



In the Share

Summer Squash, 4 pieces
Cucumber, 3 pieces
Beets, 1 bunch
Scallions, 1 bunch
Lettuce, 1 head
Kale, Collards OR Chard, 1 bunch
Beans, Green OR Yellow, 1 bag
Shell Peas, 1 bag
Snow Peas, 1 bag
Sugar Snap Peas, 1 bag

I hope you are all impressed by my culinary prowess. I deserve a little credit, but most of it belongs to others who have selflessly shared ideas and tolerated endless detailed questions such as "did you cut it before or after you roasted it?" Credit also goes to Elizabeth Schneider, author of Vegetables from Amaranth to Zucchini. I confess that I tried to keep that resource a secret purely to sound like I knew what I was talking about. Now that you know my secret, I'll liberally quote from her text! (It feels so good to share the burden of responsibility.)

But first, in the share: four pieces of summer squash. Talk about a selfless vegetable. I'm sure it has nothing more in mind that to supply your dinner table with a steady stream of manganese (whatever that does for your body, I bet you need more of it). I've eaten these tender (continued on the back)

From the Farmer

A Farmer on the Beach

This week I had the extreme fortune to enjoy something that is elusive to most farmers that I know: a vacation in July. In the wee hours of Saturday morning my family and I took the ferry across Lake Michigan to spend a long weekend camping on the beach and spending time with my parents, my siblings and their kids. I laughed, relaxed, swam, and thoroughly enjoyed our visit to "the Caribbean of the North" (with its clear blue waters and white sand, it comes by its nickname honestly!)

If I'm honest, as much as I was looking forward to a brief respite, it was a little tough for me to walk (or sail!) away from the farm and its endless lists of things to get done at this time of year. Once I did it, though, I rarely gave it a thought. I felt confident that I was leaving it in exceedingly capable hands. Upon my return on Wednesday morning, I saw that my suspicions were true and that the crew had managed to, not only break even, but gain some ground on the to-do lists. They had finished weeding and mulching all of the fall Brussels sprouts and had unearthed the peppers and eggplant from their blanket of weeds. The week's seeding in the greenhouse was already done and they had pulled off the rarely necessary (and even more rarely enjoyed) feat of picking sugar snap peas, snow peas, shell peas, AND green and yellow beans on the same day. They had even figured out a way to make it rain so that one of our late plantings of carrots would germinate.

Another thing that immediately struck me when I walked the fields was the riot of color and blooms in the CSA flower garden, which means that it is time to open up the flower and herb gardens to all of you. When you come to pick up your CSA share this week and in the weeks ahead, please take some time to walk back to the farm and harvest a bouquet of flowers. The more the flowers are cut, the more they will produce so please help us keep the flower garden beautiful by bringing a bouquet home whenever you like.

If you don't know how to find the farm (it is about 300 yards from the street), please ask us at the stand, and we will direct you. The flower garden will be right in front of you when you enter the gate. There will be a bucket with clippers and some rubber bands at the base of the rain gauge.

- When harvesting, choose blooms that are just opened and cut them with a long stem. Just be sure to leave a few side shoots on the plant so that new stems and blooms can grow.
- If you see blooms that are fallen over, making seedpods, or otherwise "past," harvest them as you normally would and leave them in the path. Then those plants can then make new blooms.
- When cutting your flowers, cut the stems at an angle and strip off the leaves as you go. The angle cut will make it easier for the flowers to take up water in the vase, and stripping the leaves will extend the life of your flowers and keep the vase water cleaner.
- When you are ready to leave, please return the clippers to the bucket and remember to **close the gate!** If the gate is left open and the deer get into the farm, they will not be so considerate with their harvest!
- As soon as you get home, trim the stems one more time and put your bouquet in fresh water.

I hope that many of you make it back to the farm and enjoy some fresh flowers!

-Jake

Recipe

I make this recipe all the time with cukes. I usually throw in some lettuce with it, too. It's very refreshing on these hot summer days! –Steph Armstead

Watermelon and Feta Salad with Cucumber and Mint

Serves 2

Ingredients

- 1/4 watermelon, diced into bite-sized chunks
- 1/2 cucumber, diced into bite-sized chunks
- 2 ounces feta, crumbled
- 1 lime
- 1 Tbsp. extra virgin olive oil
- 4-5 fresh mint leaves, chiffonnade
- freshly ground black pepper

Directions

Toss the watermelon and cucumber together in a large bowl. Sprinkle the cheese on top and season with olive oil, lime juice and black pepper. Sprinkle the chiffonnade of mint leaves over the top of the salad as a garnish.

Beets in Marjoram Pesto

Adapted from Local Flavors by Deborah Madison

For the pesto:

- 1 small slice country bread
- 2 T aged red wine vinegar
- 1 garlic clove, coarsely chopped
- Sea salt and freshly ground pepper
- ¼ C marjoram leaves
- 3 T drained capers
- ½ C pine nuts
- 1 C finely chopped parsley
- 2 T pitted green olives
- ½ C Extra Virgin Olive Oil

1. Separate beets from leaves. Roast scrubbed, whole, unpeeled beets in a 400°F oven until fork tender. When done, slip off skins and quarter.
2. Prepare pesto: Soak bread in vinegar on a plate.
Pound garlic with ½ t salt in mortar and pestle until smooth
Then work in marjoram, capers, pine nuts, parsley and olives until a coarse puree. (I cheat and use the food processor).
Add bread and olives and work in. Season with salt and pepper.
It is very thick, don't thin!
3. Prepare leaves using classic greens recipe from last week.
4. Toss cooled beets in pesto.
5. Assemble by placing a nest of greens on a plate and topping with the beets. Delicious!

(continued from "In the Share")
squashes raw with hummus or pesto. Or you place them in a baking dish whole, pat with butter, sprinkle with bread crumbs, parmesan, and a few herbs, and roast. That combo could also go on the grill in a tin foil pocket.

Check out the recipe to left for a delightful cucumber salad provided by Steph.

Beets! Use the tops! See recipe to the left from Deborah Madison.

The beans have arrived. Here, I think simpler is better. They are delicious steamed with a little butter.

There are three types of peas in your share this week and here is where I will liberally quote from Elizabeth Schneider: "fresh shelled English peas have become an endangered species" but thankfully, we're preserving them. They are the smallest quantity with deep green, fat pods. Don't eat the pod! These are the peas that are shelled on the back porch into a big bowl to be used in fried rice, peas and carrots, or simply steamed and salted.

Interestingly, no one knows why the snow pea is so named. It originated in Holland in 1536 by the "horticulturally hyperactive Dutch" and is known as the Holland Pea in China! Eat the whole flat thing, pod and all. Schneider again: "Plain or fancy, hot or cold, snow peas require the barest minimum of cooking. For hot dishes, steam snow peas about 3 minutes or boil about 1 ½ minutes. Or stir-fry or sauté whole snow peas 2 to 3 minutes. Simmer snow peas in soup for 1 minute. Oven-steam sealed in parchment or foil for 5 to 6 minutes."

The Sugar Snap Peas "are quite different in that they are curved, plump, crisp and succulent" but cook quickly using the above parameters. -Julie
Coming next week...more peas, beans, squash, cukes and maybe cabbage.

Troy Community Farm

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