



Bear Prints

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Farm News

Welcome Back & Hi to the few new members!

The farm is always changing, but somehow it all seems the same. The extra rain, the cold nights, the worry and then the magic of appearing veggies! As usual, Mike is concerned about a future lull. We are starting well this year, though, with the potential for peas. Last year the tomatoes were terrible, but they're in plastic this year, so they should have a fighting chance, even if the weather doesn't cooperate. We'll have melons again, hopefully like last year. We should also have pork early in the season, as well as in the fall. We'll have cheese again from West River Creamery and this year we are adding goat cheese from Crystal Brook Farm in Sterling, MA. This year's changes are bigger than usual. I left my part-time 20hr/wk off the farm job for a 40hr one. Now I farm part-time, like I did 14 years ago. My off the farm job is now protecting land for the MA Dept. of Fish & Game. As jobs go, it's the coolest after farming with my husband. I'll try to go in early and get out early on pick up days to see you guys. Right now I have laryngitis, so you'll have to do the talking! We also have a new "girl", Halley. She's a great worker, along with Matt, so Mike will barely miss me, as long as they stick around. My Mom will be back to help. She broke her pelvis in Feb., but the only change is that she jogs instead of runs now! The grand-kids are still in Acton, but hopefully they'll come & visit once school is out.

Please remember to cross off your name and add any kids names and make corrections. When switching pick up days, it's easiest for us if you write it down next to your name (next week Fri). If an emergency comes up, please call my cell (978) 846-4577 & get confirmation, since we don't always check our email and we haven't replaced the answering machine yet. Thanks!

What's New In Your Share This Week

This week it is **spinach, garlic scapes, lettuce, Haikurei turnips & eggs**. Greens get particularly dirty after a hard rain splashes soil up against the leaves. I find the easiest way to clean all the different types of greens is to fill the sink with cold water. (You can do smaller batches in a big bowl if you want to water plants when you are finished.) Then, trim the leaves into it and swish around a few times. Let them sit still for a minute, then all the dirt settles to the bottom and you can fish out the clean leaves. The fishing out is key, rather than pouring the water out. I usually repeat a couple times. Then dry them off in a spinner and place in a plastic bag in the fridge with a paper towel to absorb the excess so they don't slime. A plastic spinner is a great investment. It can even be used to store the greens in the fridge.

Garlic scapes are the stalks of the garlic plant that would turn into flowers. The whole thing is edible & tastes like garlic. Just chop up what you need & keep the rest in the bottom of the

fridge in a bag. Add some to an omelet with your eggs.

The **eggs** are part of your share this week, but they are usually for sale in the fridge as extra for \$3.50 dozen. We can use your **clean** egg cartons if you bring them back. Don't forget to bring **clean** bags as well.

The **spinach** can be eaten raw in salad or steamed, sautéed with some of the garlic scapes, or used in recipes.

Last but not least, yummy **summer turnips**. With all the root crops, take the tops off before you store them in the fridge. They will keep better that way. Repeat members will remember the tender leaves, briefly steamed or sautéed with olive oil. The turnips themselves are mild enough to slice raw into salad. I like them best boiled just until tender, then rolled in a bit of butter. Oh yeah, the season is upon us!

No dogs please as usual. We have a new farm dog, Sadie. She is wonderful and is Mike's dog. Be careful of cars going fast on our road and of poison ivy on the walls. Make sure there is an adult with kids visiting the pond down the road. Come anytime to visit.

Park anywhere but in a bar way (dirt road) since we often have to move the tractors to different fields.

Don't forget the **pick-your-own herbs**. They are in the first 2 beds on the left, as you look out from the farm stand, next to the grass. There's Chinese chives, thyme, garlic chives, salad burnett, & regular chives. We also have sage, lovage, sorrel, winter savory & oregano. These are all perennials. The second row has a few kinds of mint (including chocolate mint), golden marjoram, more salad burnett (tastes like cucumber) lemon balm and a couple tarragon. I'll put temporary labels not to pick if something is getting wiped out. All the herb flowers are edible, so pick away & put in salad!

We'll finish weeding soon !!

Basil will come later as part of your shares.

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!

Hip, Hip, Hooray!

It's opening day! The cold rainy weather had me disbelieving that we would ever have a summer, in spite of the Memorial Day barbecue ritual. But the lovely green on our plates this week couldn't make it any clearer: we've made it through another rough New England winter. (Speaking of which, I hope you all have gotten a chance to clear the dead branches from your yards. I will never take electricity for granted again!)

I hope you also got a chance, over the winter, to read Michael Pollan's book *In Defense of Food*. If you haven't, I suggest you run right over to your local bookstore and pick it up. CSAs get a big mention for their role in helping us to eat "mostly plants" - local and fresh ones, to boot. Having been a BHF member for so many years, it's nice to see CSAs getting the attention they deserve lately.

Michael Pollan gives us a set of common-sense principles, which he calls algorithms, to guide our eating. "Don't eat anything your grandmother wouldn't recognize." (Like blue oatmeal, LOL.) "Don't buy any food with more than five ingredients." "Don't buy any food product with ingredients you can't pronounce."

Anything you bring home from the farm is going to fit right in with Pollan's guidelines. But it's more than that. When you start with these beautiful ingredients, it's hard to demean them with over-processed food stuff. (Top my BHF lettuce with Kraft Creamy French dressing—first ingredient, high fructose corn syrup? No thanks, I'll make my own.) And when you have so much beautiful produce waiting for you in the fridge, it reduces the temptation to eat ready-made or fast food. (Why stop at Papa Gino's when I can go straight home and throw together an omelet and sautéed spinach? - and I can keep the change!) As the season heats up, along with the weather, we won't have *room* for anything else, either! Happy eating to us all. — Anna Barker (annabarker@charter.net)

Recipes: Spinach

"What's for dinner?" Tonight we'll be having an egg dish for sure. There are so many to choose from: strata, quiche, omelets, frittata—but with eggs this fresh, I might just have them scrambled or sunny side up! That will allow me to put a little extra time into preparing this spinach salad. - AB

Spinach Salad of Spinach, Oranges, and Red Onion

Adapted from Brooke Dojny's The New England Cookbook

For the salad:

1/2 pound spinach, smaller leaves, washed well & dried

1 navel orange, peeled, halved, thinly sliced

1/4 C small red onion, thinly sliced

1/4 C small black European olives, such as Nicoise

Place the spinach in a large bowl and toss with a few tablespoons of dressing (see below). Arrange the oranges and onion over the greens and scatter with the olives. Drizzle with another tablespoon or two of dressing and serve. (Serves 2-3, with vinaigrette left over.)

For the vinaigrette, whisk or shake together in a small bowl or jar:

3 TBS balsamic vinegar

2 TBS orange juice

1 TBS honey

2 tsp Dijon mustard

1 tsp grated orange zest

1/4 C extra-virgin olive oil

1/2 tsp salt

1/2 tsp fresh-ground black pepper

Store leftover dressing in the refrigerator and use it within the next day or two.

An Important Note on Recipe Sizes

We write the newsletter early on Monday morning, as soon as we know "what's in your share," but before we know "how much" (since the amount you get depends on the size of the day's overall harvest). I try to choose recipes that can be adapted easily depending on the amounts we get—So for example, if a recipe calls for 1 1/2 pounds of fresh spinach and you only get 3/4 pound, please don't freak out. :) Just change the rest of the recipe proportionately. Zap me an email (annabarker@charter.net) if you need help.—AB