



Stewarding the Land for Future Generations
Local, Sustainable, Organic

Community Supported Agriculture Newsletter

July 6th, 2006- Week 5

Featured Vegetable of the Week: Beets

Beets are one of those great vegetables that have two delicious parts of the plant to eat- in its case the roots and the greens. The greens are incredibly nutritious, with more iron and minerals than spinach, while the sweet tasting roots have lots of potassium, fiber, protein, calcium and other vitamins and minerals.

I researched the history of beets and found out some fascinating information. From the Roman era through the nineteenth century, beets were cultivated primarily for their greens. The roots were used for animal fodder until the nineteenth century when they were discovered to be highly concentrated in sugar (they have the highest sugar content of all vegetables). At that time, the first sugar factory was built in Poland. When access to sugar cane was restricted by the British, Beets were suddenly in great demand and became a cash crop in many parts of Eastern Europe.

In terms of cultivation, beets are easy to grow in most climates. They like well drained soil and lots of sunlight. They can be cultivated all year long, but peak season is considered to be between June and October. As you have seen in your box, there are a multitude of beet varieties available. The most common beet is the red beet, followed by golden beets



and then chionga beets, which are an Italian variety that have pink and white stripes. In the kitchen, beets are incredibly versatile. I have included a beet salad recipe this week. I also love to make borscht throughout the year. Here's a hint about cooking beets: To reduce bleeding and preserve more of the flavor as well as the nutrients, cut beet tops off, leaving at least 1" of stems intact. Wash them thoroughly, and boil them whole and unpeeled, leaving the root on as well. Cooking time will vary with size, with the larger beets requiring up to one hour to soften. Cool them enough to handle, cut off the root and the stem ends, and rub off the skins. You can then slice, chop, dice, or grate the beets for your recipe. The greens are best cooked, either steamed or sauteed.

Announcements

***Save the date Saturday July 29th.** Join us for our second Farm Day from 11 am to 4 pm at Wolf Gulch Farm. Bring a potluck dish, plate and utensils to eat with, and a bathing suit. Farmer Tom Powell will give tours at 12, 1 and 2.

*Please send in a Farmer of the Week question and/or a 2-3 sentence bio about you and your family for our CSA Member Corner. Thanks!

*Email your weekly order of buffalo or chevre to siskiyoucoop@aol.com.

7000 Little Applegate Road, Jacksonville OR 97530
(541) 899-9668 www.siskiyoucoop.com

Ask the Farmers...

CSA member Kim Zwerner- Margolis asks “If you wanted to supplement a farm share with edibles beyond native and bio-diversity-mass plants, what would you choose for the Rogue Valley, in a 30’X 30’ plot?”



Kimberly, Seven Seeds Farm

I would choose to grow a lot of storage crops that would help to feed me and my family after the CSA deliveries ended in the fall. 30 x 30 is not a lot of space, but I would grow some carrots, beets, potatoes, onions and winter squash that would keep for the fall and most of the winter. I would also choose to grow some perennial crops that are not included in the CSA shares, like artichoke and asparagus, and others that are included in the boxes, but that I would want in larger quantity, like berries and peas.

I would choose to grow a winter garden consisting of brassicas (cauliflower, broccoli, cabbage, brussel sprouts, kale, etc) and greens. All the brassica crops grow well through the mild winter here and greens like arugula, spinach, corn salad and some cold hardy lettuce varieties are okay, too, and can be protected from the coldest weather with simple cold frames. All of these crops can be harvested from November until April. These crops would be transplanted or directly sown into the field from mid-July to the beginning of September. If sown on the correct date, these crops will near maturity when the colder, darker weather comes in the fall. In April, when the winter garden is done, I would sow a green manure crop to replenish the soil. The green manure crop could be tilled in in late June, giving it enough time to decompose before planting the next winter garden.



Tom Powell, Wolf Gulch Farm

CSA Member Corner

Mary Ann and Terry Terrall write: While raising our children in Idaho in the 70’s we subsistence farmed on our goat dairy. We sold milk and eggs and did lots of canning from our large garden. We really enjoy being a part of the CSA network and eating the fruits of other people’s labor. We remember those back breaking days. Every Thursday we get so excited to see what is in our box!

We are **Avara, Asher and Sofia Yaron**. We moved from Los Angeles to the Little Applegate area 3 years ago, one of the best decisions we have ever made. We have our own business designing and manufacturing fine jewelry and handbags. We manufacture in Bali and travel, primarily to New York, for sales. We feel privileged to come home to 20 acres of forest, our private retreat. Last year our travels included China, where we received the baby we adopted from Hunan Province, Sofia Ruhai. It is a joy to watch her romp through the woods. We all find it gratifying to be able to eat delicious, organic, locally grown food and support our farming friends. Sofia gobbles the berries and the cherries as soon as we get them!

We are the **Nidalmia family: Jennifer, Randy, Dakota and Autumn**. We’ve enjoyed this valley for 12 years now after moving from Florida (formerly Cincinnati). Jennifer is a practicing homebirth midwife and enjoys homeschooling 8 year old son Dakota and 6 year old daughter, Autumn. Randy is the sales manager at S. Oregon Subaru/Volvo and an incredible Ironman triathlete. In our spare time we love listening to music, camping, competing in races of all kinds, knitting, reading and spending time together. We love the CSA because we can’t always get it together to do our own garden and what better way to support our local farmers! It feels like Christmas every week to pick up our produce bin!