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Tiny's Organic 'Farm to City' CSA 2010 ♦ A Farm Family Growing for You

Fresh from the Farm

(this newsletter also available online)

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JULY 14

This Week's Harvest

Please note: This newsletter is usually written before harvest is complete. Below is a list of what we hope to put in your bag. For peak freshness, we harvest at the last possible minute. If a variety is ready at that time, we add it to your bag.

- * Cherries: Rainier & Summit
- * Nectarines: Arctic Star & Polar Light
- * Peaches: Sugartime
- * Plums: Earliqueen
- * Lettuce: Merlot & Freckles or Barcarole
- * Summer Squash (*Your bag may contain one or more of these varieties depending on size*): Costata Romanesco, Jean et Verte, Eight Ball & Floridor
- * *These varieties had a light crop ready for picking this week so your bag will be rounded out with one of the following:* Ace Beets OR Windsor Favas OR Finale Fennel OR Cucumber Mix: Lemon, Satsuki, Green Finger, Boothby Blonde &/OR Armenian

This Week's Recipes

(Recipes on back)

- * Farfalle with Yogurt & Summer Squash
- * Barley & Grilled Summer Squash Salad
- * Summer Squash Harvest Bread
- * Port-Mulled Cherries with Ricotta
- * Bourbon with Peaches
- * Merlot & Green Lettuce Salad
- * Creamy Feta Salad Dressing
- * Grilled Whole Fava Beans

Crop Talk

We picked a variety of plum called 'Earliqueen' this week and it tends to show more 'russeting' than most other plum varieties. Russeting is a light brown mark on the skin of the fruit and is sometimes caused by a late spring frost or from high winds that cause the fruit to rub against a limb. Some varieties of fruit are more susceptible than others and Earliqueen is likely the most susceptible of all the plums we grow. The flavor of the fruit is not affected in the least but members should be aware that we do include slight blemishes on fruits and vegetables as long as flavor and edibility is not compromised.

We're getting to the point that more fruit is finally being harvested after a very unseasonable spring. Of course the colder the weather, the longer it takes for the fruit to mature and even though we have many varieties that have been bred to harvest early, it's not a guarantee of an early harvest, that's for sure. We've had occasional inquiries about our fruit/veg mix and I'm fairly confident that you'll see a lot more fruit showing up in your bags in the next few weeks or so.

If you have any questions about the farm/fruit/veg, feel free to email me at: greg@tinysorganic.com. Thanks and we'll talk again next week. Farmer Greg



Please note: While the fruit selection during these first few weeks has been less than we hoped so far, the total amount of fruit in the bag has steadily increased each week and as more varieties are picked we'll be adding more to the bag until we reach our ideal mix of fruit/veggies.

Arctic Star & Polar Light Nectarines

Your CSA bag this week includes a mixed bag of our first two nectarines of the year. As often happens, the first crop was very light but enough were ready to pick that we couldn't wait to share them with you. The first is the white flesh of the dark red-skinned Arctic Star Nectarine that is sometimes sweetly tinted pink and the other is the Polar Light Nectarine, this being the first year we've been able to harvest this particular variety. Its skin is yellow-white with an orange-red blush and its white flesh is sweet and low acid. Eat Nectarines fresh out of hand or slice up with cherries, drizzle with honey and sprinkle lavender blossoms on top for a dazzling fruit salad. With rich flavor and firm texture, they are best eaten when the fruit gives ever so slightly to gentle pressure. Store ripe nectarines in the refrigerator for a day or two.

Earliqueen Plums

The dark purple-skinned and gold-fleshed Earliqueen Plum does double duty for Tiny's as both a vigorous pluot pollenizer and a proficient producer of very plummy tasting plums. Earliqueen plums can be sliced and eaten fresh, roasted or added to many baked goods, fresh salads, compotes, soups, puddings and sauces. They can be paired with other stone fruits, allspice, vanilla bean, red and white wine, ginger and rich meats, such as duck and pork, as well as crème fraîche and yogurt and cheese. Allow Earliqueen Plums to soften at room temperature to your liking then keep in the refrigerator up to 5 days. Unripe plums will have shiny skin; the skin of ripe plums have a mottled appearance.

Ace Beets

Ace Beets have red roots and bright green, red-veined leaves. Roast beet roots and slice, then toss with chopped beet greens and top with nuts and goat cheese for a satisfying salad. To store, cut off beet greens, place in a plastic bag and refrigerate for a couple of days. Store beet roots separately in the crisper for up to two weeks.

Windsor Fava Beans

Nutty and buttery in flavor, Windsor Fava Beans (also known as Broad Beans) are worth the work! To eat, peel the string from both sides of the shells and remove the large, pale green beans from the fuzzy interior, parboil for 30 seconds, removing the waxy coating around each bean and add to your dish. Keep long, flat and wide Windsor Fava Beans in a plastic bag in the refrigerator for up to a week.

Finale Fennel

Thinly slice the bulb, sauté in olive oil and use in place of onions or celery in risotto and other dishes. For a quick dinner, simmer fennel slices for a few minutes with chopped summer squash and white wine then add a handful of shredded greens. Stir in a few mussels or oysters, cook until the shells open and serve over pasta or rice. Garnish with chopped fennel fronds. Store your fresh fennel in your crisper drawer for up to four days. For best flavor, use fennel as soon as possible.

Cucumber Mix

Sweet, yellow and apple-shaped Lemon Cucumbers, sweet and long Satsuki Cucumbers, great for slicing Green Finger Cucumbers, saffron yellow Boothby Blonde Cucumbers and light-green, ribbed Armenian Cucumbers will keep for up to a week in the vegetable crisper of the refrigerator. Just wash and trim then cut into spears, slice, or grate right before final preparation. There is no need to peel homegrown cukes, as taste and nutritional value suffer, unless the recipe requires peeling.

Packing the Pantry

Tips & Recipes to help prepare your pantry and freezer for the off-season

Stone Fruit Butter

5 lbs ripe peaches, plums, pluots, cherries or nectarines, pitted and coarsely chopped

1 cup water

1 ½ cups sugar

6 tbsp fresh lemon juice

In a large pot, combine the fruit with the water and cook over moderate heat, stirring occasionally, just until the fruit softens, about 15 minutes. Add the sugar and lemon juice and bring to a rapid boil. Reduce the heat to low and cook, stirring frequently to prevent scorching, until the puree is very thick and reduced to 4 to 5 cups, 1 hour and 15 minutes to 1 hour and 30 minutes. Spoon the fruit butter into ½ -pint jars and tap gently to release any air bubbles. Let cool, then cover and refrigerate for up to 4 months or freeze for up to 6 months.

This Week's Recipes

Farfalle with Yogurt & Summer Squash

1 lb farfalle pasta

4 medium summer squash (about 1 ½ lbs), coarsely shredded

4 tbsp butter

1 cup plain whole-milk Greek yogurt

1 cup freshly grated Parmigiano-Reggiano cheese, plus more for serving

Freshly grated nutmeg

Salt and freshly ground pepper

In a large pot of boiling salted water, cook the farfalle until al dente; about 1 minute before the farfalle is done, add the shredded squash to the pot. Drain the farfalle & squash, reserving ¼ cup of the pasta cooking water. Meanwhile, in a large, deep skillet, melt the butter. Remove from the heat. Stir in the Greek yogurt and the 1 cup of grated Parmigiano-Reggiano and season the yogurt sauce with freshly grated nutmeg, salt and pepper. Add the farfalle, squash and reserved pasta water to the saucepan and cook over low heat, tossing, until the sauce coats the pasta; transfer to warmed bowls and serve with the extra cheese.

Barley & Grilled Summer Squash Salad

2-4 summer squash, sliced diagonally & grilled

1 cup pearled barley

Walnuts

½ cup olive oil

½ tsp lemon zest

1-2 tbsp fresh lemon juice

Salt and freshly ground black pepper

1 cup fresh pecorino cheese, shaved

Cook the barley according to directions. Drain and quickly rinse. Remove excess water & transfer to a large bowl. Cut the grilled summer squash into bite-size pieces and add to the barley. Spread the walnuts in a pie plate and toast for about 12 minutes, until fragrant. Let cool completely. Transfer the toasted walnuts to a food processor with the lemon juice, lemon zest, olive oil and pulse until the nuts are coarsely chopped. Season the dressing with salt and pepper and mix into barley and squash. Add more lemon juice if needed. Garnish with the shaved pecorino cheese and serve warm.

Summer Squash Harvest Bread

1 cup walnut halves

2 cups flour

½ tsp baking powder

½ tsp baking soda

½ tsp salt

¾ cup plus 2 tbsp sugar

2 large eggs

½ cup oil

½ cup plain Greek yogurt

1 cup coarsely grated squash

Preheat the oven to 325F. Butter and flour a 9-by-4 1/2-inch metal loaf pan.

Spread the walnut halves in a pie plate and toast them for about 8 minutes, until they are fragrant. Transfer the toasted walnuts to a cutting board and coarsely chop them, then freeze for 5 minutes to cool. In a large bowl, whisk the flour with the baking powder, baking soda and salt. In a medium bowl, mix the sugar with the eggs, oil and yogurt. Add the wet ingredients to the dry ingredients along with the grated squash and toasted walnuts and stir until the batter is evenly moistened. Scrape the batter into the prepared pan and bake for about 1 hour and 10 minutes, until the loaf is risen and a toothpick inserted in the center comes out clean. Let the loaf cool on a rack for 30 minutes before unmolding and serving.

Port-Mulled Cherries with Ricotta

2 cups ruby port

1 ½ cups pitted fresh cherries

½ cup fresh ricotta

In a medium saucepan, simmer the port over moderately high heat until a thick syrup forms, about 10 minutes. Stir in the cherries. Scoop the ricotta into four bowls, spoon the cherries and syrup on top and serve.

Bourbon with Peaches

2 ripe peaches, pitted and chopped

4 ounces straight bourbon

Peach wedges or diced peaches, for garnish

Blend together the peaches and bourbon and make into a frozen drink. Spoon into a stemmed wineglass and garnish with the peach wedges.

Merlot & Green Lettuce Salad

2 cups bread cubes

¼ cup olive oil

1 tsp Dijon mustard

1 tbsp balsamic vinegar

Salt and freshly ground pepper

1 large bowl of mixed lettuce, cut into bite-size pieces

1 cucumber, thinly sliced

Preheat the oven to 350. On a baking sheet, toss the bread cubes with 1 tablespoon of the olive oil and toast for about 10 minutes, stirring once, until golden. Let the croutons cool. In a large bowl, whisk the mustard with the balsamic vinegar. Gradually whisk in the remaining 3 tablespoons of olive oil and season with salt and pepper. Add the lettuce cucumber and croutons, toss well and serve.

Creamy Feta Salad Dressing

5 ounces feta cheese

¼ cup buttermilk or milk

½ cup sour cream

½ cup mayonnaise

2 tbsp white wine vinegar

2 cloves garlic, finely minced

¼ tsp dried dill

1 tsp dried oregano

Salt and pepper

With a fork, mash the cheese and buttermilk together until it resembled the consistency of cottage cheese. Add the remaining ingredients and blend well. Add salt and pepper to taste. Let sit, covered, in the refrigerator at least a few hours to blend flavors. Excellent with fresh greens, cucumbers and kalamata olives.

Grilled Whole Fava Beans

1 pound of fresh Fava Beans, still in their pods

Olive oil

Salt

Chopped herbs, fresh

In a large bowl toss the fava bean pods with olive oil and salt. Evenly place favas on pan. Cook (or grill) on med-high heat until blistered on one side - 4 to 5 minutes, then flip and cook/grill for a few minutes more on the other side. Cook until the fava beans are smooth and creamy when you pop them out of their skins. Season the favas with a bit more salt (as desired) and any fresh herbs you like. To eat: Tear open the pods, take a fava bean, pinch the skin and slide the fava from its skin into your mouth. BE CAREFUL! Beans will retain their temperature after removed from heat; allow to cool slightly before eating.