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Cycle Farm CSA Newsletter

Week 9 - August 4, 2016

This week's share

- ½ lb lettuce (Slogun)
- 3 cucumbers (Shintokiwa, Mideast Peace)
- 1 bunch beets (Touchstone Gold, Early Wonder Tall Top, Chioggia)
- 1½ oz basil (Genovese)
- 1 fennel bulb (Mantovano)
- 1 eggplant (Diamond, Long Purple, Tsakoniki)
- 5oz snap peas or snow peas (Sugar Ann and Cascadia or Schweizer Reisen)
- 3 heads garlic (Music)
- 1 bunch scallions (Evergreen Hardy Bunching)

Dear CSA Members,

Oh boy, oh boy. The field is starting to get heavy with fruit and our harvest baskets are too!

At the CSA pick-up last night, there were a number of questions about using fennel. We're including a recipe here for a pasta sauce that uses several delicious things from this week's harvest. This would be good with pasta, but could make a wonderful pizza topping, broiled open-faced sandwich, or served with polenta or quinoa.

A quick note about lettuce: due to faulty farmers letting lettuce trays fry in the greenhouse, our succession plantings are off and we'll be without lettuce for a couple weeks while we get more lettuce out into the field and growing. Our most sincere apologies! Someday we'll figure it out and get lettuce harvest throughout the entire season, we know it's possible.

Some things to look forward to - the field tomato plants are all sporting teasingly green fruit, so brace your selves for salsa soon! And we'll be starting in on harvesting grapes this week. Most of our grapes are a variety called Valient which is a South Dakota-bred, cold-hardy grape, similar to a Concord. Especially good for juicing and jelling. If you are interested in putting up lots of jelly or jam, just let us know and we'll set aside more for you!

Thanks all - wishing you a safe, sound (RWARRRRR!) rally week.

Your farmers,
Trish and Jeremy

A special summer time pasta sauce with eggplant, fennel, and garlic. Snatched and modified from an old Bon Appétit magazine recipe.

Ingredients: olive oil, eggplant, fennel (thinly sliced lengthwise, plus 2 Tbsp fronds), 2 garlic cloves, some crushed red pepper flakes (a pinch), about ½ a lemon (sliced super thin, no seeds), any sort of additional herb, if you like (parsley, thyme, basil, mint), scallions, and linguine or pasta noodles of your choosing.

Sauté (or roast*) the eggplant, fennel, and garlic. To sauté, slice fennel into thin strips, eggplants into coins, toss both into a skillet with olive oil on medium heat. Season with salt and pepper. Cook, stirring occasionally, until fennel is golden brown and soft, about 10-12 minutes. Some bits of fennel will be browned and stuck to the skillet. This is good. Add garlic, red pepper flakes, and a few thin slices of lemon. Cook, tossing occasionally, until lemon slices are super soft, about 2 minutes. Transfer into a small bowl.

Meanwhile cook the pasta. When you strain the pasta, reserve about ¼-½ a cup of the pasta water. Toss the pasta into the skillet you used to cook your vegetables with this little bit of water and scrape up any browned bits of fennel and eggplant.

Then toss in the fennel fronds, remaining lemon slices and maybe a smidge more olive oil with the pasta.

*A roasted alternative - cut eggplant into one inchish cubes and toss with sliced fennel in a bowl with olive oil (don't hesitate on the olive oil here, ¼ cup, the eggplant will soak it up. Add in garlic, whole cloves. And season with salt and pepper, crushed red pepper flakes. Lay this all out on a cookie sheet and drizzle left over olive oil over the top. Roast in a 400 degree oven for 20-25 minutes. It might help to stir this up a bit with a wooden spoon every so often. Pull the cookie sheet as the eggplant and fennel start to brown. Toss this deliciousness in with your cooked pasta and dress with fresh herbs, scallions, lemon.