

The Stanton Street Harvest

SEPTEMBER 24, 2009

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE LOWER EAST SIDE'S PIONEER CSA

VOL. 4, NO. 15

TODAY'S WEATHER AT WINDFLOWER FARM



74°/49°

Warm and mostly clear. Ted would like some rain, but he won't get it today.

TED'S LETTER FROM THE FARM

Serving Up Tamales Down On the Farm

Candelaria gave a cooking class on Saturday, and the entire farm crew showed up. Tamales were the main attraction, and they spent all day making tamales of every stripe. There were tamales con cerdo y salsa and tamales con pollo y salsa verde. I think that Candelaria should have her own program on the Food Network. When I bring up the subject of food with Candelaria and her husband, Salvador, they can carry an animated conversation for a full 15 minutes. She continues to bring food over after her day in the fields. She knows that we'll be on our own when she goes home in six weeks, and I think she's concerned that we won't eat enough.

I've started irrigating again. We haven't had any rain in four weeks and our fall crops need a boost. Some tall weeds had grown up around our irrigation reel. I don't think I'd used it since May, and it took me some time to find all the pieces needed to make it work again. Today we are watering greens that we transplanted last week. It was our last planting of the season. Fall arrives here today, and the changing colors and cool, crisp air tell us the end of the farming season is near.

In your share of this week's harvest you'll find lettuce; kale; red komatsuna, a spicy mustard green; red and yellow onions; potatoes; beets; miscellaneous herbs; peppers or eggplants; corn (unless you had it last week), and beans.

Have a great week!

AUTUMN IS HERE, AND CSA SEASON LASTS FOR EIGHT MORE WEEKS

A bunch of cooking greens is strikingly different from a bag of salad. Salad greens are so petite and tender that you can almost forget that what you're about to eat is, in fact, a pile of leaves. Not so with cooking greens! Most cooking greens are big. Kale and chard leaves, for example, might grow to be longer than your forearm. Some greens, like those of beets and turnips, come attached to the roots, and you can take the "tops" off yourself.

After eating them a few times, you'll know why cooking greens are essential to so many cuisines. Their short cooking time, versatility, flavor, and nutritional benefits make for a winning combination. A side dish of greens always rounds out a meal, and, in main dishes, a few tender ribbons of green curled among vegetables enhances a meal.

Most varieties of kale belong to the same species of the mustard family as cabbage, broccoli, and brussels sprouts: *Brassica oleracea*. Kale originated in the eastern Mediterranean, like most of the other brassicas, and the leaves of kale

have a bright, sweet-spicy flavor similar to that of cabbage. Where kale puts its relatives to shame is in its leaf shapes and colors. The leaves of different varieties

of kale can be serrated, crinkled or even deeply cut and feathery, and they come in many combinations of blue-green, white, purple and yellow.

Keep dry, unwashed greens in a sealed plastic bag in the refrigerator. Thicker greens will keep up to a week. Just prior to use, swish leaves in a large basin of cool water. After any grit has settled to the bottom, lift the leaves out carefully. (A "salad spinner" is handy for cleaning gritty greens.)

Wilted greens (see the basic recipe on the next page) mix well with almost anything. They add sophistication to cooked grain or pasta. Topped with grated cheese, a cream sauce, or toasted nuts, they make a complete side dish; dressed with a vinaigrette they become a delicious warm or cool salad. Wilted greens make a great bed for any meat. They are also wonderful served on their own, simple and elegant.

Kale and Other Fall Greens



Community Notes...

NEXT WEEK'S VOLUNTEERS

Remember, we need *four* volunteers for each shift, and *two* shifts per season from each member.

Oct. 1 Early Shift (5:00-6:30 p.m.)

Tessa Huxley, Rachel Insler, Carol Haynes

Oct. 1 Closing Shift (6:30-8:00 p.m.)

Nina Cheung, Karen Casco, Julie Sortwell, Jeff Gatrall

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HOT! BREAD! KITCHEN!

Rumor has it that the “seasonal delectable” for next week will be fresh masa! You can expect to receive helpful recipes for things like tamales and pupusas along with the delivery. (Maybe keep some of your corn husks off to the side, just in case.) Bread shareholder or not, you can order whatever you like at hotbreadkitchen.org/hbkcsamenu.htm. It's simple to use, and you can pay for your order with PayPal. (Order deadline is Thursday before 10 a.m.)

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GOT BAGS?

We've run out of cheapie plastic bags at the garden. So that means one of two things. Either everyone has to remember to bring their own bags to pick-up, since none are available. Or maybe some of you have been saving up huge hordes of bags at home and want to bring them to the next distribution? If so, we would welcome it.

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IT'S YOUR PARK

In just a few weeks we'll be celebrating the annual It's My Park Day in our lovely community garden. It's an opportunity to spend some time in the garden before the season ends and to get your hands a little dirty helping out with seasonal service projects. Food and fellowship will be available in abundance. Mark your calendars for Saturday, October 24, from noon to 4 p.m. Community gardens depend on the community—and that's you.

The Stanton Street Harvest is published weekly by and for members of the Stanton Street CSA (P.O. Box 971, NYC 10002; <http://stantonstreetcsa.wordpress.com>). Thanks to core groupers Lucinda Sears (for her lovely illustrations) and Laura Schalchli (for her editorial wrangling). Most of the recipes and food info from cookbooks by Alice Waters, Deborah Madison, Farmer John Peterson, and other food geniuses. Please send questions, recipes, letters to the editor or other contributions to stantonstreetcsa@gmail.com.

PAPAS FRITATAS

from Candelaria Medina Zavala

Boil yellow-fleshed potatoes until soft, then peel them and hammer them into

the shape of a plump pancake. Dip them in a beaten egg batter and fry on both sides until brown and delicious.

BASIC FALL GREENS

This is a simple approach you can take with any of the cooking greens we'll get this fall: kale, chard, collards, turnip, beet, or mustard greens. It's a great way to give them an added richness while preserving their fresh taste and delicate texture. Greens mix well with almost anything: toss them with cooked grain or pasta for a main course, serve them as a side, or dress them with a vinegarette and have a warm or cool salad. If you are using greens with hearty stems, such as chard, cut out the stems, chop, and sauté them before adding the leaves to give them enough time to cook.

3 tablespoons butter or olive oil
1 teaspoon minced garlic
1 bunch greens, rinsed, torn or chopped
Salt and pepper

Heat the butter or oil in a large skillet over medium heat. Add the garlic and sauté for 1 minute. Add the greens immediately after rinsing them, with water still clinging to the leaves. Cover; cook for 1-2 minutes. Uncover, add salt to taste, and give the greens a good flip and stir. Cover again and continue cooking until they are bright green, tender, and wilted to your taste—from just a few minutes to 15 minutes depending on their maturity.

Serves 4

GRATED BEETS WITH SHALLOTS

from *World Vegetarian* by Madhur Jaffrey

This is one of the quickest ways of cooking beets. The grating can be done in a food processor and the cooking takes only about 10 minutes. I generally make this quite spicy but you could easily leave out the green chile altogether. With the beets picking up the taste of the fried shallots, this is really an exquisite dish.

3 tablespoons olive oil
1/2 teaspoon whole brown or yellow mustard seeds
1 large shallot, peeled and cut in slivers
1 fresh hot green chile, cut crosswise on a sharp diagonal into thin slices
1 pound beets, peeled and coarsely

grated
1 teaspoon salt
1 tablespoon fresh lemon juice

Put the oil in a wide pan or a large frying pan and set over medium-high heat. When hot, put in the mustard seeds. As soon as the mustard seeds begin to pop, a matter of seconds, put in the shallots and green chile. Stir and fry for 30 seconds. The shallots should turn a little brown. Now put in the beets and stir for a minute. Put in the salt and 1/2 cup of water. Bring to a boil. Cover, turn the heat to low, and cook gently for 10 minutes. Uncover, turn the heat up to medium, and add the lemon juice. Stir to mix and turn off the heat.

Serves 4

FRESH CORN SOUP

from *Gourmet Cookbook*, Ruth Reichl, ed.

Folks, if you have ears and ears of corn clogging your refrigerator, your faithful editor recommends this easy and delicious solution. He made it this past week (as a half recipe, using all five ears from last week's share) and was suitably impressed.

8 cups corn kernels (cut from 10 ears)
6 cups water
1 tablespoon kosher or coarse sea salt
1/4 cup chopped fresh chives

Simmer the corn with salt in the water, covered, 20 minutes, or until very tender.

Purée soup in batches in a blender until very smooth (use caution when blending hot liquids). As each batch is puréed, pour through a coarse sieve, pressing on solids, into a saucepan.

Reheat soup, stirring, occasionally. If soup is too thick, thin with water. Serve sprinkled with chives.

Serves 4