



The Weekly Weeder

A weekly publication for CSA members

JUNE 18, 2008—BOX #2

WWW.RIDGELANDHARVEST.COM

Box Contents & Tips

Cilantro: Used in a variety of cooking, particularly Mexican, Chinese, Vietnamese, Thai and Indian. Coriander is the seed of the cilantro plant. Store by standing upright in a container with an inch of water and refrigerate. Use fresh in guacamole or to top a salad or pasta. *See recipes on back.*

Garlic Scapes: Half Shares Only. This is just the start with lots more coming. We provided you with the entire garlic plant last week so you understood what this plant looks like. Out of the center of the leaves, the flower stalks or scape is now starting to grow. We pick off the scape to help the plant put energy into the development of its bulb. The scape is a more distinct garlic flavor than the green garlic, but still mild and sweet. We chop the entire scape and use it fresh or lightly sautéed. Excellent as an addition to tacos, pizza and baked potatoes.

Herbs:

Summer Savory: Similar to thyme but

Tarragon or Oregano: Full Shares Only

Lettuce, green leaf: Harvested small before they rotted from the mud washing through them. Cut off end, wash leaves, drain excess water (but don't dry entirely as some wetness needed to maintain humidity), store in a plastic bag.

Red Radishes: The first picking!

Spinach: Full Shares Only (sadly,

Baby Turnips: Brilliantly white and perfectly sweet! The flea beetles love this crop too, as you'll see by the holes they ate in the leaves. Use the root to top a salad or dip into sour



Curious about
CSA member/
photographer
Eric

Wuennenburg,
these young
Jersey steers
come to the
fence line for a
photo opt!

News from the Farm

Thanks for the many emails, phone calls and personal questions regarding the farm's conditions after all the rain. We can say that it has finally stopped. We took stock of the damages this last month of rain has done to our fields. Soil has been lost in places. Sections of crops have been buried in silt, while other sections completely washed away. Most crops seem to be fairing well, though some are yellowed from too much rain washing nutrients through them. Mat has applying a foliar fertilizer of fish and kelp to the peppers, scallions, baby leeks, broccoli and kohlrabi to give them a boost.

For us, we have been most affected by not being able to plant. The greenhouse and cold frames are packed - some flats look stressed from being held back from planting in the fields but they should recover. What is most concerning to us, however, is the lack of direct seeding we've been able to do. Boxes will reflect these missed plantings as what wasn't planted a month ago can't be harvested from in the next few weeks. Sunday and Monday we were able to catch up on seeding and field preparation. Thursday and Friday we'll be transplanting. To help boost box contents quickly, we're adding salad mix and other baby greens to our crop list as these are short-day crops (21-days from planting). We're also experimenting with MicroGreens in our greenhouse (you tasted some last week from our farming friends at Garden to Be). We always have to be willing to change our plans and take new directions when they need to be made.

It has certainly been the strangest spring we've experienced. The cold, wet April and May slowed crop development by roughly 3 weeks on our farm. Now, the addition of delayed plantings, and you understand why your boxes will remain light for a while. The cause and effect of field conditions on what we eat is something we're not used to feeling. We sure wished that our field house (an unheated greenhouse structure) where crops can be planted earlier and later into the season had been up this spring! In another month, we'll have this new production area ready. It will make a big difference next spring to our boxes.

But we must tell you that if we depended on sales to retailers and wholesalers, our farm would be in serious trouble. We feel blessed that the relationship between a CSA farm and it's members is one that allows the flexibility in nature. While we feel terrible that our boxes aren't brimming yet, especially for those who haven't previously been to our market stand or been a CSA member, to have experienced the bounty from us, we assure you that crops are coming along. It is the true philosophy of a CSA—the direct relationship between a farm and its supporting members, sharing in the risks that farmers take on but also sharing in the bounty of crops too.

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Sautéed Greens -

Taken from the Madison Area Community Supported Agriculture Coalition's [Asparagus to Zucchini](#) cookbook.

2 Tbsp sesame oil
3-4 cloves garlic (use garlic scapes too)
1/2 pound mixed greens, chopped coarsely (if you use the radish greens, cook separately from turnip greens as they'll require a longer cook time.)
1 Tbsp vinegar
2 Tbsp tamari
Black pepper

Heat oil in pan or wok. Add garlic and sauté 2 minutes. Remove garlic and set aside. Now sauté the greens until just wilted. Remove from heat, and stir in vinegar, tamari, pepper and garlic. Serve immediately. A wonderful side dish or used over rice for a simple meal. Makes 2-4 servings.

Cilantro Lime Vinaigrette

Madison Herb Society Cookbook, K. Milanich

2/3 c. (6 oz) lime juice
3 Tbsp minced garlic or garlic scapes
1/4 c. apple cider vinegar
Pinch salt
2/3 c. cilantro leaves
2-4 dashes Tabasco sauce
1 Tbsp cumin
1/4 c. oil (canola or your favorite)

Place all ingredients except the oil in a blender. Turn on and slowly add oil until well mixed. Makes 1 1/4 cup.

News from the Farm...continued

To us, this is an incredibly meaningful relationship - a trust in us that we'll utilize your upfront resources to buy seed, fertilizer, potting mix, fuel, pay employees and allow us to be farmers. So with that, when crops come, you're the ones who will receive. This year, it appears that we need to be patient.

Our farm has been luckier than many others. You've likely seen the pictures of many Midwestern towns under water. Our valley farm friends have lost entire crops and acres of land in production. The erratic spring weather has taken a great toll on farms across the United States. Landscapes are changing as lakes drain and rivers overflow. These unstable weather patterns are what global warming is all about. To me, it's the larger issues of what will come of farming and how will farmers across the US and world fair when hot dry weather and cold wet weather swing from season to season? What will the rest of this season bring? We are starting a radical change—you and I—through support of local food systems. You are helping save fuel costs on your food mile tremendously! The average vegetable travels some 1,200 miles before it's consumed. So I feel a great sense of change coming as more people invest in locally produced food. And I feel blessed that our farm has come out of this spring without much overall damage. Thank you for your continued support.

Coming Soon...

Sugar Snap Peas, Kohlrabi, More Lettuce.

The lushious wild canes of the black raspberries are brimming with flowers and tiny berry buds that we hope to be picking within a few weeks!

Scallions and baby leeks, early cabbages and broccoli, swiss chard and beets are bulking up - recovering well from the pounding rain.



Eat well! - Cate

Severe weather once again resulted in massive rain falls last week.
Cold frame tops were filled with water.