



The Cedar Post

Cedar Down Farm's Weekly Newsletter

Summer CSA, Week 1, June 17, 2013

This week's share:

Spinach, lettuce mix, lettuce, bok choy, radishes, kohlrabi, garlic scapes, thyme and sage

Next week's guess:

Spinach, lettuce, lettuce mix, radishes, kohlrabi, green onions, kale, cilantro, garlic scapes

On the farm...

After what seemed to be an interminably long spring, with cool weather, late frosts and lots of rain, we are finally getting the warmth necessary to make our crops grow and to allow us to (finally) start CSA pickups! This is the latest we've started the CSA since we've been at Cedar Down Farm but good eating has arrived at last.

Welcome to the CSA to all of our new members and welcome back to all of our returning members! We've been hard at work planting, weeding and planting some more in preparation for a whole season's worth of good eating. If this is your first time joining a CSA, you will be delighted to start following the seasons through the vegetables that you receive in your CSA share. Because all of the veggies come from our farm, you receive only what can grow in each part of the season. So, at the beginning you will see lots of cool-loving crops like fresh greens, scallions and spring onions and lots of crops in the brassica family (this is the cabbage-family of crops and includes everything from broccoli, cauliflower and kale to arugula, turnips and kohlrabi). Then, the hearty carrots, beets and onions show up followed by the heat-loving crops like tomatoes, cucumber, eggplant, beans and more.

Each week, the newsletter will tell you what is going on at the farm and supply you with lots of info about the veggies and great recipes for how to use them. We've also got an archive of past newsletters and recipes on our website so if you're ever in need of a great recipe, you can head there and search for one by veggie or season.

As our returning members know well, being part of a CSA means becoming intimately connected with your food and your farm. And that is exactly the point. You are all contributing to keeping local agriculture alive by choosing to support our farm. This support means you will reap the benefits of seasonal abundance but also help us through the hard bits when some crops fail and weather is a challenge.

And this spring has been a bit of a challenge actually. We thought all of our woes were over after last year's dry dry weather abated, but this season has thrown us some curve balls already.

Probably the worst bit is what has been happening to our squash, zucchini and cucumbers. The first seeding of all these crops germinated terribly (something we attributed to the cold weather) so we quickly re-seeded only to have the same thing happen again! Now, we think it is some pest actually eating the seed right out of the ground. So, these crops are going to be quite late this year - we've had to seed them a final time in the greenhouse and will transplant them out and hope for better luck.

The other challenge is the increasing prevalence and voraciousness of the flea beetle. This is a tiny black beetle that attacks the brassica family crops. While we've always been able to control them quite well by covering the crops with floating row cover, this spring, they seemed to have figured it out and crawled right under to munch heartily on many of our first brassica crops. You will probably notice lots of tiny holes in your bok choy, arugula and other greens - evidence of the flea beetle's munching but merely an aesthetic challenge. Hopefully, the later part of the season will be smoother and the crops perfect to make up for our early troubles!

Quick Pasta with Kohlrabi, Chickpeas and Greens

Serves 4. From Cedar Down Farm's Kitchen
2 kohlrabi bulbs, peeled and diced
1/3 lbs greens such as spinach, chard, bok choy, kale or mustard greens
5 garlic scapes, cut into 1 inch pieces
1 cup fresh bread crumbs
3/4 cup grated Parmesan, Pecorina or Grana Padano cheese
3 tbsp heavy cream
1 lb dry pasta, any shape
2 tbsp butter
2 tbsp olive oil
1 tsp fresh thyme
salt and pepper

Bring a pot of salted water to the boil. When boiling, add pasta and cook until tender.

As pasta water boils, heat olive oil and butter in a large skillet until hot but not browning. Add scapes and kohlrabi and sauté until the kohlrabi begins to brown, about 5 minutes. Add greens to skillet and sauté 4 minutes more. Add cream and grated cheese and continue to cook until the mixture has thickened, about 3-4 minutes. Add thyme, salt and pepper and taste to adjust seasonings. Add cooked pasta



and serve sprinkled with breadcrumbs and some additional grated cheese. Also good with a squirt of fresh lemon juice!

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Szechuan Spiced Vegetables and Tofu

From <http://www.dishesfrommykitchen.com/>

Kohlrabi - 2 bulbs, diced
Bok Choy - 2 cup cut to 1/2 inch thick slices
Fresh shiitake mushroom - 1 cup (sliced)
Tofu - 300 gm (pressed tofu)
Onion - 1/2 sliced
Fresh Ginger - 2 tsp
Garlic - 1 tsp minced
Garlic scapes or scallions - 2 tbsp slice

For the Sauce:

Vegetable stock - 3/4 cup
Light or dark soy - 2 tbsp
Black bean sauce or paste - 1 tbsp
Dry sherry - 1 tbsp
Chilli paste - 2 tsp
Corn starch - 1 tbsp
Sugar or brown sugar - 1/2 tsp
Szechuan pepper corns - 1/4 tsp, toasted and ground (can be omitted if not available)
Oil - 1 tbsp
Salt as needed

1. Heat oil in the pan. Add ginger and garlic.
2. Now add kohlrabi, bok choy and onion. Stir fry until the bok choy is slightly wilted.
3. Now combine all the ingredients listed under the sauce.
4. Whisk and add to the pan. Boil by stirring until it is thickened. It takes just 1 minute or couple of minute.
5. Now add the cubed tofu. Heat through for 2 to 3 minutes.
6. Garnish with chopped garlic scapes or scallions. Serve hot with Jasmine rice or white steamed rice.



Beautiful Brassicas

As I mentioned in the notes from the farm, spring is all about crops in the brassicas family. These veggies like cool spring weather and lots of moisture and tend to thrive in an Ontario spring. There are lots of veggies in the brassica family, many of which you will find in this week's share - radishes, kohlrabi and bok choy.

If you've never seen a kohlrabi, you are probably wondering what exactly to do with it. Well, remove the leaves and peel the bulb and you will have a tender yet crunchy, sweet treat that is reminiscent of the crunchy centre of a broccoli stem. Kohlrabi is wonderful eaten raw in a salad or slaw or just cut into chunks and eaten in your lunch or dipped in a bit of olive oil and salt. It is also great cooked, and can be stir-fried or roasted and is great just tossed onto the barbecue.

And for that bok choy. Bok choy is a lovely, mild-tasting green that thrives in a stir fry or put in at the end into a brothy soup. It can also be chopped into a salad for great crunch.

Like all brassicas, these veggies are very high in fibre and Vitamin C. Try substituting one for another in your favourite recipes.

Easy Grilled Kohlrabi

A Cedar Down Farm recipe, Serve 3-4

2-3 kohlrabi bulbs (or more depending on how many you're feeding)
2-3 tbsp olive oil
Salt and pepper to taste
Lemon wedges

Remove leaves and peel kohlrabi bulbs. Slice into 1/2 inch thick slices horizontally. Place in a bowl and toss with olive oil, salt and pepper to taste. Place on a hot barbecue and grill for about 3-5 minutes per side until nicely browned and tender. Serve as a lovely side dish with a squirt of lemon juice

Creamy Garlic Scape Salad Dressing

A Cedar Down Farm Recipe

Garlic scapes are the flower stalks of the garlic plant. They have a delicious, zesty but milder garlic flavour. Use them raw like regular garlic like in this yummy recipe or cook them like a vegetable. Cut them in chunks and throw them in a stir-fry or pasta and they have a lovely asparagus-like texture and a mild garlic flavour. You can also pickle them for a winter treat!

2-3 garlic scapes, chopped
2 tsp fresh lemon juice
1 tsp honey
3 tbsp apple cider or rice vinegar
1/2 cup yogurt
3 tbsp mayonnaise
salt and pepper



Put all ingredients into a blender and blend until smooth. Taste to adjust seasonings. Serve on a fresh salad.

Farm Tour and Barbecue!

Mark your calendars everyone and join us at the farm on Saturday, July 13 for a farm tour and barbecue. Come and see where your food is grown and how we grow it, have a walk around and enjoy some delicious food with your fellow CSA members!

Saturday, July 13

Farm Tour at 2:00pm
(possible 2nd tour at 3pm
if there is interest)

Barbecue starting at
4pm.

Bring a potluck dish to
share!

