra, never got planted at all. (I can almost hear the sigh of relief from some of you about the okra.) If I'd have had more time I would have planted more Little Gem lettuce, too. It wouldn't be fair of me to only blame the weather for my problems. Here's a good example of human error: I take my seeds to Headstart Nursery in Gilroy to make my transplants for me since they have an organic program and they have heated greenhouses and they do a nice job at a fair price. This year I bought many varieties of Italian peppers, both sweet (dolce) and hot (piccante). The pepper seed came from Italy in packets labeled Franci Sementi (the company name) Pepperoni (pepper) and then the varietal name like Topepo Rosso or whatever. I had about 20 varieties. The folks who work at Headstart don't speak Italian, and a lot of them don't speak English, so when I got all the peppers to transplant out they were simply labeled Sementi Peperoni, as though that were the variety. Since all pepper plants were are more or less identical in their infancy it was a total nightmare to separate them all out, and in the end we had lots of varieties scrambled through out the field. Pepper harvesting was a challenge this year. Next year will be better.

You'll notice that I haven't confessed to any mistakes myself. No, I'm not blameless, but I can't seem to remember my own mistakes too well. If you want to hear a catalogue of my failings as a farmer you'll have to ask Gildardo Espana, Jose Espana, Natanael Espana, and Manny Esquivel, since they're the fellows who I charge with the most responsibility on the farm and they're the ones that correct most of my most egregious errors before any real damage can be done.

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3) We have two 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! By the way: we will be back in March with bells on. We'll also send our customary monthly winter newsletters via email. Thanks to everyone for all their support!

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#### 4) Photos and Other Vegetable Notes

Julia's brief box notes: Arugula can be eaten cooked or raw in a salad or sandwiches. Remove greens from the beets before storing in the fridge. Cook up the beet greens within a day or two, they can be cooked up with the chard, the two vegetables are closely related! Here's a photo of Claudia with a red chard plant, root and all: you can see the family resemblance!

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

Rapini! Wash and chop the whole thing, stems and all. Try a recipe from the following webpage or just saute it up with garlic and chile flakes. This can be a side dish or tossed with cooked hot pasta to make a colorful maindish.

<http://www.mariquita.com/recipes/broccoli%20raab.html>

Arugula:

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

Fennel:

<http://www.mariquita.com/images/photogallery/fennel2.jpg>

Recipe Index:

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

Photogallery:

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

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5) Holiday Shopping! We offer gift certificates for 2007 CSA deliveries: you can specify 4 or more weeks of vegetables only(\$80/4 weeks) or vegetables and flowers (\$104/4 weeks). Jenny can email you a gift certificate and or snail mail a gift certificate and a brochure. These make a great December Holiday gift or a great host gift for the people who are cooking for you on Thanksgiving. Email or call Jenny for more information or to purchase a gift certificate to wrap up under a tree for this holiday season.

We also have T-shirts! More:

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

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## 6) Recipes from Adrienne, Laura, Alexandra, and Julia

What I'd do with this week's box from Laura Carstensen:

I'll use the most of the carrots, fennel, and leeks and whatever herbs I have at home to make carrot soup. I'll use the beets and some of the chard to make beet risotto with chard from Fresh Food Fast by Peter Berley. (I substitute farro for the barley and, if available, use beet greens instead of chard.) The red cabbage will go into salads made with peanut dressing and a few of the carrots. (This is a good place for any leftover radishes from last week. Unfortunately, mine are long gone.) Most of the arugula will probably become simple salads with balsamic vinaigrette. Either the arugula or the rapini will be wilted in olive oils and paired with tomatoes and whole wheat pasta (and possibly some spicy sausage) for a fast weeknight meal. Any leftover rapini will probably become brown butter and balsamic rapini from the same cookbook.

I hope this works for you!!!

What Adrienne C would/will do with this week's box

With this weeks box I will plan on making to following dishes to enjoy. Fortunately I have made each of these recipes so they are tested and passed with a big fat A+. I am a HUGE fan of raw vegetables, so this week's box has me really excited.

This week I am having people over for dinner so I will use my tomatoes for one of my most favorite appetizer recipes. Fresh mozzarella cheese and a slice of tomato, wrapped in prociutto and sautéed in olive oil until the cheese is slightly melty and the prociutto is a little browned. Use a toothpick to hold everything together while cooking. **MAKE SURE TO REMOVE BEFORE SERVING** (ouch)!!! Top it with the pan drippings and a little shredded fresh basil and people will want you to make the again and again.

I will use the fennel and carrots in a fresh low cal salad that I make and eat throughout the week. Both the fennel and the carrots have such a wonderful flavor raw that I rarely cook either, although there are many delicious recipes out there that use cooked versions of both. You can also juice the fennel and add it to any of your juice recipes, sweet or savory, for an extra kick of phytonutrients... Of course you can juice the carrots too. YUM!

For the beets, I will end up giving these to my mom who likes to juice them, grill them and eat them any way she can think of. She loves beets, but me, not so much. I will be certain to hijack the beet greens however; and prepare them with the Swiss chard or alone with garlic and olive oil. I love to eat them solo or use the cooked greens under a prepared piece of pork, chicken or fish. It looks pretty and a little bit of greens together with a little bite of meat is a delightful combination!!!

The red cabbage is another one that a lot of people don't know what to do with, but I am a huge cabbage fan and LOVE to use it in a fresh chopped salad, but this week I will make sweet and sour cabbage. This is traditionally a European dish but this is very tasty served with pork or poultry. You can even add some diced apples or cranberries for some tart fruitiness.

Nothing makes a yummiest soup than leeks and this week will be no exception. With the last lot of leeks I made this soup that ended up tasting a lot like Thanksgiving stuffing. It was absolutely delicious and I just finished my last bowl so I am ready to make more...

For the Rapini Greens I will be making a pasta dish that I always make when fresh Rapini is around. This is also great prepared with any other cooking greens or also goes well in risottos and soups. (see below recipe)

For the Swiss Chard. I will most likely serve this as a side dish with dinner. I cook the greens down with garlic sautéed in olive oil. I sometimes throw some crumbled bacon in for a little added smokiness.

Arugula is my absolute favorite green, and besides just shoving it into my mouth in handfuls, I like to make a simple salad with it. I lay the greens out on a plate and add some thinly sliced red onion, some thinly sliced avocado some coarse ground sea salt (this is a good time to experiment with different salts such as black and red to get different flavors) and toss it with a lemon olive oil dressing. Just whisk some olive oil together with some fresh squeezed lemon juice and viola!

#### Fennel Salad

1 Bulb fennel

1 bunch radish

1 Cucumber

A few carrots

Rice vinegar

Dill 1-2 tsp if fresh

Thinly slice fennel, carrots and radish. Seed and chop cucumber. Mix everything into a bowl and toss with some rice vinegar and some dill to taste. This salad gets better as the days go by and it marinates in the vinegar, but it is really tasty the day of as well.

#### Sweet and Sour Cabbage

1/4 cup (1/2 stick) butter

1 2-pound red cabbage, thinly sliced (about 12 cups)

6 Tbsp sugar

2/3 cup balsamic vinegar

Melt the butter in a large pot over medium heat. Add cabbage and sauté until slightly wilted, about 5 minutes. Add sugar, toss to coat evenly. Add vinegar. Reduce heat to medium-low; simmer until cabbage is tender, stirring often, about 30 minutes. Season to taste with salt and pepper.

Broccoli Rabe with Orechetti Pasta and sausage

1 bunch Broccoli Rabe

1 Lb or so of your favorite sausage (no casings, or remove from casings), I use hot Italian

4 cloves garlic, or more if you wish

Orechetti Pasta (Italian for little ears) Penne and Farfalle work well too if you can not find.

1/4 to 1/2 cup chicken stock

Brown sausage in large skillet (best in bite size crumbles). While sausage is browning, clean Broccoli Rabe and remove only the thick tougher ends of stalks. Chop rabe into bite sized pieces. Drain sausage and set aside. Start your water for the pasta and cook according to directions for al dente pasta. In same large skillet as sausage sauté chopped garlic cloves in a bit of olive oil for a couple of minutes (do not clean pan as remaining fat from sausage will add more flavor). Add Broccoli Rabe and some chicken broth to pan and cook until greens have wilted. Add sausage and heat through. Toss with cooked pasta and enjoy. Watch the salt on this as some sausages will have a lot of it and could potentially make this dish too salty if more salt is added. Keep the salt added to pasta water to a minimum.

This dish also works well with vegetarian substitutions for a yummy vegan alternative, make sure to increase the olive oil accordingly... Yummy!

Adrienne's Leek Soup Recipe

3 cups finely chopped leeks (about three with rough ends discarded)

1 Lb sausage

1-2 stalks celery

1 med carrot

4-6 cans chicken stock

Pearl barley

Crushed red pepper to taste (I like it pretty spicy)

1 tsp Thyme

1/2 tsp Oregano

1/2 tsp Rosemary

Cook sausage in a large skillet, drain, cool and chop. Keep pan and do not clean pan after done cooking sausage. Deglaze the pan by heating and pouring some chicken stock into pan. Add remaining liquid according to barley cooking directions. I use chicken stock but you can use any clear liquid you would like and season accordingly. Cook barley according to directions on package. In large saucepan or soup pot heat up sausage for a few minutes then add leeks and sauté for about 3 minutes, add Celery and carrot and sauté another 3 minutes, add remaining spices (double if spices are fresh) and sauté another few minutes. Add remaining chicken stock or clear liquid of choice and simmer until barley is nearly done. Add barley to soup and you have a whole meal in a bowl.

**-Adrienne Cox**

From Alex Von Feldt:

I made this a few weeks ago, and despite the simplicity, it was delicious. Even my 3 year old ate it:

Sauté leek in olive oil and garlic

Add beet greens until wilted

Add chopped tomatoes

Season with salt and pepper

Serve over pasta

I have to add how sad I am that the end of the veggie year is coming. I have thoroughly enjoyed all of your lovely produce, and I tell everyone I can how great it is. I really think that it has broaden the horizons of my kids as it forces us to try new veggies all of the time. Now my 5 year old begs for cabbage.

Thanks again, -Alex Von Feldt

Fennel Quote:

“The fennel is beyond every other vegetable, delicious. It greatly resembles in appearance the largest size celery, perfectly white, and there is no vegetable equals it is flavour. It is eaten at

dessert, crude, and with, or without dry salt, indeed I preferred it to every other vegetable, or to any fruit.”

Thomas Jefferson

### **Pasta with Arugula and Goat Cheese Sauce**

from *A Complete Menu Cookbook for All Occasions* by Brother Victor-Antoine d'Avila-Latourrette 4 servings

a bunch of fresh arugula  
4 springs fresh parsley  
1 8 ounce container low-fat yogurt or sour cream  
1/3 cup goat cheese, crumbled  
S and P to taste  
1 pound fusilli noodles  
Grated parmesan cheese, as garnish

1. Before preparing sauce, fill a large casserole with water, and bring the water to a boil.
- 2 Wash and clean well the arugula and parsley. Dry thoroughly. Trim and chop both the arugula and the parsley.
3. Place the arugula and the parsley in a food processor. Add the yogurt or sour cream, goat cheese, salt, and pepper. Blend the ingredients thoroughly. Keep the sauce at room temperature until ready to use.
4. Add a pinch of salt to the boiling water, and cook the fusilli noodles following the instructions on the package. When the noodles are cooked, drain them, and place them in four serving dishes. Pour the sauce evenly over the top of each serving and add some cheese to each dish. Serve immediately.

### **Swiss Chard Tian**

from *A Complete Menu Cookbook for All Occasions* by Brother Victor-Antoine d'Avila-Latourrette 4-6 servings

1 pound (or one generous bunch, if that's what you've got!), trimmed  
Olive oil, as needed  
1 leek or 1 onion, chopped (if using a leek, make sure it's cleaned, and only use the white and light green parts)  
3 garlic cloves, minced  
3 eggs  
S and P to taste  
4 teaspoons water  
Bread Crumbs, as needed

1. Chop the chard, both leaves and stems, and then boil the chard for about 20 minutes (yikes, I think I would do 5-10 in my kitchen-julia) in lightly salted water. Drain the chard and set it aside.
2. Preheat the oven to 350degrees. Pour some olive oil into a large skillet. Add the onion and saute lightly over low-medium heat for 2-3 minutes. Add the garlic, and saute for another minute. Add the Swiss chard and continue sauteing for 2-3 minutes more, blending the ingredients well. Beat the eggs in a deep bowl, add the salt, pepper, and water. Mix well.
4. Butter thoroughly a long, ovenproof dish. Place the chard mixture in it and spread evenly. Pour the egg mixture on the top and also spread evenly. Sprinkle some bread crumbs over the top surface. Place the dish in the oven for about 25-30 minutes. Serve hot.

A simple Cabbage Salad:

Grate or finely slice then chop a couple of times to get slivers/shreds of red cabbage; toss in a bowl with a few roasted nuts, a favorite salad dressing (vinaigrette or creamy one), and other vegetables: grated radishes, chopped parsley (lots of it for color!), grated cheese if you like, chopped smoked turkey or roast beef or whatever you have to make it a main dish. Leftovers can make a take-to-work/school lunch!

The following recipe links have many recipes on them, try it!:

Fennel Recipes:

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

Arugula Recipes:

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

Red Cabbage Recipes:

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

Chard Recipes:

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

Rapini (Also called Broccoli Raab or Rabe)

<http://www.mariquita.com/recipes/broccoli%20raab.html>

Beet Recipes:

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

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>

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#### 7) 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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#### 8) Veggie Notes

From High Ground: Flowers, Arugula, Leeks, Chard, Cabbage, Fennel

From Mariquita: Carrots, Rapini Greens, Tomatoes, Beets, Carrots

To see a picture of the 2 farm families:

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

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

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

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#### 10) Two Small Farms Contact Information

Two Small Farms

Mariquita Farm/High Ground Organics

Organically Grown Vegetables

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<http://www.mariquita.com>

<http://www.highgroundorganics.com>