



## TRIALING SWINE

With a dry weather outlook for the next several days, Mr. Farmer has been called to the fields to cut hay. Helping a neighbor cut for their beef cattle operation and then cutting our own which amounts to about eleven acres this first round. Then baling it all! Some of this hay will be sold and some will go into storage for our various swine this winter.

We have a new breed of pigs we are trialing called Idaho pasture pigs and they're a grazing pig. The upside is healthier, better tasting meat. The downside is that they take longer than conventional pigs to grow so we will need to put away some high quality hay to feed them through the winter. We will compare these grazers to the heritage large black hog/tamworth cross variety we just purchased this week. Growing our own feed and grain and keeping our own breeding stock is one of our end goals for our farm. Whether that be Idaho pasture pigs or not, we will decide in the coming months.

The area beekeepers meeting on our farm last week went well. Folks came from all across the county to talk bees. All were hobbyists with 3-6 years experience looking for information on what others are doing to combat parasitic mites, successful overwintering techniques, and splitting hives to grow your own bees. The group plans to continue meeting once a month throughout the summer to continue to learn from one another. If you know someone who keeps bees, please ask if they'd like to join the network. There is no charge. Don't forget anyone can help stop the pollinator decline by planting things for them that are chemical-free.

Running in circles - it's hay season,

*Eric & Rebecca*

## words from our youngest farmhands

**"Oh man, this one is just too nice to not eat."**

- Gus, helping pick peas and taking advantage of working in the snack patch

## IN THE CRATE

Snow Peas (Edible Pod)

Carrots

Scallions (Green Onions)

Bok Choy/Pac Choy

Swiss Chard/Beet Greens

Garlic Scapes

Bibb Lettuce

Broccoli (family)

Scarlet/Blue Curly Kale (family)

**Health is not simply the absence of sickness.**

*-Hannah Green*

## WASHING YOUR PRODUCE

We do our best to keep your produce clean, but the reality is it was grown in dirt. While we field-rinse most of what goes in your box, some items don't store well after being wet and are better if washed immediately before use (think peas, beans, basil) so we do not wash them. You should wash all your produce again before you use it, especially greens where the leaf meets the stems.

## PLASTIC BAGS

We struggle with the fact that we give you so many plastic bags to help keep your produce fresh. We can't reuse these. If you aren't already, please consider recycling your plastic bags. It's not hard once you get in the routine. In our house, we collect plastic bags inside our reusable grocery bags and take them to County Market's plastic bag recycling bins. This way they are made into other products instead of going to the landfill.

## SNOW PEAS

We tried something new in 2016. We started an early row of peas inside our new caterpillar tunnel. So when we compare these ripe snow peas to our snap peas currently about 6" tall in the field, we know we made the right decision. They are flourishing because they haven't had to deal with the weird spring weather patterns! We should have a couple of weeks of snow peas and then another round of peas later in the season that are of the snapping variety.

Snow peas can be eaten in their entirety. Store as is in your fridge. Do not wash before storage as they can become slimy which is indicative of bacteria growth. Instead, wash before eating. Enjoy them whole (just trim the stem) in your favorite stir fry, chop 'em up and blanch for 30 seconds for cold pasta-type salads, or just munch 'em up fresh. Kids love these raw!

## BOK CHOY/PAC CHOY

We're growing a variety of Asian greens which are from the cabbage family. Napa cabbages are in the same family as this week's featured bok choy. For the most part, all can be prepared either fresh or cooked. Another similarity is that they all contain a fair amount of water. We offer members our favorite ginger-sesame stir fry sauce recipe, but you could also just chop these up and lightly sauté with garlic and oil. Preparing a cold salad with creamy or vinegar dressing would be a good options as well with the stems being so crunchy and fresh.

Choys are noted for being packed with vitamins A and C among many other important nutrients, so eat 'em up! Store in a plastic bag in the fridge at high humidity for best freshness.

## BIBB/LEAF LETTUCE

This week we are sharing a bibb lettuce. You should find the center of the "head" has a very smooth, tender texture. It will be interesting to compare all the varieties of lettuce throughout the season, some new, some favorites from last year. If your bibb doesn't add up to enough, we will include another variety to make weight.

Please note that this is the first lettuce harvested from the field. With all the rain, it will be very dirty inside. Please clean well after you pull it apart. Spin or blot the leaves to remove excess moisture and store in a bag (or leave in your salad spinner) in the fridge for up to a week or more.

## SWISS CHARD

If you're looking for a new way to try your chard, consider a 4-minute sauté with olive oil, salt, pepper, zest from one orange and a splash of juice as well. This dish

pairs well with pork and chicken. Chard also does well in a baked quiche or breakfast casserole. Think of using the large smooth leaves as a replacement for spinach. In a fresh salad, pair with a light, tangy dressing to balance the heavy flavor.

## GARLIC SCAPES

Scapes offer more than a slightly rowdy alternative to garlic. Because of their substantial heft as opposed to garlic cloves, they are vegetable, aromatic, and even herb all in one.

Scapes are the seed shoots that grow from the bulbs of hard-neck varieties of garlic. When they're young and tender, they look like curly green stalks with tightly closed buds on top. Gardeners harvest them at this time of year so that they won't drain nutrients from the garlic bulbs that will be dug up in a couple of months, plump and glorious and ready for drying.

A popular use for garlic scapes is pesto, either straight-up or mixed with herbs like basil and dill. Pesto showcases raw scapes in all their glory. Scape pesto can be very pungent, but it mellows substantially in the freezer. I like it best in the middle of winter, but it might be one part mellowing and two parts deprivation.

You might also try something as simple as frying them with some olive oil and shrimp. Tossing them into an omelet or using them as a topping on your pizza. Store in a bag in the fridge for up to two weeks or more or chop and store in olive oil without refrigeration.

## RECIPE: Garlic Scape Dressing

### Ingredients

- 2 garlic scapes
- 2 green onions
- 1 teaspoon honey
- 2 teaspoon dijon mustard
- 3-4 tablespoons red wine vinegar
- 1 tablespoon lemon juice
- dash of salt
- 1/8 teaspoon pepper
- 1/2 cup extra virgin olive oil

Blend all ingredients except oil on low until smooth. Slowly add oil until well blended.

*We've prepared additional recipe cards for you to take if you'd like more ideas for using the vegetables in your share. Feel free to share your own ideas with us online or in person. Being part of a farmshare collective makes it fun. We love to hear from you!*

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