



BLUE HOUSE FARM

CSA Newsletter

Leaf & Let Leaf

June 09, 2011

This is the week to practice cooking with greens! Our first planting of salad mix is finally here and looks and tastes phenomenal. And our romaine lettuce is large, crunchy, and ready to be covered with a creamy dill dressing. We are in-between plantings of the typical early roots crops like carrots, beets and radishes, and are still waiting another week or two for the broccoli, cauliflower and cabbage to reach maturity.

So for this week and the next you will be receiving a generous number of, well... leaves. Our field crew consists of four men from Mexico who work primarily on the harvest side of things here. Each morning we give them a "pick list" of what needs to be harvested for the day's orders. On the list, we've done our best to translate the different names of crops like Red Russian Kale, Curly Kale, Dinosaur Kale, Rainbow Chard and Collard Greens from English to Spanish. But after passing the list off to them, when they get to the bunched greens section, they quickly abandon our description of dinosaur kale as "col dino" and begin calling it "hojas largas", or large leaves. Our fancy names are replaced by more descriptive names like - hojas rojas (red leaves), hojas rizadas (curly leaves), and hojas corta verde (short green leaves a.k.a. collards.) We typically harvest anywhere from 100-200 bunches of these greens a day for the CSA boxes and the various markets we do. For a group of men who have little to no cultural familiarity with and have likely never cooked or possibly even eaten Red Russian Kale, they have become experts at planting, fertilizing, watering, and especially in knowing the optimal time and method to pick them. The remarkable freshness of the greens that you receive is a testament to their skill and attentiveness.

I promise not to overwhelm you with bunched greens this year. I plan to put a bunch of kale, chard, or collards in your boxes two out of every three weeks once the fields are producing a higher diversity of crops. But it is spring and right now the greens hold a dominating presence. If you are new to cooking with greens, don't be intimidated by them, we are including plenty of recipe ideas and of course the Internet is full of plenty more.

Thanks for being a part of our small farm,
Ryan

Anticipated Harvest

Collard Greens
Baby Artichokes
Spring Onions
Romaine Lettuce
Rainbow Chard
Green Garlic
Spring Salad Mix
Cilantro
Dill
Strawberries

Big, strong and sorta tough, Collard Greens may seem to be the bully of the Cabbage family...but get to know them a little better and you'll find that Collards aren't mean, just misunderstood!

Believe it or not, Collards work wonderfully raw, especially as a substitute for bread or tortilla in a sandwich or wrap. They make a great salad if you massage the leaves and marinate them in vinegar or lemon juice to soften them up. When cooking, do as the Southerners do: low and slow is the way to go! Collards are an outstanding source of Calcium, as well as Vitamins A, C and K. Collards are also rich with anti-oxidants and a very good source of Omega-3s. Recent studies have shown that Collard Greens boost the immune system's ability to fight viruses, bacteria...and even cancer! Collards are also better for lowering cholesterol than any other veggie!

CSA News & Notes:

Sourdough Loaves from Companion Bakeshop

Companion Bakeshop has been kind enough to include a sample sourdough loaf to each of our CSA members this week. If you would like to receive a weekly delivery of a full loaf, visit the “add-on” page on the website at:

<http://bluehousefarm.csaware.com/store/>.

They also have a rye and spelt loaf available.

Note to Flower Bouquet Members

Your 20 weeks of flowers is being bumped one week later. The hard rains that we got last week have damaged many of the petals on our early flowers. I was hoping that they would have recovered by now, but after walking the field this morning, they haven't. So next week you will begin receiving flowers. Sorry for the delay!



Harvesting Greens.

Ye'abesha Gomen - Egyptian Collard Greens

- 1 Bunch Collard Greens
- 1 or 2 Spring Onions
- 2 or 3 Green Garlic Shoots
- 1&1/2 Cups Broth, Stock or Water
- 3 - 5 Sprigs Spring Herbs (Dill, Thyme, Oregano, etc)
- Several Gratings of Fresh Nutmeg
- Sugar
- Salt & Pepper
- Crushed Red Pepper (optional)
- Olive Oil
- Lemon (or Vinegar)

Destem and chop or tear the collards, halve and slice the onions, and slice the garlic into rounds. Put 1-2 T oil in a heavy skillet, add the onions (& red pepper if using) and place over medium-high heat. When the onions start to get shiny, 3-5 minutes, add the garlic and and cook for another 1-2 minutes. Then add the water (or broth or stock) and bring to a simmer.

When the water starts a-bubbling, add half the chopped collards in a single layer and sprinkle with salt, sugar, nutmeg and herbs, then drizzle with olive oil. Repeat, then turn each layer over the other until the greens are well-coated with broth and oil. Turn the heat down to medium-low and continue simmering until greens are tender and the seasonings have married, about 7-10 minutes for firmer greens and 15-20 for more tender greens.

Season with black pepper and a squeeze of lemon (or vinegar). Traditionally served with flatbread, but is great served over rice or as a side with roast meat.

Dill Salad Dressing

two variations

Lemon-Dill Dressing

- 2 T Fresh Dill, Chopped
- 1 T Fresh Lemon Juice
- 2 T White Wine Vinegar
- 1 T Minced Spring Onion
- 1/2 C Olive Oil
- 1/4 tsp Salt
- 1/4 tsp Pepper

Combine ingredients in blender and blend until smooth

OR

Place all ingredients except Olive Oil in a metal bowl and whisk together. Then while whisking continuously, slowly add the oil in a thin stream until fully emulsified.

MexiGerman Dill Dressing

- 3 T Fresh Dill, Chopped
- 2 T Minced Spring Onion
- 2 T Minced Green Garlic
- 2 Avocados
- 1 1/4 Cup Water
- 1 tsp Cider Vinegar
- Salt, Sugar & Pepper

Combine ingredients in blender and blend until smooth. Refrigerate before serving.

Spring Chard Frittata

- 1 Bunch Rainbow Chard
- 6 Eggs
- 2 or 3 Spring Onions
- 2 or 3 Green Garlic Shoots
- Olive Oil
- Salt
- Pepper
- 1 tsp Dried Thyme
- OR
- 4-5 Springs Fresh Thyme
- Crushed Red Pepper (optional)
- Parmigiano-Reggiano (to taste)

Remove chard leaves from stems. Cut stems into 1/4" slices and roughly chop the leaves. Chop the onions and garlic.

Heat 1 T oil in an oven-safe skillet. Add the onions (& red pepper if using) and sauté for 3-5 minutes. Add the chard stems and sprinkle with salt. Cook for 4 minutes, then add leaves and cook until tender (if pan starts to dry out, add a splash of water).

Turn on broiler. In a bowl, whisk together eggs, garlic, cheese, herbs, salt, pepper and 2 tsp oil. Pour egg mixture into skillet with chard. Fork the egg mixture from side to side to ensure eggs seep to bottom of pan. Do this for 5-7 minutes, until eggs start to solidify (test by jiggling pan). Sprinkle with more cheese and place under broiler for 4-5 minutes or until golden brown.