

North Creek Community Farm NEWSLETTER

Week Two - Thursday, June 23



IN THE BAG:

Lots of lettuce
Radishes
Green onions
Two bunches of Spinach
Fresh garlic (use like regular garlic)
Parsley (Italian flat leaf)
Flowers on the side (Tuesday will get them next week)

Update on the Land Acquisition

Last year I talked about buying land next to the farm to provide expanded access for members and room for training new farmers. That project has been stalled by the potential purchase of the land by another farmer. He has been renting the land and is working on buying it. I have asked to be kept in the loop but have not gotten called back by the owners. I will continue to contact them but am a bit discouraged now. I will continue to mentor and train interns and look towards reaching my goals without new land purchase. The price of corn and the possibility of frack sand mining have giving everyone a different view of the land in our area. More on local frack sand mining in the future.

Garlic Harvest Festival Date Change - Now July 16

Join us on July 16 for a fun afternoon of harvesting garlic and relaxing with a delicious supper of roasted garlic, salad, French bread, cheese and other goodies. I'll provide the garlic and a big salad and you bring one of the other ingredients. Desserts appreciated too. This is one of my favorite festivals. Please RSVP by email: kstout@chibardun.net

About the vegetables:

The greens continue to explode with the rains and warm weather. Stock up on your favorite dressings and indulge in salads. The romaine is a great excuse for Caesar salad. I love Chinese chicken salad with mandarin oranges and crispy noodles. Add some green onions and you are all set.

Lettuce overload? Make lettuce soup. I ate this when I was on a farm in France and it was very good. I have included a recipe on the back.

I like parsley in pasta salads and in just about anything actually. Someone recommended radish and peanut butter sandwiches but I have yet to go there.

LAMB FOR SALE

Lamb is available from local 4-H kids again this year. Members who have purchased this lamb in the past have loved it.

Lamb is sold by the hanging weight and then it is cut up. It can be cut in standard cuts or for an extra fee; special cuts are available such as rack of lamb or boned legs.

It is available in halves or whole, weighing around 30 and 60 lbs. respectively before cutting. (Weights vary with each animal) Cost per pound hanging weight is \$3.75. If you are interested, go to the website for the lamb order form and send it in by July 1. Questions? Send me an email.

Lettuce Soup

This soup is a great way to use lettuce's outer leaves and ribs, which usually go to waste. Any kind of potato and any salad greens, including lettuce, arugula, spinach, and watercress, will work fine.

1 cup chopped onions, scallions, and/or shallots
1 garlic clove, chopped
3 tablespoons unsalted butter
3/4 teaspoon ground coriander
1/2 teaspoon red pepper flakes
3/4 teaspoon salt
1/4 teaspoon black pepper
3/4 cup diced (1/3 inch) peeled potato
8 cups coarsely chopped lettuce leaves including ribs (3/4 lb)
3 cups water

Cook onion mixture and garlic in 2 tablespoons butter in a 4- to 5-quart heavy pot over moderately low heat, stirring, until softened, 3 to 5 minutes. Add coriander, pepper flakes, salt, and pepper and cook, stirring, 1 minute. Stir in potato, lettuce, and water and bring to a boil, then reduce heat and simmer, covered, until potato is very tender, about 10 minutes. Purée soup in batches in a blender (use caution when blending hot liquids) and transfer to a 2- to 3-quart saucepan. Bring soup to a simmer, then whisk in remaining tablespoon butter and salt and pepper to taste.

Sephardic Spinach Patties

Keftes de Espinaca: Among my favorite spinach dishes are these simple but delicious patties. Even spinach haters can't resist them, especially when they're splashed with a little fresh lemon juice; fresh juice does make a major difference in taste. Onions add a sweet flavor and textural complexity. These patties are traditional on Passover and Rosh Hashanah, corresponding to the emergence of the early and late spinach crops.

Yield: Makes about 16 patties

3 tablespoons olive oil or vegetable oil
1 large onion, chopped
2 to 4 cloves garlic, minced (optional)
2 pounds fresh spinach, stemmed, cooked, chopped, and squeezed dry, or 20 ounces thawed frozen chopped spinach, squeezed dry
About 1 cup matza meal or fine dried bread crumbs
About 3/4 teaspoon table salt or 1 1/2 teaspoons kosher salt
Ground black pepper to taste
1/2 teaspoon freshly grated nutmeg or 1/2 teaspoon cayenne (optional)
3 large eggs, lightly beaten
Vegetable oil for frying
Lemon wedges for serving

1. In a large skillet, heat the olive oil over medium heat. Add the onion and, if using, the garlic and sauté until soft and translucent, about 5 minutes. Remove from the heat and add the spinach, matza meal, salt, pepper, and, if using, the nutmeg. Stir in the eggs. If the mixture is too loose, add a little more matza meal. The mixture can be stored in the refrigerator for a day. 2. Shape the spinach mixture into patties 3 inches long and 1 1/2 inches wide, with tapered ends. In a large skillet, heat a thin layer of oil over medium heat. In batches, fry the patties, turning, until golden brown, about 3 minutes per side. Drain on paper towels. Serve warm, accompanied with lemon wedges.

Sephardic Spinach Patties with Cheese (*Keftes de Espinaca con Queso*): Add 1 cup (4 ounces) shredded Muenster, Swiss, Gouda, or Cheddar cheese; or 1/4 cup grated kefalotyri or Parmesan cheese.

Sephardic Spinach Patties with Walnuts (*Kites de Espinaca con Muez*): Substitute 1/2 to 1 cup finely chopped walnuts for the matza meal.

Italian Spinach Patties (*Polpettine di Spinaci*): Add 3/4 cup raisins soaked in white wine for 30 minutes, then drained, and 3/4 cup toasted pine nuts.