



# The Healthy Harvest

## ***Green Earth Farm's CSA Newsletter - Week 1***

### **Welcome to Week 1**

We're excited to begin our CSA season, and we want to welcome our returning members as well as our new members. The purpose of our weekly newsletter is to update you on things going on at the farm - what we're planting, how the season is progressing, anything we think you might be interested in hearing about the farm where your food is grown. We also want to help keep you informed of the issues around sustainable farming, organic vs. factory farmed food (or organic vs. factory farmed organic), the impact of farming on the environment, and nutritional information about the food in your box. We will also provide you with recipes to go along with some of the lesser known veggies in your box. If there is anything you'd like to see in our newsletter, please let me know and I'll do my best to add it. So welcome to week 1...

### **The Season so far...**

Well, we all know how this spring has played out. Warm then cool, cool then cooler, rain and more rain, etc. We began our planting in the green house at the end of February and so were able to plant very strong and well developed tomatoes, peppers, and eggplants out into the field. These are all later in the season vegetables, but they've all taken root very nicely and are flourishing with all the rain. Some of our cooler weather vegetables didn't do as well with the temperature fluctuations and consistent rain and lost their window of opportunity to grow well. So now these will be replanted as late summer/fall crops. These vegetables are broccoli, cauliflower and cabbage.

### **Green garlic - what the heck do you do with this?**

Green garlic is regular garlic that is picked before it develops into the familiar garlic bulbs. Once garlic has fully developed, the stalks are not very tender and tasty to use. But with green garlic you use it like you would green onions. Wash and chop all the way up the green shoot until it becomes tough or brown. It can be fairly strong, and tastes just like garlic, so you may want to use sparingly (unless you're garlic lovers like we are). We like to sauté it in olive oil and then add chicken breasts, or turkey burgers. Tonight I'm actually chopping it up and adding it to my spaghetti sauce. Below is a recipe for green garlic pesto.

### **Green Garlic Pesto**

- 4 stalks green garlic
- 1/8 cup (or less) extra virgin olive oil
- 1 tablespoons toasted pine nuts, or other nuts you have on hand such as walnuts or almonds
- pinch salt
- 1-2 pinches black pepper
- 1/4 inch chunk of parmesan, cut up into a few pieces

Whirl the nuts and parmesan pieces in the bowl of a food processor for a few pulses. Cut the green garlic shoots into 1-2 inch lengths. Drop in the garlic pieces through the feed tube as the food processor is running. Add the olive oil while it's running.

**A great source for recipes**

One of our members, Carol Gaus, has been providing us recipes for the past several years. She also has a recipe book published. If you'd like to be added to Carol's email list to receive more recipes that coincide with the vegetables in your box, you can email her directly to be added to her list. Her email address is: [recipes@cjsrecipe.com](mailto:recipes@cjsrecipe.com) .

**Work Share program...it's working!**

We just wanted to say thank you again to our work share members who have been coming out every week and putting a serious dent in our weeds (and potato bugs). As you know, on an organic farm where we don't use any kind of pesticide or weed killer, everything is done by hand, and it's very time consuming and tedious. We really appreciate everyone's help!



## The Healthy Harvest

### ***Green Earth Farm's CSA Newsletter - Week 2***

**Half Share members: Last name M-Z pick up this week.**

#### **Here at Last - Week 2**

We won't really know until we walk through the fields later today, but it looks as though the week delay gave us a little more growth for this week's boxes. When we first began our CSA, we made the decision that once the season started, we would have boxes for you every week. And up until last week, we honored that commitment. However, we have come to the realization that this decision was not necessarily in our member's best interest. Had we made you boxes last week, they would have been very small, and not a box we would have been proud to present to you. While the boxes for Week 1 were also very small, we couldn't postpone that picking for another week because those vegetables wouldn't have survived another week in the field. As we said last week, once the season is truly underway, there will be such a wide selection of vegetables that skipping a week won't be a consideration. But while we're still in the early weeks of the season, if we feel the produce would benefit from another week of growth, we'd rather wait a week and give you a fuller box. If we do this, it will not eliminate a week. It will just push it back, and prolong the season. We think this decision is more in working *with* Mother Nature, rather than in spite of her.

#### **Weeding Party!**

So this appears to be a season of firsts: first season to postpone a week of boxes, and first season to actively reach out to members for help. With our rain-challenged spring, the weeds have been dancing with delight. As an organic farm, weeds are our biggest challenge. I don't know why they grow so much faster than the vegetables, but they do. They just do. Once the produce grows big, they can fend for themselves and weeding is more of a maintenance project. But now, in the early stages, the weeds can easily choke out and steal the sun from the small new plants. Now is the time when we work like crazy people to keep the fields cleared of our little green nemesis's. Our work share folks have done an amazing job of helping us, but we need a little push to get us caught up to where we can go into maintenance mode. That's where you all come in.

We're going to have our first annual Green Earth Farm Weeding Party (you should have heard my kids groan when I told them this). **Next Saturday, July 10, from 10:00 - 5:00.** **IF** you are available, and **IF** you feel like playing in the dirt, we'd love for you to stop by for an hour or so to lend a hand. We're not asking anyone to work a full day. This will be an "open house" so anytime within this timeframe for however long you are available - any and all help would be very appreciated and very helpful. We'll have drinks and snacks, and for those of you who have not been out to the farm yet, this would be a great opportunity to meet your farmers, see where and how your food is grown, and to enjoy what Mother Nature is all about at Green Earth Farm. So, we hope you'll decide to roll up your sleeves, put

on your gardening gloves, slap on a little sun screen and come play in the dirt next Saturday. Let us know if you do plan on coming out (don't worry, if plans change and you end up not coming, we'll understand) just so we'll have an idea of what to expect.

### **Bring back your boxes - mark on sheet**

Please remember to bring back your produce boxes each week when you pick up your new box. For our farm pick up members it's pretty easy - we're there most of the time when you come and we mark it off on our sheet. And if we're not there for any reason when you come, the sheet is on the bulletin board inside the door and you can mark through your name and check the box that says "Dropped off box". For our pick up locations, we need you to do the same thing. We leave a spreadsheet with the names of who will be picking up a box. So when you pick up your box, please cross your name off the spreadsheet and put an X in the box if your brought your box back. If you don't bring it back, and do so the next week, put a "2" in the box so we know you dropped off two boxes. Returning these boxes helps us keep our costs down so we can keep your membership cost down. So thanks in advance for your consideration in this.

### **Different boxes between locations**

If you have joined Carol's recipe distribution, please note that in these first weeks, you may get a recipe for something that is not in your box. In the beginning, different days/locations may have slightly different things in their box, depending on what is ready to harvest on Monday, vs. Thursday, etc. Again, once the season is truly underway (am I starting to sound like a broken record?) then the boxes are more uniform. So hang on to whatever recipes you get, because you may not have it this week, but you will have it in a future week.

### **No more reminder calls if you don't get your box!**

In past years, if you did not pick up your box, we called you to remind you and to find out when/if you would be picking it up. This turned into a burdensome project that we had to do in the evening, when really we just want to sit and relax after a long day of picking and boxing and working in the field. So, we will not be doing reminder calls this season. If you don't pick up your box on your designated day, and if you don't call or email us to make other arrangements, we will donate your box at our discretion. I sent out emails this week to verify everyone's pick up day and location, and you know that if you are a half share member and your last name begins with A-L you pick up on odd weeks and M-Z picks up on even weeks. I will do my very best to get our newsletter out every Sunday, so this will act as a reminder, and I will also try my best to send a quick email reminder the day before your pick up. But after that...it's up to you. Please don't miss out on the yummy produce that is coming your way. Mark your pick up day on your calendars!

### **Lettuce Health Benefits**

We grow several kinds of lettuces, and have them off and on throughout the season, weather permitting. But mostly lettuce is an early spring vegetable that grows best in cool weather. Here are a few nutritional facts about the benefits of lettuce:

- All types of lettuce are considered as a good source of chlorophyll and vitamin K. Recent studies indicate that vitamin K assists in prevention of osteoporosis and loss of bone density.
- Lettuce is a healthier choice for many fitness conscious people as it is very low in calories.
- Eating lettuce on a regular basis helps in overall digestion and benefits the liver.
- Lettuce lowers the risk of certain heart diseases, strokes, and cataracts.

- Also, lettuce has been proven to reduce the dangers of cancer.
- In addition to preventing spina bifida and [anemia](#), lettuce also works its magic in alleviating nervous insomnia as it contains a substance which stimulates sleep.
- The amount of magnesium in lettuce provides energy in the muscular tissues, brain, and the nervous system.
- Making a juice of lettuce, carrot, and spinach will aid in sustaining the natural color of hair. (I wish I'd known this 20 years ago.)

Taken from Buzzle.com article By [Sheetal Mandora](#)  
Published: 3/20/2010

So that's it for this week...we hope everyone had a safe and happy holiday, and we hope to see some of you at the farm next Saturday!



## The Healthy Harvest

### ***Green Earth Farm's CSA Newsletter - Week 3***

#### **Half Share members: Last name A-L pick up this week.**

##### **How are the fields looking?**

I was in Denver most of last week, and didn't get to take my daily walk through the fields, so when Scott and I walked around this weekend, I was surprised and excited to see how much everything has grown. The leaf lettuce and rocky top salad mix is ready for harvest and should be in everyone's boxes this week. It will probably be the last week of radishes and romaines for a few weeks, but we have more on the way. (It may be too hot now for the romaines until the fall, but we'll see how they do.) The pepper plants have little peppers coming out and while the eggplants are not yet bearing fruit, the plants are bigger and stronger than any year so far, so we're hopeful that this will be the year of the eggplant. I can't wait to make babaganoush and to share our recipe with you. The pumpkins are looking great and the melons are coming along. We had the first zucchini of the season for dinner last night (sorry, there was only one so far!) But there are tons of flowers (each flower grows a zucchini), and many little 2 inch fruits out there. Our first batch of snap peas died out after the one week of produce, but we have another row planted, and they are starting to bear pods. Cucumbers are producing, onions are growing bigger and while the green garlic is gone, the full clove garlic is looking great. We should be plowing up our first row of potatoes in the next couple of weeks, and the sweet potatoes are starting to vine and spread as they should. And last but not least...tomatoes are looking MUCH better than last year. The plants are healthy and strong with lots of flowers and many little golf ball sized green tomatoes out there. Beets, carrots, kale, turnips are still growing and as we thin the plants you'll find some of these in your boxes.

I'll be out of town again this week (a dude ranch in Montana for a work retreat!), but I can't wait to get home on Friday to see how much everything has continued to grow. So I won't see our farm pick up folks this week again, but hopefully everything will go smoothly, and you'll enjoy your boxes this week. And don't forget to bring back last week's boxes (and prior weeks you might have missed!)

##### **Thanks to those who came out to our Weeding Party**

Scott and I want to thank all of you who came out on Saturday to help us tackle some of our weeds. The weather stayed beautiful almost all day, until the late afternoon, when a short thunderstorm chased us out of the field. We freed our peas, some zucchini plants, and the melons. They were all very happy to not have to share their space and sunshine with the grasses any longer. We also made some great headway in clearing up our kid's garden, and some of the kids planted more tomatoes and pepper plants. If you didn't make it out this past weekend but would like to come another time, just drop me a note to let me know when - we always have weeds, and always have room for help!

##### **Responding to E-mails**

If you send me an email with questions about your box, or to change a pickup day or anything - I will always respond to your email, even if just to thank you for your message. So if you have sent me a message about making a change and you don't hear back from me, please resend your message, as I may have missed it. In Google email, all the messages with the same subject are lumped together and sometimes it's easy to miss a message. I want to make sure I don't miss any pick up change requests, so if you don't hear back from me within in day, please forgive my not responding, and resend your message.

### **Movie Night**

We did a couple of movie nights during the winter, inviting our CSA members to view with us some movies we thought were pertinent to what Green Earth Farm tries to promote with our organic farming and sustainable farming practices. We all want to be good stewards of the land, and being a CSA member is just one way. We'd like to keep doing periodic movie nights as new movies come out and people share movies that they've seen and think we'd be interested in sharing. We have a couple that we are looking at right now, and will hopefully schedule another movie night in next week's newsletter, so stay tuned! And if you have any movies or books you'd like to share, please do! Knowledge is power, and in today's uphill battle to have a say in what we eat and how our food is grown, we need both knowledge and power!

### **Don't forget to pick up your box!**

We had 8 boxes last week that were not picked up at the farm on Monday and Thursday. If you cannot pick up your box in a given week, please let us know so we don't pick veggies that can stay in the ground for another week. If you realize at the last minute that you will not be able to pick up your box, also let us know so we can either make arrangements to hold it for you until the next day, or donate it to someone else. It's a shame to pick vegetables, just to have them go to waste. If we don't hear from you by the end of the day on your pick up day, we would like to donate your box to our local food pantry. If you can come the next day, we'd rather hold it for you so you don't miss out on a week of your CSA Share.

Thanks everyone - have a great week!

Yours in health,  
Scott & Kathy



## The Healthy Harvest

### ***Green Earth Farm's CSA Newsletter - Week 4***

**Half Share members: Last name M-Z pick up this week**

#### **Farm Notes**

First, I want to apologize to our members if there were any mix ups in the pickups for last week. With me being in Montana last week, and Denver the week before, all the office work fell onto Scott's shoulders along with tending to the fields and the harvest. We tried to keep up with the emails that came in and tried to update everyone's requests, but if we missed something, we're sorry. Hopefully I'm here in town now for the remainder of the season, and I can get back to my job handling the paper work, and leave Scott to his, of handling your food!

That being said, I would also like to ask for your help in keeping our CSA a streamlined process. We understand that most of you will be taking vacations during the summer and that you won't be available for 1-2 weeks to pick up your box. We try to be as accommodating as possible and switch the pick up day or week with you, but doing this is a tedious process, because we have to change the spreadsheet to reflect your request, and then remember to change it back for the next week. What we would prefer is that if you are not going to be able to pick up your box that you either have a friend or family member come pick it up and let them enjoy the harvest for the week, or ask us to donate your box to our local food pantry. We will keep working with you to make sure you get your box every week, but the fewer times we have to switch boxes from one day to another or from one week to another, the less likely we are to make a mistake in our overall count of the boxes we need for a particular harvest day.

#### **Drop off Half Share Members – Please Read!**

We seem to either be fostering confusion or not being clear on the pick up process for our half share members. For those of you who come to the farm to pick up, there is no issue because if you come on the wrong week, we'll just let you know to come back the following week. But for those half share members who are picking up at one of our drop off locations, we've had at least one member each week pick up a box when it's not their week, which means the last person to pick up their box that day does not have a box waiting for them.

When you pick up your box, there is a sign off sheet for you to check your name and to check that you returned your box from the previous week. If it is not your week to pick up a half share box, we put dark gray highlight over your name, so we know not to make you a box and so you know not to take a box. However, we've had instances each week so far where someone with their name grayed out still takes a box and checks it off. This has led to someone who should be picking up a box not having one. Then we have to make another box and drive it out to the drop off location, or the member has to drive



out to the farm. You can imagine the extra work this creates for us, plus then we have to figure out who took a box and make the change on the spreadsheet so they don't pick up a box the next week.

The way to avoid this confusion is to please read the weekly newsletter I send out every Sunday. At the top of the newsletter (**now in red**) I notify the half share members which week it is. Please make sure you only come to pick up a box on your week, designated by the first letter of your last name. If you are sharing a box with someone and are not sure which last name I am using, please email me for clarification. The only way we can continue to offer you the convenience of a drop off location, at no extra charge, is if people are picking up their boxes only on their designated week.

Please let me know if you have any questions about your pick up day or week.

### **What's growing?**

No rain in 11 days has begun to make us a little anxious for a good drenching rain. We keep our eyes on the forecast and the radar, and we're all keeping our fingers crossed that one of these predicted isolated thunderstorms will find its way over our farm.

But in spite of the

### **Hot weather = Less eggs**

Even with all the laying hens we now have, it seems we still can't make any accurate predictions on our egg production. With the hot dry weather we've had these past couple of weeks our hens are laying fewer eggs. Just as in the cold winter months they lay less, the same is true with overly hot weather. Our routine remains the same: those members who pre-paid for a season of eggs are first on the list for eggs in their weekly or bi-weekly box. If you wish to buy eggs, please email us your order and you'll be on the list on a first request basis. If there aren't enough eggs that week, you will be on the list for the next week, and so on.

### **Responding to E-mails**

### **Movie Night**

### **Don't forget to pick up your box!**

Thanks everyone - have a great week!

Yours in health,  
Scott & Kathy



## The Healthy Harvest

### **Green Earth Farm's CSA Newsletter - Week 7**

**Half Share members: Last name A-L pick up this week**

#### **This is real farming**

I was frustrated as I looked outside at the rain this morning. Frustrated, because once again Mother Nature was trying to thwart our plans – that plan being to plow up a row of potatoes for this week's boxes. To cut her some slack though, our original plan was to plow them yesterday, which was a beautiful sunny day. However, a cog was thrown into that wheel when the old Farmall tractor started sputtering and Scott had to spend half a day troubleshooting the problem, then tracking down a new rotor, and replacing that along with a couple of spark plugs. The good news is, the Farmall is running better than it has in a long time! The bad news is, as often happens in farming...it looked like we were going to miss one of those small windows of opportunity that Mother Nature so easily gives then takes away.

So with nothing better to do than drink another cup of coffee and watch the rain, I instead watched a movie I had just ordered: *Fresh*, which I bought for one of our future movie nights. By the time I sat through this 70 minute documentary, my spirits were bolstered again to gladly acknowledge that while Mother Nature may always have the final say (and we may not like her decisions), we are none the less partners with *her*, and not partners with Monsanto, Cargill, and Syngenta – the largest producers of GMO seed, pesticides and herbicides.

When we worry about not enough rain, too much rain, too hot, too cool, late spring, early fall, potato bugs, Japanese beetles and squash borers, we worry because we want every CSA season to be perfect. We want an abundance of fresh vegetables for our members every week, and we want our season to be 16-20 weeks long. When I drive by a farm stand and see an abundance of fruits and vegetables that we don't yet have available, I have to shake off the thoughts of self doubt and remember...what we are doing is real farming – traditional, sustainable farming. We are not spraying our fields with herbicides, like Roundup, that not only kill the weeds, but indiscriminately kill insects, insidiously drains into the soil and up into your vegetables and ultimately throws off the entire balance of nature. We are not spraying pesticides that kill any and all insects: those that destroy the plants and those that pollinate, protect and promote the growth of our plants and aerate and enrich the soil. And we don't plant the same crop over and over in the same space, depleting the soil of all nutrients so that the only way any plant can survive is through genetic modification or more chemicals (aka poisons).

While we'd love the peace of mind of the almost guaranteed abundance that comes with using chemicals and GMO seed, we'd prefer to continue monitoring the weather radar, watching the sky, feeding bugs to the chickens, and pulling weeds by hand, allowing us to sleep at night with the peace of mind that we nurtured the land while we worked; we didn't damage it. And we'll continue to hope that

Mother Nature will cut us a break – like today...the rain stopped, the sun came out, and we plowed up a row of beautiful potatoes for you.

### **Screening of *Fresh* – October 20 and maybe sooner?**

When purchasing the movie and license for *Fresh*, we had to select a showing date, which the producers of the movie then put on their website ([www.freshthemovie.com](http://www.freshthemovie.com)) event page, so people can sign up to attend the screening. We picked October 20, because we will be nearing the end of this CSA season, and beginning the signup process for the 2011 season. We thought this would be a good time to invite people to the farm to see the movie and to answer any questions about CSAs and Green Earth Farm. And of course to invite our current CSA members to see the movie.

After seeing the movie myself, I'm excited to share this with our CSA members and so we are considering doing a showing before the one in October. Probably the first week or so of September. If you are interested in seeing this movie, let me know and if there is enough interest, we will schedule a screening here at the farm in early September.

### **Turkey Update**

For those members who signed up for a turkey, I will be sending out an email with the order form attached. You can fill that out and send back with your \$25 deposit to secure your holiday bird. We still have some turkeys available, so if you're interested, sign up soon. We'd love to sell our turkeys to our members before selling outside the CSA.

### **Carol no longer sending weekly recipes**

Our CSA member, Carol Gaus will no longer be sending out her weekly email recipes, due to time constraints with her full time job, and some computer glitches. When she has time, she may send me recipes that I will add to our newsletter. However, she does blog on [www.allrecipes.com](http://www.allrecipes.com) and you can look for her

She will try to post at least one blog a week using farm share ingredients. (Usually on Tuesdays) You can find her blog at: <http://allrecipes.com/Community/Blogs.aspx>

Scott and I would like to thank Carol for her hard work in helping that all of our CSA members (not to mention the farmers) enjoy our vegetables and find creative and delicious ways to prepare them.

### **Quote of the Day**

"Nature doesn't like monocultures. Sooner or later she will destroy them." (taken from the movie, *Fresh*)

Thanks everyone - have a great week!

Yours in health,  
Scott & Kathy

# The Healthy Harvest

## *Green Earth Farm's CSA Newsletter - Week 9*

### **Half Share members: Last name A-L pick up this week**

#### **Do you know what you are?**

I suppose a lot of different names come to mind when you stop to think “what you are”, but in the context of being members of our CSA, you are all “locavores.” I’ve heard the term many times – although you probably won’t find it in the dictionary yet, but I felt proud when I heard the term again today. The meaning is fairly obvious: those who eat locally grown food. (Loca = local, vore = eat). Let me explain...

I made Scott take the day off today after he had an accident yesterday. While trying to save our peach tree, which is so laden with fruit it’s actually falling over, he was hit in the head with a very heavy piece of metal. I think the blow caused a slight concussion, so after spending last night with a horrible headache, dizziness and nausea, I kept him out of the field today and on the couch resting. We watched a documentary on Channel 11 – WNIT, called “*Farm Fresh To You.*” It was much like many of the recent documentaries we’ve seen – Food Inc., Fresh, Fed Up, Dirt, The Movie...the list goes on.

But this program was different in that it focused totally on local farmers and the community supporting them and eating locally grown food. The “locavores” in the program reminded me of many of you. They were people who looked forward to the summer months so they could stop buying grocery store produce or frozen veggies, and once again enjoy fresh organic produce, picked that day, just for them. They were people who saw the big picture of sustainable farming and the positive implications it has on the land. They were people who knew their farmer and were learning about “real farming” and what it took to make food come out of the ground without herbicides, pesticides, hybrids or GMOs. And they were people who understood that some seasons were better than others.

As we have struggled this season with our weather challenges and have been disappointed in our crop yield and the variety that has been able to withstand the weather changes, we have been consistently uplifted by our members, who have come to pick up their box and have been encouraging and excited about whatever they were getting, and grateful for the hard work we put into each and every box of vegetables. We saw those same positive attitudes in the community interviewed in *Farm Fresh to You*, and realized how fortunate we are to have this opportunity to serve our community. Last year was an over-abundant crop. Hopefully next year will be again. Every year we learn from the past years. We are still excited about the upcoming weeks of this season as we watch the winter squash, pumpkins, sweet potatoes and melons continue to grow. But very importantly, we are just excited and grateful to be associated with the wonderful group of locavores we call our CSA members. Thanks once again for supporting locally grown food and sustainable farming practices.

#### **Locally grown NON-GMO sweet corn**

After last week’s newsletter, where I explained why we do not grow sweet corn, one of our members took it upon herself to research locally grown NON-GMO sweet corn. (Now you see why our CSA members are so great!). What she came up with is two local farms who offer sweet corn that has not been genetically modified.

One is Stade's, which is in Johnsburg. You can buy corn directly from their farm in Johnsburg, or they also have roadside farmstands on Chapel Hill Rd. or on Ringwood Road. The other farm is Twin Garden Farm in Harvard. Thanks Jan for doing the research and providing this information for us all!

### **Green Earth Farm featured in Web Radio interview**

We were contacted last week by the producers of CeCe's Kitchen, an internet radio show ([www.webtalkradio.net](http://www.webtalkradio.net)) and asked if they could interview us for their radio show. They were focusing on locally grown food (seems to be the theme this week!) and had found our website and liked it. So Scott did the interview, which will be aired this Tuesday. Once it has aired, the link to it will be on CeCe's website at [www.webtalkradio.net/show/ceces-kitchen](http://www.webtalkradio.net/show/ceces-kitchen). We hope you'll take a few minutes to here Scott's talk show debut. I'll let you know when the link is up. I think the "live" airing is at 10:00 a.m on Tuesday.

### **Peppers & Kale**

There are still tons of banana peppers coming out, while the poblanos, anaheims and green peppers are taking their time, yet definitely growing. So I wanted to share this season's Mor favorite for our banana peppers. I take the peppers, slice them lengthwise, remove the seeds and membrane. Then make a mixture of feta cheese and seasoned breadcrumbs (the fine ones) and add enough olive oil to make it all stick together. Stuff each half of the pepper with the cheese mixture and bake on a cookie sheet at 350 for 10-15 minutes until the pepper is tender. We've been enjoying these as appetizers or a dinner side dish.

One of our members shared this Kale recipe, which I haven't had a chance to try yet, but sounds delicious, and my kids are actually asking me to make! She takes her washed/dried kale and cut into chip sized pieces. Place on a cookie sheet (she suggested putting parchment paper down first) and spray with either vegetable or olive oil. Then sprinkle with your favorite spice: sea salt, seasoned salt, garlic... Bake at 325 for 15-30 minutes (depending on accuracy of your oven). These come out as deliciously crunchy kale chips, which she says her daughter has been gobbling down as fast as she can make them. One note: watch them carefully in the oven as they will burn quickly. As soon as they begin to curl and get crisp, remove from oven. Enjoy!

### **Quote of the Day**

"If farming was easy, everybody would do it!"

~ Farm Fresh to You

Thanks everyone....have a great week!

Yours in health,

Scott and Kathy

# The Healthy Harvest

## *Green Earth Farm's CSA Newsletter - Week 10*

**Half Share members: Last name M-Z pick up this week**

### **Around the farm**

OK, so I'm going to try this newsletter again...

Last week we enjoyed a wonderful week of breezy, warm weather – the kind of temps we would like to have had all summer. It was so pleasant working in the fields without our mosquito friends and without feeling like melting butter out there in the sun. But alas, here we are back into the 90's, and back to feeling like we're in the dustbowl! We are anxiously watching the radar for any kind of precipitation, and tomorrow looks hopeful for some rain, so keep your fingers crossed and keep doing those rain dances.

Last week Scott planted some fast growing cool weather crops to complement the winter squash, sweet potatoes and pumpkins. So with some rain and not too hot temperatures we hope to have more Romaine lettuce, bib lettuce and radishes before long. We still have a couple of rows of beets, who are just sitting around waiting for some rain, and the kohlrabi is doing the same. The spaghetti squash, delicata, acorn and butternut squashes are looking good, and you should start seeing those in your boxes next week.

As I told many of our farm pick up members last week, if you received a newsletter this week it meant I survived my first triathlon (super sprint) which was this past Saturday. So yes, I did it, and I lived to tell about it! The weather was perfect, Lake Michigan was calm and 67 degrees (which is still cold upon that first dive under the water), and it was early enough in the morning to not be too hot for the 6 mile bike and 1 ½ mile run. I finished in 1 hr. 8 min. which I was pleased with, and came in 712 out of 804 (ok, that doesn't sound so good, but I'm ok with it, because I still survived!). So I think we're going to make this an annual thing, and next time I'm even going to train for it! Now my co-worker, whom I did the triathlon with wants us to sign up for a fund raiser on Nov. 14 where we would be climbing up the stairs of the Sears Tower (Willis Tower). That's 103 stories and over 2,000 stairs. Suddenly, pulling weeds in 90 degree temps doesn't sound so bad!

### **Green Earth Farm CSA Cookbook**

Over the past years we've received many delicious recipes from our CSA members and we've also provided recipes through our newsletter to go with the veggies in your box. I've been saving all these recipes and have them in files, in drawers, and stuck on the bulletin board. So we thought it would be a cool idea to compile them into a cookbook – just recipes for the vegetables we grow.

Once we have it all put together I'll figure out how to self publish it, and we will make it available to our CSA members. We'd love for everyone to contribute to our cookbook, and hope you will send us your favorite ways to prepare your CSA vegetables (we need lots of Swiss chard recipes!) Besides your favorite recipes, you can also pass along any storage, canning, freezing, or even washing tips for your veggies. We'll try to have this out for next season.

### **Seeking volunteers to help with farm inspection**

As a Certified Naturally Grown farm, we have to do an annual inspection of the farm, which means answering some questions about how we are growing our vegetables, whether it looks like we're using anything that would not be organic, are we practicing sustainable farming methods, etc. In the past we've done our inspections with 2 other CNG farmers, rotating the inspections. This year however we have not been able to connect with them in time and we need to complete our inspection soon.

We are looking for 2 CSA members who wouldn't mind stopping by the farm for an hour to help us with our inspections (if we don't do the inspection with other farmers we can use CSA members, but have to provide 3 separate inspections). We were hoping to accomplish this with some of our work share members, but we've kept them so busy helping us with our harvesting, that we haven't had time to pull them away from that important work.

If anyone would like to help us with our inspections we would greatly appreciate it. Just email me and let me know and we'll set up a time convenient to you.

### **Green Earth Farm featured in Web Radio interview**

As I mentioned in last week's newsletter, we were asked by CeCe's Kitchen, a web radio show, to be interviewed to talk about the farm, CSA's and sustainable farming. If you'd like to hear the broadcast, you can find it at <http://webtalkradio.net/shows/ceces-kitchen>.

### **The power of garlic and onions**

Garlic and onions are both members of the allium family and are rich in powerful sulphur-containing compounds. This gives them their strong odor *and* many of their health benefits. Onions are rich in the *quercetin*, which helps keep the heart healthy. The stronger the onion is, the higher the level of quercetin, with small yellow onions containing more than the slighter sweeter Spanish varieties. Onions are also rich in chromium, a trace mineral that helps cells respond to insulin.

Garlic contains the compound allicin, which helps lower blood pressure, lower cholesterol levels, and supports healthy heart function. Garlic and onions are also good source of the antioxidants beta-carotene and vitamin C, vitamins B, potassium and selenium and they contain small amounts of prostaglandins A1 and E which help lower high blood pressure. They can also help lower cholesterol levels and are powerful cancer preventatives.

There is of course a caveat: Both of these strong tasting foods have their highest level of benefit when eaten raw. I can eat raw onions if it's on a big juicy burger, or finely diced in my tuna salad, but not so much any other way. And raw garlic? I don't think so. So if you can enjoy them raw, more power to you. But if not, then when cooking with them, try to cook as little as possible to gain the most benefit. Add them to what you're cooking almost when everything else is finished cooking, and try not to cook them until they're totally limp or mushy. Still tasty, still beneficial, still need the breath mint, but won't have the same healthful potency as the less cooked version. But anyway you slice it, onions and garlic have long been proven to be one of nature's most powerful natural medicines – both preventative and curative, so enjoy!

### **Quote of the Day**

"The farmer has to be an optimist or he wouldn't still be a farmer."

**Will Rogers**

Thanks everyone....have a great week!

Yours in health,  
Scott and Kathy



# The Healthy Harvest

## *Green Earth Farm's CSA Newsletter - Week 11*

### **Half Share members: Last name A-L pick up this week**

#### **Around the Farm**

To actually close our windows to the cold evenings this past week was quite a nice change. While we're not ready to succumb to the fall weather yet, getting a little taste of the cool temps was a treat. Hopefully the cool weather fall crops we just planted (lettuces and radishes) will respond accordingly.

We also finally had a nice steady rain on Thursday night, and we could almost hear the vegetables in the field dancing with delight.

I hesitate to give the synopsis of what is growing in the field, as my past efforts to do so seem to jinx their progress. But in the spirit of eternal optimism, I will say this...the chard is finally slowing down, but we certainly had a successful crop of that delicious green. Next year we are going to plant the rainbow chard in the field where the white chard was planted this year. That field seems to be a perfect match for Swiss chard and grows twice as large there as it does in the upper field. While so far it seems like only the banana peppers have been successful this season, we do have a good looking crop of anaheim, poblano and green peppers finally taking off and just about ready to harvest. Beets are still plentiful, but they don't seem to be growing very fast any more so we may have to pull them and give members a bunch of small beets rather than a couple of large ones. Kohlrabi is still growing, and will hopefully be ready for picking before the cool temps are here to stay. The cabbage is trying really hard, and we still hope that continued warm temps will keep it growing. The winter squash (delicata, spaghetti, acorn and butternut) should be ready for the first picking this week. Zucchini's are still out there, but their numbers will just not be what they were last year. We still have 3 rows of potatoes to dig up, and sweet potatoes are still underground and growing. With proper rain and temperatures our romaine, leaf lettuce and radishes will hopefully round out the fall crops.

Scott and Martin spent Saturday enlarging the pen where Lottie, our pig, and Dizzy and Maria the sheep and Billy the goat reside. It's now about 3 times as large, and is starting to look like a true petting zoo. We hope we'll have a few new animals roaming about in there by next season.

#### **Raw milk source here in McHenry County**

Throughout the season we've had members asking us if we had a source for raw cow's milk, which sadly we have not...until today. The owner of the horse farm where our Charlie and Apples went to their new home this weekend, mentioned in passing that she raises Jersey and Jersey-cross cows and they sell raw milk. Their cows are forage fed (pasture only) and hay. They grow their own hay and it is all chemical free. The cows are completely hormone free. If you are interested in contacting this farm you can email me and I will be happy to give you their contact information.

#### **Heritage turkeys still available**

We still have some turkeys available for the holiday season, so please let us know if you would like to get on the reservation list. For those of you who have already signed up, I will be sending out the sign up form this week which you can mail in with your \$25 deposit (if you haven't already). Our turkeys

are completely free range and organically raised. They will most likely range in size from 8 lbs to 18 lbs. and the price is the same as last year - \$7.50/lb.

### **Fresh, The Movie screening at the farm**

I mentioned several weeks ago that we had purchased Fresh, The Movie for us to share with our CSA members, and community. We will be showing it here at the farm on October 20<sup>th</sup>. There will be more information to share as we get closer to the date.

### **2011 Membership now open!**

Each year, as the current season begins to wind down, we open the membership for the next season. We do this for two reasons: 1) having people sign up early helps us plan in advance for the next season. We can plan our field layout, our quantity to grow and what kind of help we will need. 2) The earlier members sign up, the longer they can take to pay for their membership. While it's certainly OK to pay the entire membership fee up front, we understand in this economy that it is easier for many people to spread out their payments. So once you've signed up with a \$100 initial payment, you can pay the balance over several months as long as the balance is paid by April 1. Scott will be posting the 2011 sign up sheet to the website in the next few days. We hope to see many of you back next year.

### **Layered Zucchini**

Thanks to our CSA member, Lynda for submitting this delicious looking recipe! She says it's like lasagna, without the noodles. This will be one for the Green Earth Farm cookbook!

#### Ingredients

- 4 cups water
- 6 cups sliced zucchini (about 3 medium)
- 1 lb. ground round
- 2 garlic cloves, minced
- 2 cups low-fat spaghetti sauce
- 1/2 teaspoon salt
- 1/2 teaspoon dried basil
- 1/2 teaspoon dried oregano
- 2 cups low-fat cottage cheese
- 1 tablespoon dried parsley
- 2 large eggs, lightly beaten
- Cooking spray
- 1/2 cup dry breadcrumbs, divided
- 1 3/4 cups (3 1/2 ounces) preshredded part-skim mozzarella cheese, divided

#### Preparation

Preheat oven to 350°.

Bring the water to a boil in a large saucepan. Add zucchini; cook 3 minutes or until crisp-tender. Drain and cool.

Place the beef and garlic in a large nonstick skillet over medium-high heat. Cook until browned, stirring to crumble. Stir in the spaghetti sauce, salt, basil, and oregano; cook for 1 minute. Remove from heat.

Combine the cottage cheese, parsley, and eggs in a medium bowl.

Arrange zucchini slices in a shallow 3-quart casserole coated with cooking spray. Sprinkle the zucchini with half of the breadcrumbs. Spread half of cottage cheese mixture over breadcrumbs; cover with half of the meat mixture and 1 cup mozzarella. Repeat the layers with the remaining breadcrumbs, cottage cheese mixture, and meat mixture; reserve the remaining mozzarella. Bake at 350° for 40 minutes.

Sprinkle with remaining mozzarella, and bake an additional 5 minutes or until cheese melts.

**Please bring back your boxes!**

We really appreciate everyone's diligence in bringing back their boxes each week this season. We've done a much better job in keeping our inventory, and it looks like thanks to everyone, we will not have to order new boxes for next season (which is a huge expense for us). So thanks very much.

However...that being said, we still have about 20 boxes out there that have not been returned yet. So please take a look around your garage, your car trunk, your garden shed...where ever a box might have ended up, and please return any boxes that you come across.

Thanks everyone....have a great week!

Yours in health,

Scott and Kathy

# The Healthy Harvest

## *Green Earth Farm's CSA Newsletter - Week 12*

**Half Share members: Last name M-Z pick up this week**

### **Around the Farm**

The cool weather continues, and the weeds slow their growth (yes, even the weeds slow down at some point!), so we have a little more time to focus on other jobs around the farm that get put on hold when we are knee deep into the planting/harvesting part of the season. Most of our farm pick up members have heard our stories about the farm predators (raccoons, skunks, opossums) that have been finding their way into the chicken house and randomly picking off our hens and roosters. So this weekend Scott and Martin tore out the entire ceiling to the chicken house (taking away the winter nesting spots for predators) and filled in all open walls with chicken wire. So during the day the chickens can still be opened up to free range around the farm, but now at night they have a larger and safer home to come back to roost in. By taking out the large swinging fence that was the opening to the house, it's also a nicer way for our members to walk around and see the birds "at home."

It's also this time of year that we start looking ahead to the impending winter months and to finding firewood to heat our home. We have two wood burning stoves that we use almost exclusively to heat the house in the winter. One is a fireplace insert in the large stone fireplace in our kitchen, and the other is a tall circa 1892 Round Oak stove that heats the living room and upstairs bedrooms. So we're always looking for fallen trees that people don't want, or great deals on firewood. We were fortunate last year to get two fallen oak trees from the property next door that the owner said we could take. I think he's realized what a gold mine he has on his property though as we've seen him out there in recent weeks cutting up and hauling off some of the other dead trees on his wooded acreage, so we may not be so lucky this year. Chopping and stacking wood – another favorite farm chore for the boys (NOT!)

### **How long will the season last?**

It's the time of year to start asking that question, and some of you have been. The easy answer is we just don't know. As long as there are vegetables to pick, we will continue having boxes – even as the boxes get smaller. The way the season usually winds down is this: At some point, there just won't be enough harvestable vegetables left to justify making boxes for. So when that time comes, we will pick whatever there is in the fields, put them in baskets in the pole barn and let you know via email, what we have available. Then you can come to the farm, and fill a bag with whatever you'd like. The times and days will be the same – Mondays and Thursdays from 4:00-7:00. I know this usually is not convenient for our drop off members, but hopefully it will give you a reason to stop by the farm and say hello and take a short tour of the farm if you haven't been here before.

We plan to continue boxes for several more weeks, as the last rows of potatoes are harvested, sweet potatoes, winter squash, peppers, hopefully eggplants, and pumpkins become harvestable. After this weekend's rain we see the new lettuces and radishes we planted coming up, so hopefully those will be in the final boxes. Cabbages, which have not taken off for various reasons this season, have finally started growing quickly. Most likely due to the cooler weather. It takes a while for them to develop a

head large enough to harvest, so who knows, you may get an email in November saying to come by the farm and get some cabbage!

**It's a turkey's life**

**Fresh, The Movie screening at the farm**

**2011 Membership now open!**

**Please clean your boxes!**

**Synopsis of past newsletters**

Heritage turkeys still available for holiday season

We have a source for raw milk – please email me for contact info

Please bring your boxes back! Still missing almost 20

Thanks everyone....have a great week!

Yours in health,

Scott and Kathy

# The Healthy Harvest

## *Green Earth Farm's CSA Newsletter - Week 13*

**Half Share members: Last name A-L pick up this week**

### **Signs of Fall**

After a hot, dry summer there's nothing more invigorating than the cool days of autumn. I think we'll still have our Indian Summer, bringing us a few more days of hot temps, but it looks like the Old Farmer's Almanac (and the National Weather Service) was correct in its prediction of an early fall. The signs are all around us...geese flying south, leaves turning color and days getting shorter. On the farm we have our own signs of fall. The animals are growing their winter coats, the turkeys are getting larger, the hens are laying more eggs, the weeds are growing slower. We have to turn the lights on in the pole barn for our Monday and Thursday members who come after 6:00.

We also begin the earnest hunt for firewood (that we are always kicking ourselves for not doing year round). We heat our house in the winter with two wood burning stoves (with the furnace on standby for those cold early mornings when the fire is down to embers). So now, as we enjoy sleeping with the windows open and the chilly night air coming in, we start looking in all directions for dead trees we can cut up and haul off to our farm.

It's also the time of year that Scott and I start putting together a list of the projects we can't do during the busy farming season, that we can focus on when we're not planting, plowing, weeding and cultivating. Last weekend Scott and Martin (our summer farm worker) renovated our chicken house, making it totally predator safe, and larger with more roosting space. We lost a number of our young meat chickens to raccoons, skunks, and opossums this summer so we've declared war against these predators. Knowing that the cold winter months make these nocturnal hunters even more daring and desperate, we've fortified the chicken house to keep our fowl safe. Now these carnivorous critters will need to know how to chew through chicken wire or unlatch a chain link gate to raid the chicken house.

Scott is also drawing up plans to build raised beds next to the pole barn, where we can grow more herbs next season and have more control over their growth and cultivation. We grew basil in the green house this year, but next year plan to add dill, sage, oregano and a few other herbs. Growing them in raised planters will make it easier to manage them through the season.

It's also at this time of year that we start planning for next year's crop. We've already started pouring through our heirloom seed catalogs, looking for some new flavorful vegetables to add to the garden. We also decide which of the veggies we grew this year should be kept on the menu for next year. We always welcome your input on what you'd like to see in your box. We will be growing many of the same things we grew this year that didn't make it into your box, such as cabbage, kohlrabi, turnips, parsnips, and melons. We are excited to begin a new season, putting to use what we have learned from this and past seasons. While next year will

surely have its own new challenges, we'll go into the season confident that we can better predict and overcome challenges that stymied us this year.

So enjoy these weeks of changing colors and cool days. Enjoy the final boxes of the season, and please take time to come and enjoy fall at Green Earth Farm. If you are one of our drop off members, we hope you'll make a trip out to the farm before the end of the CSA season. If you're a farm pick up member, we hope you'll take time when you pick up your box to enjoy walking around the farm, feeding the animals and spending some time relaxing and enjoying nature's beauty!

### **When is the end of the season?**

The simple answer is, we don't know. As long as there is food left to harvest, we will keep making boxes. We can tell you *how* the season will end though. As the harvest gets smaller, and eventually there isn't enough to go through the process of making up the boxes and doing deliveries, we will continue to harvest whatever is in the field. Then we will send out an email letting you know what is available and we'll have it in baskets and bushels in the pole barn. Members then can come to the farm and fill a bag with whatever they would like. All members (drop off and pick up) are welcome to come to the farm to enjoy the final harvests of the season. But until we send out an email letting you know we're at that point in the season, we will continue to make your weekly boxes.

### **Fresh, The Movie - Screening at the farm**

We will be having a screening of *Fresh, The Movie* here at the farm on October 20<sup>th</sup> at 7:00 pm. This 70 minute documentary is a celebration of our food system – the way nature intended it to be – and those who are trying to preserve and re-invent that system. It shows how more and more people are determined to replace food contamination, environmental pollution, depletion of natural resources and morbid obesity with healthier, sustainable alternatives.

If you would like to join us for this event, please send us an email confirming your attendance so we know how many to expect. Feel free to invite your friends and family to come also.

### **2011 Membership now open!**

Thanks to our CSA members who have already expressed their intention to sign up for our CSA again next year! We appreciate your faith in us and we applaud your desire to support local farmers and locally grown food. The movement of "buying local" is growing in many markets, but we feel that none are as important – both for the community and for our health – as buying locally grown food and eating foods when they are in season. Our commitment to you is that we will work our hardest to make next year and coming years bountiful and delicious. We hope to see many of you as members again next season.

Our 2011 membership is now open, and attached is a sign up form if you wish to sign up for next year. The advantage to signing up early is that you can pay in several smaller payments, having until April 1<sup>st</sup> to pay your membership in full.

### **Wiping down your produce box**

As we near the end of the season, it would be very helpful to us if, before bringing your box back each week, you could take a moment to wipe the inside of the box down with a damp paper towel. This will save us a lot of work at the end of the season when we have to disassemble and store the boxes for the winter. Actually it will save our boys a lot of work, so I'm sure they would *very much* appreciate your help with this!

### **Synopsis of past newsletter announcements**

- Heritage turkeys are still available for the holiday season – sign up form is attached
- We have a source for raw milk – please email me for contact information
- We're still missing boxes, so please look around and bring back any boxes you have

Thanks everyone....have a great week!

Yours in health,

Scott and Kathy