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# Cycle Farm CSA Newsletter

Week 6- July 26, 2012

## This week's share

- 1 summer squash (*Costata romanesco*)
- 1/4 lb head lettuce (*Plato II*)
- 1/4 lb leaf lettuce (*Brown golding, Devil's tongue, Mascara, Jester, Emerald oak, Merlot*)
- 1 bunch green onions
- 1/4 lb kale (*Dinosaur kale*)
- 1/2 lb bush beans (*Red swan, Marvel of Venice, and Provider*)
- 1 bunch beets, greens (*Chiogga and Golden*)
- broccoli teaser
- 12 squash blossoms

Hello CSA Members!

Big news on the farm: the greenhouse frame is going up! We've been visualizing the space, pacing off the area in the yard, and looking at the blueprint for so long. Now the posts are up, it really looks like something. It will be a wonderful space to work in and grow in. And just as expected, construction costs are exceeding even our wide ballpark estimates.

A few of the tomatoes have started to blush. Already! This might be because Jeremy whispers naughty things to them every time he walks by their rows.

And we've started in on the pickling cucumber harvest. The pickling cukes will not be in CSA shares, if you are interested in some, let us know.



## *A bit about our insectary row...*

Take a walk through the gate towards the back of the farm. Half way to the hops, amongst the weeds ...and weeds, there is a magical spot. The tallest row in the field. Sunflower heads just starting to burst open. And peek down below the tall sunflower stalks.. marigolds, cosmos, and dill. Borage: thick and wooly, but with such a delicate flower. And so many bugs.

This is our insectary row, the makings of a perennial bed of flowers for pollinators and other beneficial insects. While all the other crops will rotate in rows across the field each year, this flower bed will stay right here. The insectary not only helps us delineate the long continuous field into more manageable sections, it is also provides a stable habitat for invertebrate populations. The diversity of flowers right now is small, but we will add new varieties each year to ensure a continuous supply of flowers for nectar and forage throughout the growing season. Invertebrate species benefited by this row, and the other undisturbed margins on the farm, include honey bees (from whom we receive many benefits), lady bugs (eat aphids and other nasties), native pollinators, such as mason bees and bumble bees (so important), butterflies (so pretty), syrphid wasps, spiders, and assorted carabid beetles (all predatory insects, roar!)

A less obvious, but very important, benefit of the undisturbed areas and insectary row is to provide habitat and food sources for our pest species. Keeping pests (in small numbers) will ensure that the predators of these pests have a food source and reason to stay on the farm. For instance, if by some crazy juju we were able to eradicate aphids from the farm, our lady bugs might take off to find food sources elsewhere. Then, when aphids return en masse to our delicious brassicas, we would be left defenseless against their attack. If we help foster a diverse and balanced ecology, then our predators are here to keep pests in control and we have a healthy, happy farm.



We enjoyed green beans for lunch yesterday, crunchy green beans with garlic and ginger. They were spectacular. Here is Jeremy's recipe. (Sorry, no photo. We ate them too fast)

### Jeremy's green beans

1/4 lb green beans, trim off ends and cut in 1/2 or 2-3" pieces  
4-5 cloves garlic, minced  
1 thumb knuckle length of ginger (Jeremy has big hands), grated  
1 Tbs soy sauce  
2 Tbs olive oil

Heat oil in skillet over med heat. Add green beans. When beans start to brighten in color, add garlic, ginger, and soy sauce. Stir and cook until *perfection* - until beans are cooked but still have crunch, approx 6-8 minutes. Serve right away.



Jeremy and I are working on a blog post for our website regarding why we want to farm and why specifically Spearfish Valley (coming soon!). Part of this includes wanting to help build a strong local food system, including a thriving farmers market. So we have been taking produce to the weekly Hills Horizon Farmer's Market downtown on Friday nights. We spend Fridays harvesting, washing, and bunching for market. We load the cooler, table, etc. onto bicycles and head into town. We set up our table and.. well, our time could be better spent.

Understandably, Friday night is not prime vegetable market hours, especially at a street fair with loud cover bands, corn dogs, and beer stands. It's the end of another long week, and folks want to curl up at home, order a pizza, and get the kids in bed - not go downtown to buy kale. But this is what we have. There has been very little advertisement for the weekly Farmer's Market - this is where we need your help. Please help us spread the word.

The Farmer's Market is a chance to buy produce in season, directly from small local producers. Food that's fresh, grown locally and with love. Tell your neighbors and your friends. If you are splitting a share and are eager for more, come find us at the market! Other farmers are there offering fresh eggs, milk, honey, pasta, herbs, and so much more! Last week, our neighbor and good friend was selling the most beautiful, luscious chard I've ever seen. Ever. People need to know about this and rally downtown to support these hardworking farmers and take home good food. We generally have lettuce greens, green onions, garlic, and the fun random extras we have after CSA pick-up on Thursday (i.e. bags of peas, bunches of beets or kale; this week we'll have pickling cucumbers and green beans).

The Market runs from 5-8 PM every Friday night, downtown Spearfish, on Main Street. If you come down early, you can avoid the crowds, find easy parking, and skip the silly cover band. If we sell out early, we can scoot home and avoid the cover band too. Please help us spread the word.

Also! We have been working hard on an ultra-secret-surprise art project for our fantastic CSA members, YOU! It's so good.

But it's not ready yet. So you just have to wait.

With dirt under our fingernails and big fat smiles,  
your farmers,  
Trish and Jeremy



Cycle Farm at the Spearfish Farmer's Market