

Farm News

Spring is well under way here at the farm. Lots of spring greens are maturing in the fields, along with peas and salad greens. Our warm season crops, like beans, squash, corn, tomatoes, peppers and eggplants, are growing rapidly in this warm humid weather. Our potatoes are blooming, which means that early potatoes are only a few weeks away!

Some of you have asked us about eggs. Our chickens are now four months old. Hens usually start laying at 4-5 months of age, so we expect to see the first eggs soon and are hoping to have eggs available at the pick-ups by the end of the month. We've asked these ladies here what their plans are, but when we ask about eggs they counter by asking for more corn.



Speaking of birds, there is a lot of avian activity at the farm. Violet-green swallows are nesting in nest-boxes on the margins of the fields, as are chickadees. Our resident red-tailed hawks are busy bringing food to their youngsters, and we saw an American kestrel catch a large garter snake in our driveway the other day. While we stay busy in the garden, our feathered friends rush about gathering food for their babies. Meanwhile our resident killdeer is still waiting for her own clutch to hatch.

We've added a few more pictures to our web albums. You'll find them under "Week #2" at <http://picasaweb.google.com/scattleberry>. We'll also be posting the PDF versions of our newsletters on the website. Follow the "News & Recipes" link.

Cast of characters

- **Purple peacock broccoli:** Steam, boil, or sauté. Kids (or grown-ups) might like this better with a little bit of cheese or peanut sauce.
- **Turnips with greens:** This offering is mostly greens, with a small turnip root. Turnip greens can be used like mustard greens; they are spicy raw but mellow out when cooked. The root is radish-like (can be eaten raw), and is great sautéed right along with the greens. Check out the recipe.
- **Garlic scapes:** These babies are MUCH hotter than the green garlic last week, but they seem to mellow much more than regular garlic when cooked. Dice them and add to dishes as you would minced garlic. Great brushed with oil and then grilled.
- **Mizuna:** Cultivated in Japan since ancient times, this Asian green is akin to arugula in its use. Not as spicy, it can be eaten raw as a salad green or gently cooked in a stir fry. See the salad recipe featuring mizuna on the next page.
- **Sugar snap peas.** Peas are harbingers of spring, and although they are later than we'd like this year, we'll be adding them to shares for as long as they are around. Snap peas are great raw or cooked into stir fries. We cook them with rice: throw a handful of peas on top of the rice once the water has cooked off and the rice is almost done. Their flavor infuses the rice with a wonderful pea flavor, and the peas are gently steamed to perfection. The larger ones with swollen pods are sweeter, but they can have a tough 'string' that you might want to remove when you pull the stem.
- **Radishes:** More radishes this week. You can eat the greens if you can't get enough chlorophyll from our other offerings. Cook them into stir-fry or add them to a vegetable soup. See this week's recipe for a lesser known radish root preparation.

Recipes

What should I do with all these greens?

As we mentioned last week, this is the season for greens. We'll have lots of traditional garden produce soon, but now is the time to enjoy pot greens. Here are a couple of hints to help you integrate all this leafy goodness into your family's diet.

- The sooner you use them the better. Greens are best stored in a plastic bag in your refrigerator. Give them some air – you can leave the bag slightly open, or use a perforated bag
- Tender greens such as spinach and chard can be lightly sautéed and eaten as is. They are very tender. Other greens such as Collards, kales, and turnip greens can also be simply sautéed, but they won't be so tender. Boil or steam them first to soften them up before frying.
- Greens are great on their own as a side dish, but they can be integrated into all kinds of meals. For example, we add greens to beans for burritos, in marinara sauce, or in soups. They cook down and take a backseat to the more intense flavors of any dish.

Pasta with beans and greens

Sara threw this together the other night for dinner and it really hit the spot. The turnip greens are 'heartly', just the way we like them, but some might find the turnip greens a bit, well, chewy in this recipe. If so, you could steam them before the sauté or remove the stems before cooking..

A mess of turnip greens, with or without roots (or any other green leafy vegetable (kale, spinach, chard).

2 T olive oil
1 T chopped garlic scape or minced garlic
1 t dried thyme
1 t dried marjoram or parsley flakes
1 ½ cup cooked white beans or 1 15 oz can, drained
Salt and pepper to taste
Parmesan cheese to taste.
3 cups of pasta (any size shape or flavor)

Start the water for the pasta, and sauté the garlic and spices in oil 1-2 minutes until fragrant. If you are using the turnip root, slice it finely and add along with the garlic. Roughly chop the greens and add to the pan, stirring to mix well, cook 5-8 minutes until thoroughly wilted. You can cover the pan to make the greens cook more evenly, but remove for the last couple of minutes to

cook off the liquid. Toss the greens with the cooked drained pasta and add the beans. Heat gently if you wish to warm the beans. Add plenty of finely grated parmesan to the top of each dish and salt and pepper to taste.

Enjoy!

Wilted Mizuna Salad

2 ½ T olive oil
1 T minced garlic, green garlic, or garlic scape.
1 T Minced shallot or scallion.
2 T cider vinegar
½ to 1 lb mizuna, roughly chopped
Heat oil in a large saucepan. Sauté shallots or onion about 1 min, then add garlic and heat about 1 minute more until very fragrant. Stir in vinegar and pour over greens. The hot dressing will wilt the greens. Serve immediately.

Braised radishes with greens

Radishes are great braised; Asian cultures have known this for a long time, and have bred special varieties especially for cooking. However, regular radishes taste good cooked as well. Here's an informal recipe from CSA member Courtney Sherwood, describing how she prepared last week's radishes. Thanks Courtney! Remember to send your creative recipes to sara@bigleaffarm.com.

“I cut the radishes into medallions and cooked them over medium heat in butter, olive oil, white wine, a half spoonful of sugar, and salt and pepper until they were mostly soft and the sugar was starting to caramelize and the radishes were beginning to turn a golden color. Then I added washed and trimmed greens (with the thickest part of the stem removed) and cooked them down until they were wilted but not soggy.”

Coming soon to a table near you...

- **Head Lettuce** for big green salads!
- **Mystery vegetable.** Some of you may know this one. If not, wait until next week to find out!



The mother ship has landed!