In the Bag

Pea Shoots, 1 bunch
Green Garlic, 1 bunch
Radishes, 1 bunch
Scallions, 1 bunch
Lettuce, 1 head
Choice of Spouts, 1 bag/box
Choice of Herb, 1 bunch

Claire’s Comments

The First Harvest Day, 2008

The first harvest of the year is always both exciting and demanding. It’s exciting for obvious reasons. Who can resist the first sweet, spring lettuce? Who does not appreciate those red and purple radishes, so bold in their beauty and their flavor? And garlic! It’s time to compost those winter storage garlic heads all shriveled and sprouting and chop into the new green garlic so full of fresh life. Even the sprouts that we are lucky enough to grow and have fresh all winter long take on a new vigor when coupled with these other spring offerings. There is no shortage of excitement with the first harvest!

Just as the vegetables are young and fresh this time of year, so are we, the harvesters. Getting back into the groove of harvesting and bunching and cleaning can take a week or two, even for those of us who have been doing it for years. This season almost half of our crew has worked at the farm before, which is really great. We have plenty of experienced people who know the ropes and can help the new folks to get oriented. Even so, we had a marathon first harvest. We were still stripping and bunching scallions a full hour later than we expected. Often that’s the way it is with the first harvest.

It felt so good to finally get that last crate tucked into the cooler that when we started our afternoon task list, there was no stopping us. Somehow, even though we were dreadfully behind schedule, we finished everything in time before the forecasted rain. You should have seen us. Emma and Gini planted purple basil in the CSA herb garden and then seeded our second crop of summer squash and cucumbers – three beds each. Jake trained Nicole on leading a tour for grade schoolers and then she brought three rounds of kids from Lakeview out to the field to taste radishes and identify that the edible part of the radish plant is the root. Lisa, Peter, and I set up to plant out our last four beds of tomatoes and were joined by the rest of the crew as they finished up their original jobs. After the tomatoes were safely tucked in, we all closed out the day with a little weeding and mulching in the older tomato beds. It was a great.

I went home feeling so lucky to have such a great crew of worker shares and interns at the farm this year. Surrounded by so many positive attitudes, so much motivation, such enthusiasm for local food, and some pretty excellent soil, the vegetables cannot help but grow big and hardy!

We are entering the 7th CSA season at Troy Community Farm. I want to welcome the 40 new members who will eat regularly from this farm for the first time this year, as well as the 75 members who have been eating our food for anywhere from 1 to 6 years already. Even with this slow, cold spring start, I have a good feeling about the harvest this year and am very much looking forward to sharing it with you.
Farm Pick-up:
Q: If I get to choose my own vegetables from the piles, how do I know what and how much to take?
A: The name and quantity of each vegetable is listed on the front of the newsletter (1 bunch, 1 bag, 3 pieces, etc.) Also, the vegetables are displayed in the same order that they are listed in the newsletter. This arrangement will help you identify any mysterious veggies. Sometimes there will be multiple varieties of a particular vegetable to choose from, but you will still take only one of that vegetable. For instance, there may be red and green lettuce in the pile; you choose one or the other. Also, someone will always be behind the stand to help you. Just ask.

Q: What if I forget to come to the pick-up some week?
A: There is a back-up plan for folks who pick up at the farm. I bag unclaimed shares and set them on my front porch for the night. You can come by to get yours anytime between 7:00 PM on Thursday and 6:00 AM on Friday. At 6:00 AM on Friday, I combine the leftovers into larger bags for Shirley (a follow CSA member) to pickup and use in the free Friday meal at St. Mark’s Lutheran Church. My porch is at 1814 Sheridan Drive, about a mile from the farm.

Lydia’s Porch Pick-up:
Q: Do I get to choose my own vegetables?
A: The bags on the porch will be pre-packed for you. You can peek inside before you choose one to make sure you get the red or green lettuce that you like best.

Q: What if I forget to come to the pick-up some week?
A: Lydia is an excellent cook and also has many friends who love vegetables. They will likely be used one way or another.

All Pick-ups:
Q: I signed up for eggs. How do I get them?
A: Eggs will be in a separate cooler or box. Just cross your name off the egg list and add your dozen to your bag. Folks who signed up for a weekly dozen will get eggs every week. Those who signed up for biweekly eggs will be assigned to an “A” week or a “B” week and will get their dozen every other week accordingly. Either way, your name will be on the list if you are scheduled to get eggs that week.

Q: What if I am out of town during the pickup?
A: Have a friend or neighbor pick up your vegetables instead. You can ask your friend to deliver the food to you, or just have her/him eat it if you will be gone for a while and won’t be able to use it. If you cannot find someone to come to the pick-up, please try to let me know ahead of time and I won’t harvest your share that week.

More Questions? Please ask. Contact information is below.