

North Creek Community Farm NEWSLETTER

Week Seven - Thursday, July 28

IN THE BAG:

Chard	Summer squash
Green beans	Tomatoes
New Potatoes	Parsley
Cucumbers	Cabbage
Garlic	Onions

How much is enough?

Surrounded by abundance, especially on the farm, it's hard to imagine the scarcity being faced by people in Kenya, Somalia and other countries with the drought. The lushness of the tomatoes seems almost to mock the barren images of refugee camps. Yet to not enjoy their splendor by feeling guilty does not seem right either. But how much is enough? For example, how often do I need the mail to arrive at my house? Wouldn't waiting a day and planning ahead be worth saving half of the gasoline used by the post office?

Barbara Kingsolver explored eating seasonally with her family. The Interns and I are thinking about eating extremely locally just for a week, all for within 10 miles. The bargaining started right away. "How about we wait until the melons are ripe," I suggested. "Can we have some olive oil?" I thought about Kalamata olives. "COFFEE!" we all said with horror.

How different the summer would be if I ate mostly locally all year. I would be using my time canning and preserving to save what I have right here. Afternoons would be spent getting black caps and local blueberries. I grow my own wheat and there is a dairy farm just down the road but no greenhouses with limes or lemons. What would be lost is the convenience and variety. No peaches, mangos or red peppers in the winter, not even any fresh greens unless I get mighty busy.

Rob Hopkins explains local this way: if you look at local eating like a cake, it used to be that the cake ingredients were produced locally and the decorations came in on the canal barge or train. Now, the ingredients come in on the truck and a few decorations are sometimes made locally. What if I ate local cake?

Like most of my musings about local, it comes back to relationship and connections very quickly. I can't do all the work of living sustainably by myself and why would I want to. It takes a whole village to eat locally too.



About the vegetables:

Well its wet but things are growing. I have never seen so many cantaloupes. Of course, they aren't ready yet and you shouldn't count your chickens etc but boy it's looking tasty. There are tiny Yellow Doll watermelons too but their vines are busy taking over the world. The tomatoes are just starting to ripen. I don't know about you but I anticipate those first vine ripened beauties. Sun Gold cherry tomatoes are just beginning to ripen too. We rotate which drop site gets them and then make sure the each site gets them an equal number of times.

Sautéed Swiss Chard with Onions

1 bunch Swiss chard
2 tablespoons olive oil
2 tablespoons butter
2 medium onions, halved lengthwise and thinly sliced
2 garlic cloves, finely chopped

Cut stems and center ribs from chard, discarding any tough portions, then cut stems and ribs crosswise into 2-inch pieces. Stack chard leaves and roll up lengthwise into cylinders. Cut cylinders crosswise to make 1-inch-wide strips.

Heat oil and butter in a large heavy pot over medium heat until foam subsides, then cook onions and garlic with 1/2 teaspoon salt and 1/4 teaspoon pepper, covered, stirring occasionally, until onions begin to soften, about 8 minutes. Add chard stems and ribs, 1/2 teaspoon salt, and 1/4 teaspoon pepper and cook, covered, stirring occasionally, until stems are just tender, about 10 minutes. Add chard leaves in batches, stirring until wilted before adding next batch, and cook, covered, stirring occasionally, until tender, 4 to 6 minutes. Transfer with a slotted spoon to a serving bowl.

Cooks' notes:

- Chard can be washed, dried, and cut 2 days ahead and chilled in sealed bags lined with dampened paper towels.
- Chard can be cooked 4 hours ahead and reheated over low heat on stove or in a microwave oven.

Green Goddess Green Beans

1 1/2 lb green beans, trimmed
1/3 cup coarsely chopped fresh flat-leaf or curly parsley
1 large clove garlic
1/4 cup mayonnaise
1/4 cup sour cream
1 1/2 teaspoons red-wine vinegar
1/2 teaspoon fresh lemon juice
1/2 teaspoon anchovy paste or 1 tsp fish sauce
1/4 teaspoon salt
1/4 teaspoon black pepper

Cook beans in a 6- to 8-quart pot of [boiling salted water](#), uncovered, until just tender, 6 to 8 minutes. Drain in a colander and immediately transfer to a bowl of ice and cold water to stop cooking. When beans are cool, drain in a colander and pat dry.

Purée parsley, garlic, mayonnaise, sour cream, vinegar, lemon juice, anchovy paste, salt, and pepper in a blender until smooth. Transfer to a bowl and toss with beans.

Cooks' note:

Sauce can be made 1 day ahead and chilled, covered.

Green Beans with Lemon

1/2 pound haricots verts (thin French green beans) or regular green beans
1 teaspoon fresh lemon juice
1 teaspoon finely chopped fresh flat-leafed or curly parsley leaves (wash before chopping)
1/2 teaspoon freshly grated lemon zest
freshly ground black pepper to taste

Trim regular green beans if using and in a large saucepan of boiling salted water cook beans until crisp-tender (2 minutes for haricots verts or 3 to 4 minutes for regular green beans) and drain in a colander.

In a bowl toss beans with lemon juice, parsley, lemon zest, and pepper and season with salt.