



# The Weekly Weeder

A weekly publication for CSA members

JULY 30, 2008—BOX #8

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## Box Contents & Tips

**Fennel— Full Shares Only:** lots more to come! use the bulb and the fronds— stores best by removing fronds from bulb then kept in sealed container

**Baby Leeks:** see recipe on back

**Fresh Sweet Onions—** stores best in fridge in sealed container. Slice for sandwiches and salads

### Cucumbers:

**Zucchini:** great on the grill— thickly slice, coat with olive oil, salt and pepper and grill until tender— toss with pasta and fresh basil

**Eggplant, Oriental:** see recipe on back

**Radish, Easter Egg:**

**Kohlrabi:**

**Garlic:** it is starting to cure, the paper skin is drying nicely— store on counter

**Basil:**

**Cilantro:**

**Lettuce— Red Bibb or Green Romaine, and Green leaf:** wash and store in a sealed container

## Coming Soon...

Green beans, tomatoes, carrots and peppers more fennel, zucchini, herbs.....

## Bulletin Board:

**Attention Pesto Makers!** We have extra basil you can purchase in case quantities. 12 bunches for \$15.00 Available on a first come first serve basis. Simply email your order no later than Friday July 31 and we will deliver an extra box to your pick-up site. Checks made payable and mailed to Ridgeland Harvest, E5538 Nelson Road Viroqua, WI 54665

**Reminder that August 1** post-dated checks will be deposited in a few days. An updated statement will be emailed to each of you individually to whom this applies.

**It may seem like a long way off**, but Winter Shares are still available for sign-up. Our general order form may be printed off the website and submitted with your payment.

## News from the Farm

The summer vegetables are really starting to ripen with the warm muggy nights. You will find several new crops in this weeks box and there will be more to come. We had hoped to be picking green beans by this date but because of the wet spring they were planted late. It looks like we will have a few to bring to market but not enough for this weeks box. Look for them to appear in the next couple of weeks. Zucchini has arrived and will be making regular appearances in the boxes for the next several weeks. It is a staple of any seasonal kitchen. Fennel is one of our favorite crops to grow as well as eat. Some people have difficulty finding uses for this beautiful veggie. But it goes into just about anything we cook. It is great grilled, steamed, or sautéed. Tomatoes are also coming and we should have extra's available for you to purchase for canning, along with peppers. Keep an eye on the bulletin board for details.

The garlic harvest party was no doubt a success. We got 2 1/2 beds harvested and hung to dry. We didn't have a large turnout from the CSA membership, but it was awesome to meet those who did come. They all took home a bundle of German Extra Hardy garlic, for their hard work. We understand that it is difficult for our Madison members to travel the distance to visit the farm, but we hope that as we have other events (hopefully with a little more advanced notice) that you will be able to make the journey to see your food growing. There will be a fall pumpkin pick/ harvest party which we have not set a date for yet. We also are in the process of planning a Madison Potluck/Dinner so stay tuned for details.

One of our goals this week is to finish the garlic harvest (we have one more bed remaining) then we need to get a cover crop of buckwheat planted in the beds that contained the now finished spring crops. Buckwheat is great at weed suppression and will serve as a green manure, when plowed down, for a second cover crop of either oats and peas or winter rye. It always is a comforting feeling when we can make the time to clean up the old beds and get them planted into cover crops. With our amazing crew I am able to have the time to farm and do things that will make us a better farm in the future (like plant cover crops) rather than scrambling to keep up with the moment. A huge thanks and appreciation need to be extended to Craig, Brett, Emmett, and Aquillino. As much as Cate and I would like you to think that this farm is only us we wouldn't be able to provide you this beautiful box of veggies without these four good people. Anyway I hope that your week is a good one.

-Mat

# Recipes

## Caramelized Fennel

from Chez Panisse Vegetables by Alice Waters

1 large fennel bulbs  
1/8 cup olive oil  
salt and pepper

Trim fennel bulb, Cut the bulbs in half vertically, cut out the cores, and cut the bulbs into 1/8-inch-thick slices.

Heat a large sauté pan over medium heat, add the olive oil, and when the oil is hot, add the sliced fennel. (If necessary, cook the fennel in two batches; the fennel should brown, not steam.) Cook, tossing or stirring occasionally, for 8 to 10 minutes, until the fennel is caramelized and tender. Season with salt and pepper. Drain off any excess oil and serve. (This holds well and can easily be reheated; no additional oil is necessary.) Serve with fish and with grilled meats and poultry, or use for a pizza topping..

## Braised Baby Leeks Vinaigrette

Here is a wonderful side dish from Chef Brandon Miller of Stokes Restaurant and Bar in Monterey. It showcases baby leeks to their best advantage. If baby leeks are not available, chose the smallest leeks you can find. Homemade basil oil is easy to make, but if time is short, you can use a commercial brand, or substitute walnut or hazelnut oil instead.

Serves 4

12 baby leeks  
3 tablespoons butter  
2 cups hot vegetable stock  
Salt and freshly ground pepper, to taste  
3 tablespoons champagne vinegar  
3/4 cup Basil Oil (recipe below)  
2 tablespoons heavy cream  
1 tablespoon snipped fresh chives

Position a rack in the middle of the oven and preheat to 325 degrees F. Butter an 8-inch square baking dish and a piece of parchment paper cut to size (for the top); set aside.

Cut off the stem ends (roots) and green tops of the leeks. Slice the leeks lengthwise, leaving one inch near the root end intact to keep the leeks from falling apart. Wash thoroughly under cold water to remove all sand.

Place leeks in the prepared baking dish and cover with the stock. Salt and pepper lightly and cover with the parchment paper, buttered side down. Cook until leeks are tender and the stock is reduced to a glaze. Turn leeks 2 or 3 times while baking. Cool to lukewarm.

While the leeks are cooling, mix the vinegar with a pinch of salt and pepper. Whisk in the oil and cream. Correct the seasoning and add the chives. Pour the vinaigrette mixture over the leeks and serve lukewarm.

## Basil Oil

Makes 2 1/2 cups  
1/3 cup kosher salt  
6 cups fresh basil leaves, packed  
2 cups extra-virgin olive oil

In a large saucepan, bring 4 quarts of water to a boil with the salt.

Add the basil and cook for 15 seconds. Drain through a sieve and immediately plunge the basil into an ice water bath to stop the cooking process. When cool, drain again and squeeze all the water from the basil with your hands.

Place the basil and the oil in a blender and pulse a few times to break up the herbs. Then blend for 2 minutes to puree.

Strain the infused oil through cheesecloth or paper coffee filters.

Transfer to a sterilized glass bottle or jar and cover. Refrigerate for up to 2 weeks

## Grilled Oriental Eggplant

Recipe courtesy Bobby Flay Show: The Food Network

2 Japanese eggplant, halved lengthwise  
1/8 cup soy sauce  
1/8 cup dry sherry  
1 tablespoons toasted sesame oil  
2 cloves garlic finely minced  
Salt and freshly ground pepper  
1 tablespoons sesame seeds, toasted lightly

Place eggplant in a large shallow baking dish. Mix together the soy sauce, sherry, sesame oil, and garlic in a small bowl. Pour the marinade over the eggplant and let marinate at room temperature for 1 hour. Preheat grill. Season the eggplant with salt and pepper to taste and grill on each side for 3 minutes, basting occasionally with the remaining marinade. Serve topped with the toasted sesame seeds.