



The Cedar Post

Cedar Down Farm's Weekly Newsletter

Summer CSA, Week 2, June 22, 2015

This week's share:

Lettuce, spinach, arugula, chard, bok choy, kohlrabi, broccoli, garlic scapes, green onions, herbs

Next week's guess:

Lettuce mix, lettuce, spinach, turnips, broccoli, kale, green onions, garlic scapes, herbs

On the farm...

Soil. As organic farmers this word is imbued with enormous significance. In fact soil is the determining factor (or should be) of what it means to be an organic farm. Protecting and caring for soil that is - it is what farming organically is all about. At this point in history, soil is not something that gets a lot of attention or that is much understood by the general public but it is critically important to the existence of humanity much like clean water and air.

As CSA members you get an intimate glimpse of that importance through your connection to Cedar Down Farm. It is healthy and fertile soil that produces the beautiful food that you receive in your shares and it is caring for the health and resilience of our soil that will mean we are able to produce that food year after year. You see soil is not an inert medium in which we plant seeds and add fertiliser so as to make a crop grow, rather it is a complex ecosystem that requires care and attention to maintain. A healthy soil ecosystem allows soils to remain productive over time and plays an important role in supporting other ecosystem processes. We are now also finding out how much soil can play a role in helping to mitigate the effects of climate change with it's potential to actually sequester carbon from the atmosphere.

This year, the UN General Assembly declared 2015 to be the International Year of Soils. Thankfully they are recognizing the great importance of soil to humanity and how important it is that we begin to work towards protecting and building soils around the world. It is as important to our future as protecting our oceans and reducing carbon emissions into the atmosphere.

On the farm, our goal is to try to build our soil and keep it fertile and resilient. This means paying attention to how our farming practices effect soil microbiology and working to mitigate and balance that effect (tillage is extremely hard on soil - we use crop rotation and cover crops and try to minimize tillage where possible to counterbalance the effect). We pay attention to the mineral balance of our soil and amend where needed. And overall we try to use practices that are sustainable over time - crop rotation and cover cropping, applying compost and avoiding all chemical pesticides or fertilizers. We hope to improve our farming practices over time as well, possibly bringing cattle onto the farm for the beneficial effects they can have on soil and improving our cover cropping techniques to incorporate more species of plants to nourish more types of microbiology.

As CSA members, with your special relationship with agriculture, hopefully you can spread the word! Most people don't realize how important soil is to their existence and how directly we rely on it to feed us and support our communities. But building soil may also be a key way to slow climate change as healthy soils sequester carbon from the atmosphere - this could be a key element in our fight to combat climate change if we pay attention and start changing our behaviours to conserve and protect our soils around the world (check out this great article on soil's capacity for carbon storage - http://e360.yale.edu/feature/soil_as_carbon_storehouse_new_weapon_in_climate_fight/2744/).

Fresh Spring Salad

This salad is refreshing and light and can be made with many of the different veggies that you receive in your spring CSA shares. It's also quick and easy to make!

1 bunch radish or turnip, kohlrabi or broccoli
4 tbsp cilantro, chopped (or dill)
5 green onions, chopped finely
1/2 cup plain yogurt
3 tbsp lemon juice
2 tbsp olive oil
salt and pepper

Finely chop radishes (or turnip, kohlrabi or broccoli or a combination).

Place in a bowl and add cilantro, green onions, yogurt, lemon juice and olive oil. Toss to thoroughly combine.

Add salt and pepper to taste. Serve immediately.



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Chard & Chickpeas With Tahini Cream

1 14-ounce can of chickpeas, drained and rinsed
1 bunch of swiss chard, chopped. Separate the stems from the leaves.
1 chili pepper, diced. I use a red fresno chili (optional)
1 medium red or yellow onion, diced
1 lemon
1 tablespoon of smoked paprika
1/4 teaspoon of ground cinnamon
2 tbps chopped cilantro
Olive oil for cooking
Salt to taste.

Tahini Cream

2 tablespoons of well stirred tahini paste
2 tablespoons of plain yogurt.
1 tablespoon of olive oil
1 lemon
Tiny drizzle of honey (optional)
2 tablespoons of water
Salt to taste.

To Serve: pita bread, crusty bread, olives, steamed rice, Spanish or thinly sliced ham, manchego cheese

Preheat oven to 375. Line a small baking tray with foil.

Make the tahini cream sauce by combining the the tahini, yogurt, olive oil, honey and water. Stir in some lemon juice and salt to taste. Mix until smooth. Set aside.

Place the chickpeas, smoked paprika and cinnamon on the lined baking tray. Add some olive oil and salt to taste. I use a generous tablespoon of olive oil. Toss everything together. Spread out in a single layer and roast in the oven for about 10-15 minutes.

While the chickpeas are roasting, saute the swiss chard stems, onion and chili pepper (if using) in a large fry pan on medium heat with some olive oil and a pinch of salt. Once the stems and onions are soft, stir in the leaves and a pinch more salt. Cook until the leaves are wilted and soft.

Place the sauteed swiss chard in bowls. Top with the roasted chickpeas and a sprinkle of chopped cilantro. Finish with a dollop of tahini cream. Serve with lemon wedges and pita bread or any of the suggestions.



What to do with that bok choy?

Roast it!

Set the oven to 400°F, quarter the bok choy lengthwise, and toss it in salt, pepper, and olive oil (or sunflower or grapeseed oil). Roast the choy cut side down on a baking sheet for 10-15 minutes, then flip it and roast 5 minutes more.

The result? Slightly crispy leaves (similar to a kale chip), crisp-tender cores, and a delicate cabbage-y flavor. Roasted bok choy will pair well with almost anything, but is a great side with meat, tofu or on top of rice.



Greens, Greens, Greens...keep 'em crisp!

Spring! Is a time for crisp, green vegetables. We harvest them fresh for you each week so they are at their peak freshness when you pick them up. But they should last very well in your fridge if you store them right.



So...make sure to store your greens (anything green and crisp from lettuce, arugula and spinach to bok choy, broccoli, cabbage and kohlrabi) sealed in a bag or container in your fridge. Sealing them will retain their moisture (your crisper drawer won't do this - it's a lie!) and the fridge will keep them good and cold!

Spring Turnips with Miso Glaze

The little white turnips you're getting in your shares this week are the best! Sweet and crispy with delicious greens, they are a simple and tasty treat.

1 bunch white spring turnips
3 tbs sesame oil or other vegetable oil
1 tbs miso
1 tbs soy sauce
1 tbs honey
1 tbs butter
5 green onions, diced
1 tbs chopped cilantro (optional)
Salt

Wash turnips very well. Remove greens, leaving 1-2 inches on the roots. If larger than 1 inch diameter, cut the turnips in half.

Heat a wok or large frying pan. Add sesame oil and when hot, add turnips. Cover with a lid and cook, stirring occasionally for 5-6 minutes. Check the turnips for tenderness, stir and cover again cooking for a few minutes until turnips are almost completely tender.

Uncover and add miso, soy, honey and salt to taste. Stir-fry uncovered for 2 minutes more, coating the turnips with the glaze and reducing slightly. Add the green onions and butter, cook for one more minute. Add cilantro, taste for salt and serve.