

Welcome to the CSA Roundtable

Presenters are Anne Bohl and Meghan Spees of Sweet Earth Farm, Ann Bushman of Annie's Gardens and Greens, and Erik Sessions of Patchwork Green Farm.

1. Overview of each farm's CSA model:

- Patchwork Green Farm
- Annie's Gardens and Greens
- Sweet Earth Farm

2. Luther Program - Institutional CSA shares

3. Questions and Discussion

- Social media uses
- CSA marketing ideas
- How do farms keep members involved?



Patchwork Green Farm CSA History

- Began delivering CSA shares in 1999 after one year of farmers' market sales. Members could choose from 3 size options (full, half, mini), an optional gourmet upgrade, and 2 delivery days (Saturday or Wednesday). We delivered weekly for 20 weeks (30 - 45 members).
- We took a year off from CSA in 2005. We did take many special orders that year. It was like running an individualized CSA. We missed the CSA and the income in the spring.
- In 2006 we changed the system to an every other week delivery with just one size. (40 - 45 members)
- Added Market Share CSA option in 2011. We had many farmers market customers who wanted to be a part of our CSA, but didn't participate because of trips, wanting vegetable choice, smaller quantities, etc.
- In 2012 Luther College subsidized part of the cost of employees' CSA shares to encourage better health. This year, their Sustainability Center put together funding for 100 employees to participate in this program. Due in part to this program, we now have 33 Traditional Shares and 93 Market Shares.

Current Share Offerings

Traditional Shares from Patchwork Green Farm cost \$300, and members get 11 deliveries at a central drop site in Decorah on Saturday mornings. Members get the first pick of the seasonal produce, including gourmet items like fennel bulb, fresh herbs and cut flowers. If we only have a limited quantity of a desirable item (like early season cherry tomatoes), they are the first priority. Potential downsides include what to do with the share when a member is out of town, too little or too much produce, irregular face time with the farmers, and no choice of produce. We try our best on the farm to help folks find solutions to each of these issues!

The **Market Share** comes in three sizes: \$150, \$225 and \$300. We find that members join at each level equally. Members pay up front in the spring and we keep balances on an Excel spreadsheet updated after each market. They have to use their entire balance by the end of the market season, but they can add to it whenever they want (in \$50 increments). We add a little to their initial balance as a 'reward' for paying up front (\$10, \$15 and \$20, respectively). Member balances can be used for anything we sell at market, including flowers and bulk special orders. Members enjoy having a choice of produce, having regular face time with the farmers, not having to carry so much cash to market and being able to shop when they need the food and are in town. The potential downside is that shoppers who make it to market at the end of the day will not have as much choice.

Both share types receive regular newsletters that include the current harvest list, recipes and farm updates. We also try to send out a newsletter or two each winter.

Sweet Earth Farm

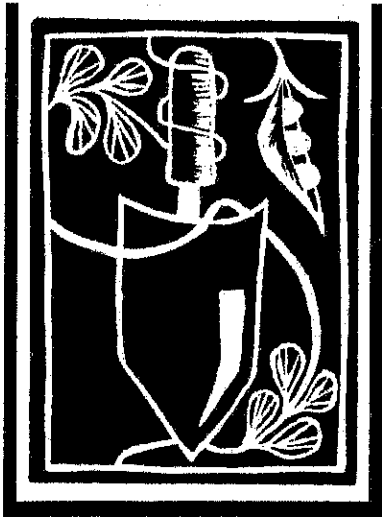
Meghan Spees & Anne Bohl

About Us:

- ❖ Started in 2012.
- ❖ We grow chemical free, sustainably grown vegetables, herbs, and flowers on about 1 ½ acres.
- ❖ We also raise pastured poultry- 200 birds per year- red heritage breed.
- ❖ We rent land from a family on the outskirts of town...5 minute drive to downtown Decorah.
- ❖ The landowners are very supportive of us and our mission and use solar, wind, and geothermal energy sources on their property.
- ❖ Our first year, we only sold at Decorah and Cedar Rapid's farmer's markets.
- ❖ This year, we also have a 41 member CSA comprised of 35 small shares and 6 full shares.

Community Supported Agriculture at Sweet Earth Farm

- ❖ Both of us have experience apprenticing and working on large CSA farms and are passionate about the CSA model as a creative means for local food distribution.
- ❖ We use a traditional CSA model for our farm:
 - Members pay upfront in one or two payments in the winter months.
 - This income in the off season helps us purchase seeds and supplies for the coming season.
 - In return, our member's receive a box of freshly harvested and washed produce every week for 22 weeks during the growing season.
 - We provide a wide diversity of vegetables and encourage folks to try new recipes and get creative with the bounty of the summer.
 - Every box comes with a newsletter comprised of what is in the box, storage tips and notes on the veggies, recipes, farm happenings, and photos.
- ❖ It is important to us that our members feel they are part of our farm and get to know us a little at the CSA pick up every week so they can make a connection as to where their food is coming from, where their money is going, and what they are truly supporting.
- ❖ We hope to increase our members next year, although we are not sure what that number will be yet.
- ❖ Our hope for the future is that we can sustain ourselves financially through CSA.



Sweet Earth Farm CSA

Week 1 : June 5th, 2013

YOUR BOX: *All vegetables are pre-washed.*

Vegetable:	Storage:	Notes:
Arugula or Asian Mix	Loosely closed plastic bag in fridge.	Will last up to one week. Can either be eaten raw as a salad or lightly sautéed.
Pea and Sunflower Shoots	Loosely closed plastic bag in fridge.	Will last up to one week.
Spinach	Loosely closed plastic bag in fridge.	Will last up to one week.
Kale	Store in plastic bag in fridge or cut 1/2" off stems and put in glass of water on counter.	De-stem and sautee lightly in olive oil with garlic.
Mini Bok Choy	Store whole in plastic bag in fridge.	Eaten raw or gently sautéed in stir-fry's.
Basil Plant	Set on kitchen counter near window and water every 3 -5 days.	If you harvest the leaves a little at a time, it should last a few months.
Tomato Plant (optional)	Pot up to larger pot or in garden.	Tomato will do great in 5 gallon pot in rich potting soil.

Welcome to the first week of your CSA share!

Thanks again to everyone for joining and supporting Sweet Earth Farm in our second growing season. We are thrilled to be your farmers for the season and can't wait to meet everyone!

Enjoy the spring veggies and recipes!

On The Farm



It has been a cool, wet spring and the farm is looking fantastic. While it may not be ideal weather for us, the cool loving spring crops are having a field day.

This includes arugula, lettuce, radishes, spinach, and snap peas. Thanks to our soil's wonderful drainage, we have been able to work the ground at opportune times and get our seeding and transplanting done. Although, due to the cool temperatures and late spring, everything is a few weeks behind on size. Because of this, your first share is a bit smaller than we had hoped, but don't fret. The share sizes will continue to grow as the season progresses.

Pick Up Logistics:

- ♦ *Pick up will be every Wednesday at the Decorah Farmer's Market located behind the Oneota Co-op, from 3-6pm.*
- ♦ *We have two wax boxes per share, so when you come to pick up your share, you will have the option of taking the wax box full of produce with you, and returning it at the following week's pick up, or bringing your own bag to bring your produce home in case you do not want to store a wax box in your house. Either way works well for us, so it's up to you!*
- ♦ *If you know you won't be able to make it to a pick up, you have a few options:*
 - *have a friend pick up your share for you (maybe in exchange for some veggies?),*
 - *we can hold your share for up to 3 days in our cooler and you can pick it up at the farm, which is across from Twin Springs park, very close to downtown.*

Vegetable of the Week:

ARUGULA

Arugula, also known as rocket, is a dark green leafy vegetable of Mediterranean origin. Arugula is a quick growing, cool season crop that is ready to harvest within 40 days of sowing. The plants' leaves have a peppery flavor and are used in salads, as a green on sandwiches, in pasta dishes, and in pesto.

Arugula has many anti-oxidants, phytochemicals, vitamins, and minerals that can aid in a healthy diet. Arugula is an excellent source of vitamins A, C, and K. In addition, this vegetable is rich in the b-complex group of vitamins such as thiamin, B-6 and Riboflavin.



Photo's by Brad Crawford

Recipes

Every week, we will include some of our favorite recipes to go along with the vegetables in your box. In addition to these recipes, here are some great resources to help you use up all those

Books

Serving Up The Harvest by Andrea Chesman
From Asparagus to Zucchini
Vegetarian Cooking For Everyone by Deborah Madison
Simply in Season

Websites

101cookbooks.com
Smittenkitchen.com
Awesomcookery.com
Simplyrecipes.com

Frittata with Spring Greens and Feta

Sauté for a few minutes in a heavy wide saute pan:

Olive Oil

1 1/2 - 2 cups Greens, chopped

Mix together in a bowl:

3 large Eggs

3/4 tsp Coriander

3/4 tsp Paprika

Pinch Nutmeg

Pinch Cayenne

1/8 tsp Sea Salt (the Feta is salty)

Black Pepper, freshly ground

Add in:

The Sautéed Greens mixture

1/2 cup Feta

1/3 cup Caramelized Onions or Sautéed Onions

Reheat the heavy saute pan. Melt:

2 teaspoons Butter or Olive Oil

Pour in the Egg/Greens mixture.

Cook on low heat for 5-8 minutes until the bottom is quite firm.

Move pan to oven broiler for 1 minutes, or to a hot oven for another 5 minutes or until fully cooked.

Ruth Hampton
Awesomcookery.com

Sunflower Shoot Pesto

1 bunch of sunflower shoots
1/2 cup of sunflower seeds
1 clove of garlic
1/2 cup of Parmesan cheese
1 tablespoon lemon juice

Mix it all in an immersion blender or food processor, adding in a few tables of olive oil until you get a creamy consistency, plus S&P. I served mine over angel hair with roasted red pepper and chick-peas.

Vinaigrette

1/4 cup good quality red or white wine vinegar, balsamic, or sherry vinegar

1 small clove garlic, minced and crushed to a paste

3/4 cup extra-virgin olive oil, canola oil, or safflower oil

4 teaspoons Dijon or other flavorful mustard

Salt and freshly ground black pepper

Makes 1 Cup

The way we like to make salad dressing involves combining all the ingredients together in a jar with a lid and shaking it up. You could also whisk it all together in a bowl.

Either way, feel free to play around with your vinaigrette recipe, adding what you have on hand..... Herbs, mustards, vinegars. As long as the proportions are close to the recipe above, you should end up with a tasty, fresh, and cheap vinaigrette.

Recipes

Napa Cabbage, Bok Choy, and Wild Mushroom Stir-Fry

3 tablespoons peanut oil (or olive oil)
2 tablespoons chopped fresh ginger
2 cloves garlic, minced
1/2 napa cabbage, shredded
2 teaspoons toasted sesame oil
1 bunch bok choy, shredded
(sub extra napa if not available)
1 pound assorted wild mushrooms, trimmed
(or cremini/shitake mushrooms quartered)
3/4 cup chicken broth or water
2 tablespoons oyster sauce, or to taste (optional)
3 tablespoons Japanese dark soy sauce

Makes 4 Main Course Servings

Heat oil and add ginger and garlic. Let sizzle for 1 minute and add sesame oil. Add cabbage, bok choy, and mushrooms; turn the heat to high, and stir-fry about 2 minutes. Add broth, cover, and simmer over low heat for about 10 minutes. Season to taste with oyster and soy sauce.

From Vegetables by James Peterson

Arugula Pesto

8 cups arugula leaves
1/2 cup pine nuts (or other nut)
2 garlic cloves
1/2 cup extra-virgin olive oil
1/2 cup freshly grated parmesan (optional)

Other optional ingredients to add at the end:

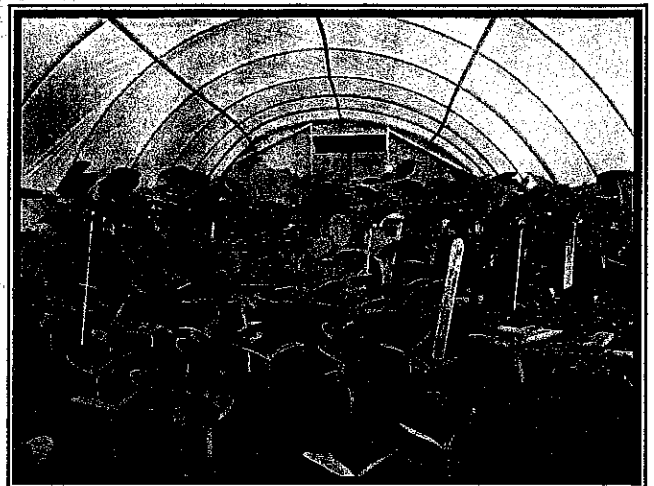
8 sun-dried tomatoes packed in oil, minced
1/2 cup pitted cured black olives, sliced

In a food processor, chop garlic and nuts. Add the arugula and process until finely chopped, adding the oil as you go. Add the Parmesan and process until the mixture has a consistency of a thick paste. Season with salt and pepper.

Toss with pasta and add any optional ingredients you desire.

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Patchwork Green News

July 20, 2013

Lettuce

Broccoli

Cucumbers

Green Beans

New Red Potatoes

Carrots

Sweet White Onions These are great for fresh salsa, hamburgers and tacos. Keep them refrigerated, as they are not cured keeper onions.

Summer Squash These squash are more tender-skinned than their zucchini relatives. Lightly sauté with onion and a topping of basil, or chop them small and add to your enchiladas, raw or cooked. They will keep well in your crisper drawer for 10 days.

Basil Bouquet We grow lots of Genovese basil at Patchwork Green Farm, and we harvest it by the pound for restaurants and pesto-makers around town. You'll be getting more soon! But, we also like to experiment with other varieties. This week, sample lime, lemon and 'Spice Boys' cinnamon basil. Try them in iced tea or lemonade, on a sandwich, in pesto, or in

an Asian dish. They really do carry distinctive flavors, and they'll change the way you think about and cook with basil. One word of caution: the lemon and lime basil are very temperature sensitive, so wrap them in a towel and place in the warmest part of your refrigerator. Use within a few days.

Jalapeno Pepper Just one little hot pepper this week. Core out the seeds (or leave them in for more heat) and carefully mince the pepper while wearing rubber or plastic gloves (seriously!). Add hot peppers to any dish that needs heat and a hot flavor a little bit at a time. Let the flavors blend and sample for heat. It's easy to add more, but very hard to 'remove' the heat!

Cherry Tomatoes The sweet 'sungold' cherry tomato is one of the most coveted fruits on our farm. If I have orders for all of the whole fruit, my kids will beg for the split tomatoes. When we occasionally have extra, we put them in the food dehydrator, freeze them and save them for a snowy day pizza. Tomatoes should not be refrigerated, and we find that the 'sungolds' are best within the first 4 days.

News from the Garden

We dedicated ourselves to weeding the gardens this week. With most of the garden areas planted, and lots of harvesting (peas and beans, wow!) and other chores taking our time this month, the weeds were getting a little bit ahead of us! I brought in some extra help, and we have been hoeing, pulling, cultivating, mowing and tilling every chance we get.

Although we have many more small areas to clean up, we did make a lot of progress this week, and the veggies look great!

In case you didn't get outside this week, it was pretty hot and very dry. I was surprised how quickly the plants started to show some water stress. The hot winds desiccated the leaves and soil surface, and the plant roots are struggling

to find enough moisture. We ran the drip irrigation and got the sprinkler going for the first time this season. There is rain in the forecast (and milder temp's) for the coming week, so I'm not too worried about a repeat of last summers' drought.

Drier weather does increase the bitter taste in many vegetables. You will notice that the lettuces, cucumbers, broccoli and carrots are not as sweet as they were a month ago. On the other hand, fruit like tomatoes concentrate their sugars when they experience dry weather, and they taste great.

Recipes

Shaved Squash Salad with Sunflower Seeds from Bon Appetit, 8/2013

Shave 2 large summer squash lengthwise with a vegetable peeler and toss with 2 Tbsp. fresh lemon juice and 2 Tbsp olive oil: season with kosher salt and freshly ground pepper. Top with ¼ cup crumbled feta, ¼ cup torn fresh basil, and 2 Tbsp. salted, roasted sunflower seeds.

Classic Green Beans from 'Cooking with the Season' by Monique Hooker

4 quarts lightly salted water
2# beans, ends removed
1 T butter
Salt and Pepper
½ cup blanched almonds

Bring the water to a boil. Drop in beans, then cover and bring back to a boil. As soon as the water reaches the boiling point, remove the cover and cook up to 5 minutes, or until the beans turn bright green and are tender but still crunchy. Drain and rinse under cold water. Melt the butter in a pan and add almonds and

Just a reminder about the Practical Farmers of Iowa field day that we are hosting this Sunday afternoon, July 21, from 1:00-4:00. There will be a good tour of the gardens and an interesting (optional) discussion of different CSA models. Families are welcome, there will be food around 2:30 and the weather should be beautiful. Please bring a camping/lawn chair if you plan to stay for the discussion. RSVP appreciated but not necessary.

The next CSA delivery will be August 3.

sauté until golden. Add the beans and toss gently.

Peruvian Potatoes with Chiles and Cheese from From Asparagus to Zucchini published by MACSAC

2# red potatoes
2 T vegetable oil
1 cup finely chopped onion
2 minced jalapenos
1 T minced garlic
1 cup milk
6 oz feta
3 hard-cooked eggs, chopped
2 T. chopped cilantro
salt and pepper to taste

Boil potatoes in salted water until nearly tender. Heat oil in large skillet over medium low flame. Add onions: cook 5 minutes. Add jalapenos and garlic; cook until tender, about 2 minutes. Drain potatoes and cut into cubes. Add potatoes and milk to onions. Simmer until potatoes some liquid. Stir in feta and eggs ; heat briefly. Stir in cilantro, salt and pepper. Makes 6 servings.