



Bear Prints

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It's not too late to donate to the Pawtucket House in Lowell. An update: We have one full share and almost a half share now as well as two people to alternate delivery. It would be great to have two full shares again.

Does everyone know the baby pigs are up on the top of the hill? They live in a pen next to the house up there that just got painted green. Feel free to go visit, they are very friendly. You can bring them your scraps.

Every year we contend with wild critters eating your veggies and this year is no exception. The deer attacked the squash over at Nashoba and were yanking whole plants out of the ground as well as chomping the fruit. We put up scare-crows, though, with Mike's sweaty T-shirts, & aluminum pie plates on string. We even used the solar lights we had in front of the house. It worked!

Farm News

The weather has been cooperating and the heat has really made everything grow. Hot weather means haying and that's what Mike and I did this weekend, big time! Some of you may know that I work part-time off the farm as the Conservation Administrator for the town of Shirley. It keeps us in health insurance. Part of my responsibilities there is making sure some large fields get hayed. A volunteer uses his equipment to mow, rake and bale the hay. Then comes the hard part. Coordinating volunteers (with very short notice) to come help load all that hay onto trucks & trailers to get it into the barn. We later sell it & use the funds to maintain the property. It is incredible hot, hard work to get over 1,000 bales in, took us Saturday evening and all of Sunday, but we did it! Mike loves to hay & I couldn't have done it without him. He is great with the trailer and a fantastic stacker. We also bought a couple hundred bales out of the field to use for feed for the critters and as mulch for the tomatoes. We started staking and stringing hundreds of tomato plants. The cherry tomatoes are starting to set fruit and we'll be picking them before you know it.

We are still behind in planting & harvesting due to all the rain in the wet spring we had, but all in all things are looking better & growing well. We also made a big push to get the weeds under control & we are making great progress in that department.

What's New In Your Share This Week

New this week for some is **zucchini & summer squash**. It matured in the middle of last week. It's great sliced and grilled with olive oil & garlic. (Isn't everything?) Try cutting them up in different configurations over the summer, sometimes sliced, sometimes cut lengthwise and even diced. I think the texture difference makes a difference in their taste. You can sauté them with different spices (like cumin) or herbs as well.

Also new is **bok choy**. You can use the whole thing, white and green parts. Great for stir-fry with garlic scapes, soy sauce, fresh ginger and sesame oil. It is mild in flavor and adds a nice crunch. Add some rice and a bit of meat or tofu and you are set!

We also have the first picking of **Swiss chard** this week. The stems are not tough

but do take a little longer to cook than the leaves. We like to slice them up and throw them in first, then put the greens on top. It cooks down a lot, like most greens. Chard is a relative of beets. We have a multi-colored variety this year as well but it takes longer to grow. It is good steamed, or my favorite, sautéed with some olive oil & garlic. Throw it over pasta and you have a meal! That's pretty much our answer to most greens. You can get adventurous and cook it up and add it to lasagna, soup, or use it as a bed or topping for meat or fish.

All the greens benefit from being eaten when they are fresh, so don't forget it in the bottom of the fridge! Anna often cooks them up all at once then stores the leftovers in the fridge to add to omelets, quiche, risotto, etc.

Bear Hill Farm CSA

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PICK UP MONDAY, WEDNESDAY, OR
FRIDAY
3 PM UNTIL 7 PM

(Please make arrangements at least one week
in advance to switch your pick-up day.)

CSA Since 1998

COME ANYTIME —
THIS IS YOUR FARM!

Too Late for 4th of July?

Every year around July 4th, Mike & Anne let me climb up on my soapbox and wax patriotic. I love the image of the farmers who dropped their plows and risked their lives for a set of ideals, like a country formed around a constitution. And I always wondered if I would have the same courage; or would I hide my men and boys in the basement and serve the Redcoats tea?

This year, though, I just couldn't write. A few weeks ago I saw "An Inconvenient Truth," about the potential effects of global warming, and I've been so bummed ever since. It was a "call to arms" (do you follow the theme?), as they say we have 10 years to reverse CO2 emissions before a "tipping point" is reached. The potential impact on our planet is devastating, and it really is a major downer. All this time when I'd been saying "let's save the planet for future generations," I really thought we *had* generations to turn things around. I was thinking of maybe my great-grandchildren, and that's so far down the line that environmentalism seemed more of an option, something to do to be a better person. And now what, this is happening in *my own lifetime*? How fair is that?

So I've been going around buying Tom's of Maine toothpaste and calling myself an environmentalist, but meanwhile making the tiny little mistake of driving 15k a year in my 24 mpg minivan — that's 16,800 pounds of CO2 emissions each year, my friends. Oh, I have excuses for the large car. "Where will we put the hockey stuff? What about long trips? I can't fit the car-seats. Why don't they make a hybrid minivan?" But I'm not sure it accounts for my failure to act. Where, I wonder, is my courage? And will it come too late? ...I know I can't mope about this for long, though. Guilt is just so counter-productive. It is my pledge to use my husband's car, the hybrid sedan, at every possible opportunity; the manual shift takes some getting used to, but I know I can do it! (Courage, also, to the poor folks behind me on the next hill; I'll really try not to roll back on them.)

I will also take heart in the fact that being a member of a CSA is the next best thing I can do to reduce CO2 emissions. Did you know that a British study has determined that eating locally is actually better for the environment than eating organic? I can only imagine the energy required to fly my grapes up from Chile, but I bet it makes for more than 16,800 pounds of CO2.

Let me know what *you* think about it! — Anna Barker (annabarker@charter.net)

Recipes: Bok Choy

Here's a recipe that CSA member Kate McNierney gave me last year. How quickly the wheel of the year turns: we're back to bok choy season again. Anyway, Kate says that she made this without the tofu and served it over rice, but here's the complete recipe adapted from the cookbook 501 Recipes for a Low-Carb Life. — AB

Chinese Vegetables With Tofu

1 block firm tofu
1 bunch bok choy
1 cup fresh or frozen shelled soybeans (edamame)
2 teaspoons dark sesame oil
1 teaspoon toasted sesame seeds
Salt to taste

Wrap the tofu in a double-thickness of paper towels and place on a plate. Let sit 30 minutes. Meanwhile, trim off the ends of the bok choy. Cut large stalks and leaves lengthwise into 1/2" long pieces. Cut leaf pieces crosswise into 1/2" wide pieces. Steam greens over boiling water, until crisp-tender and bright green, 7-8 minutes. Steam the soybeans over boiling water about 2 minutes, until heated through. Toss together the steamed greens and soybeans.

Cut the tofu into 1" square pieces. Steam the squares until heated through, about 5 minutes and toss with the steamed vegetables, sesame oil and sesame seeds. Season to taste.

And here's another that was a hit last year. The combined sauce ingredients deepen the flavor, without the high fructose corn syrup you'll find in bottled stir-fry sauces. We get enough Asian greens during the season that you'd might as well pick up a bottle of sesame oil and hoisin now. If you crave meat, serve this alongside a pork chop. — AB

Bok Choy with Garlic, Cashew Nuts, and Hoisin Sauce

(adapted from Vegetables, by James Peterson)

1 bunch bok choy, washed	1 TBS grated fresh ginger
1 TBS peanut oil	3/4 C roasted cashews
1 small onion, minced	3 TBS hoisin sauce
2 garlic cloves or scapes, minced	2 tsp Asian dark sesame oil
2 tsp dried red pepper flakes	2 TBS dark soy sauce

Separate the bok choy branches from the green leaves. Shred leaves 1/4" wide and slice stems 1/4" thick. (Keep them separate.) Heat the peanut oil over med heat and stir in the onion, garlic, and pepper flakes. Stir for 5 min or until the onion starts to turn translucent. Stir in the ginger and cashews, turn the heat to high and add the bok choy stems. Cook for 5 minutes, add the leaves, and cook for 1 minute more. Stir in hoisin sauce, sesame oil, and soy sauce and cook for another minute. (If there is too much sauce, remove the bok choy with a slotted spoon and boil down the liquid until there are only about 2 TBS of thick glaze left. Then put the bok choy back in the pan, stir for a moment, and serve immediately.)