



Cal Poly Organic Farm

Community Supported Agriculture Newsletter

CPOF ANNOUNCEMENTS

→ Earth Day SLO 2008, Saturday, April 26

- ▶ **Green Living Expo**
Mission Plaza, noon to 5 p.m.
- ▶ **Arbor Day Celebration**
Laguna Lake, 9 a.m. to noon

For 2008 the Earth Day Alliance will unite its efforts and expand the impact of Earth Day by blending our efforts with the City of San Luis Obispo. Rather than compete with Cal Poly's Open House or fundraising efforts built on Earth Day, the Earth Day Alliance and the City of SLO will hold our Earth Day events back-to-back on April 26.

If you would like to learn more about Earth Day 2008 Expo, receive an application, or become a volunteer, send an email to earthdayslo@fix.net or call 544-8529.

Thanks for all that you do to create a greener tomorrow.

→ We're counting down to the **CPOF Spring/Summer CSA** share which starts April 7th, 2008. Only five weeks left to sign up to insure your spot!

- ▶ Large Share, 10 weeks for \$265.00
 - ▶ Small Share, 10 weeks for \$190.00
- Sign up for 24 weeks and get a 5% discount with the option to pay in 2 installments:
- ▶ Large Share, 24 weeks for \$604.00 (5% discount)
 - ▶ Small Share, 24 weeks for \$433.00 (5% discount)

BONUS! Sign up a friend for the upcoming season and get a free CPOF tote bag!

→ The Spring/Summer Bread Share from **Skipping Stone Breads** also starts April 7. The cost will be \$4.50 per week for a delicious, crusty 2-pound loaf of rustic bread made from unbleached flour, whole wheat flour, rye flour, salt, water and yeast. Sign up for a 24 week share for \$108.00, or a 10 week share for \$45.00 when you register for the upcoming Spring/Summer CSA.

→ *Reminder:* Catch one of the **HopeDance** screenings of the film **Two Angry Moms** to view the struggles of Amy Kalafa and Susan Rubin, two moms working to induce school districts to serve fresh, healthy foods, rather than the junk food that has become the norm in cafeterias across the nation. Shows will be held in the San Luis Obispo Library (Pismo & Osos Streets) on Monday, February 25 at 10:00 a.m. and 7:00 p.m. Call 544-9663 for more information.

For more information on HopeDance publications and activities (and other featured area films), please visit: www.hopedance.org.

Week 21 Produce

February 24 – March 1

Full Shares expect 10-12 items

Small Shares expect 8-10 items
from the following list:

Blood oranges* (CP Citrus Project) - The red pigment, anthocyanin, is an antioxidant that reduces the risks associated with many ailments.

Carrots - The high content of vitamin A is beneficial and contributes to the function of the retina of the eyes.

Bunching Onions - "Know your onions."

Cauliflower (BonniPak) - Store uncooked cauliflower in a paper or plastic bag in the refrigerator; to prevent moisture from developing in the floret clusters, store it with the stem side down.

Beets - They can be eaten raw, boiled, steamed, roasted, and sautéed.

Turnips - Turnips grow wild in Siberia and have been eaten since prehistoric times.

Parsley - Both Greek and Romans believed parsley would absorb wine fumes, preventing intoxication, so they placed bunches on their banquet tables or wore garlands around their necks.

Cilantro - It is actually the leaves (and stems) of the Coriander plant and used in everything from salsas and salads to burritos or meat dishes.

Kale - Kale was a significant crop during ancient Roman times and a popular vegetable eaten by peasants in the Middle Ages.

Braising greens - Braise with olive oil and garlic.

Bok Choy - Its taste is similar to spinach or Swiss chard and it can be eaten raw as single stalks or combined into other dishes such as stir-fries and soups.

Red leaf lettuce - Wrap fresh, unwashed leaves in plastic wrap and store in the refrigerator for a few days if necessary.

Pistachios (NPO) - One male tree is needed to pollinate every six female trees.

Thyme - Thyme is a wonderful addition to bean, egg and vegetable dishes.

** Not certified organic.*

Unless otherwise noted, all vegetables are certified organic.

Unless otherwise noted, all vegetables are from the CPOF.

www.calpolyorgfarm.com

VEGETABLE OF THE WEEK: CARROT (*Daucus carota* var *sativa*)

The carrot can trace its ancestry back thousands of years, originally having been cultivated in central Asian and Middle Eastern countries. These original carrots looked different from those that we are accustomed to today, featuring deep purple coloring, ranging from lavender to deep eggplant. This coloration was a reflection of the anthocyanin phytonutrient pigments these carrots had. In pre-Hellenic times, a yellow-rooted carrot variety appeared in Afghanistan and was further cultivated and developed into an earlier version of the carrot we know today. Both types of carrots spread throughout the Mediterranean region and were adopted by the ancient Greeks and Romans for their medicinal use.

It seems that carrots did not become a popular vegetable in Europe until the Renaissance. This was probably related to the fact that the early varieties had a tough and fibrous texture. Centuries later, beginning in the 17th century, agriculturists in Europe started cultivating different varieties of carrots, developing an orange-colored carrot that had a more pleasing texture than its predecessor. Europeans favored the growing of this one over the purple variety, which was and still is widely grown in other areas of the world, including southern Asia and North Africa. Carrots were subsequently introduced into the North American colonies. Owing to its heightened popularity, in the early 1800s, the carrot became the first vegetable to be canned.

Storage

- Carrots are hardy vegetables that will keep longer than many others if stored properly. The trick to preserving the freshness of carrot roots is to minimize the amount of moisture they lose. To do this, make sure to store them in the coolest part of the refrigerator in a plastic bag or wrapped in a paper towel, which will reduce the amount of condensation that is able to form. They should be able to keep fresh for about two weeks. Carrots should also be stored away from apples, pears, potatoes and other fruits and vegetables that produce ethylene gas since it will cause them to become bitter.
- If you purchase carrot roots with attached green tops, the tops should be cut off before storing in the refrigerator since they will cause the carrots to wilt prematurely as they pull moisture from the roots. While the tops can be stored in the refrigerator, kept moist by being wrapped in a damp paper, they should really be used soon after purchase since they are fragile and quickly begin to wilt.



Nutrition

Carrots are an excellent source of vitamin A. In addition, they are a very good source of vitamin C, vitamin K, dietary fiber and potassium.

Preparation Tips

- Wash carrot roots and gently scrub them with a vegetable brush right before eating. Unless the carrots are old, thick or not grown organically, it is not necessary to peel them. If they are not organically grown, peel them; most all conventionally grown carrots are grown using pesticides and other chemicals. If the stem end is green, it should be cut away as it will be bitter. Depending upon the recipe or your personal preference, carrots can be left whole or julienned, grated, shredded or sliced into sticks or rounds.
- Carrots are delicious eaten raw or cooked. Beta-carotene is not destroyed by cooking; in fact, cooking breaks down the fiber, making this nutrient and carrots' sugars more available, thus also making them taste sweeter.

Serving Ideas:

- For ease and convenience, nothing compares to a well-scrubbed, fresh organic carrot. Just wash and eat--it doesn't get much easier than that.
- Shredded raw carrots and chopped carrot greens make great additions to salads.
- The traditional carrot salad with raisins and nuts can go equally as well with some variations like chopped dried fruits and sunflower seeds.
- Combine shredded carrots, beets and apples, and eat as a salad.
- For quick, nutritious soup that can be served hot or cold, purée boiled carrots and potatoes in a blender or food processor, and add herbs and spices to taste.
- Spiced carrot sticks are a flavorful variation on an old favorite at parties or at the dinner table. Soak carrot sticks in hot water spiced with cayenne, coriander seeds and salt. Allow to cool, drain and serve.
- Combine freshly squeezed carrot juice with soymilk and bananas to make a nutrient-dense breakfast shake.

Folklore

- Carrot tops were considered a fashion statement when worn by the ladies of the English court. The lacy green foliage provided an attractive hair ornament or an adornment on their hats.
- Carrots were prepared as a love potion by the ancient Greeks. The carrot was thought to endow men with the power of passion, while compelling women to become more submissive.
- During the Middle Ages physicians prescribed carrots for all sorts of ills including syphilis and dog bites.

Carrot Bisque

6 cups water or vegetable broth
1 3/4 pounds carrots, peeled and sliced
1 1/2 pounds russet potatoes, peeled and cut into large chunks
1 small sweet potato (about 8 ounces) peeled and cut into chunks
1 medium onion, chopped
1/3 cup water
1 bunch fresh dill, minced
1 tablespoon + 1 teaspoon lemon juice
1 1/4 teaspoons salt or to taste

Garnish

2 large cloves garlic, minced
3 tablespoons fresh parsley, chopped
1 to 2 tablespoons fresh chives, minced
3 tablespoons fresh sorrel, minced (optional)
Croutons



1. Combine the water, carrots, russet potatoes, and sweet potato in an 8-quart (2 liter) stock pot. Cover and bring to a boil over high heat. Turn heat down to medium and simmer until vegetables are tender, about 15 minutes.
2. While carrots and potatoes are cooking, sauté onion in water in a medium skillet. Cook until transparent and soft, about 4 to 5 minutes. Transfer to a food processor or blender.
3. Add carrots, potatoes, and onions and their liquid to food processor or blender in batches. Puree completely and return to stock pot. If you prefer a smoother puree, use the blender instead.
4. Measure 3 tablespoons minced dill into a small bowl, and set aside for garnish. Add remaining dill to stock pot along with lemon juice and salt. Adjust seasoning if needed.
5. For the garnish, combine the garlic, parsley, chives, and sorrel together in the bowl with the reserved minced dill. Pass the bowl around the table for guests to sprinkle a little into their soup. Serve the croutons in a separate bowl. *Serves 6 to 8.*

Swiss Chard with Garlic

3 pounds Swiss chard (about 2 large bunches)
1 large garlic clove
1 tablespoon olive oil

1. Tear Swiss chard leaves from thick white stalks and coarsely chop leaves, reserving stalks. In a large saucepan or kettle of boiling salted water simmer stalks until tender, 5 to 10 minutes, and drain in a colander. Chard may be prepared up to this point 1 day ahead, stalks cooled completely and leaves and stalks chilled separately in sealable plastic bags.
2. Mince garlic. In large skillet heat oil over moderate heat until hot but not smoking and cook garlic, stirring, 30 seconds. Add leaves in 2 batches, tossing to coat with oil and stirring after each addition, and cook until leaves are wilted. Add stalks and cook, stirring occasionally, until heated through. Season with salt and pepper. *Serves 6.*

Balsamic Roasted Carrots

2 pounds carrots, cut into 3 1/2- by 1/2-inch sticks
2 tablespoons olive oil
1/4 teaspoon salt
2 tablespoons balsamic vinegar

1. Toss carrots with oil and salt in a shallow roasting pan (1 inch deep). Roast carrots in middle of preheated 425°F oven, stirring occasionally, until golden and tender, 25 to 30 minutes.
2. Drizzle vinegar over carrots and shake pan a few times. Roast carrots until most of vinegar is evaporated, about 2 minutes more. *Serves 4.*

Swiss Chard Gratin

5 tablespoons unsalted butter
1 cup fresh white bread crumbs
3 oz Tomme de Savoie or Gruyère cheese, grated (1 cup)
1 garlic clove, halved lengthwise, germ removed if green, and garlic finely chopped
1 tablespoon finely chopped mixed fresh herbs (preferably chives, tarragon, and flat-leaf parsley)
1/8 teaspoon freshly grated nutmeg
1 cup low-sodium chicken broth
1/2 cup heavy cream
1 tablespoon all-purpose flour
1 medium onion, finely chopped
3 lb Swiss chard, leaves and stems separated and both cut into 1-inch pieces
1 lb spinach, coarse stems discarded, leaves coarsely chopped

1. Melt 2 tablespoons butter and toss with bread crumbs, cheese, garlic, herbs, half of nutmeg, and salt and pepper to taste in a bowl.
2. Boil broth in a small saucepan until reduced by half. Add cream and keep warm.
3. Melt 1 tablespoon butter in a small heavy saucepan over moderate heat and stir in flour. Cook roux, whisking, 1 minute, then whisk in broth mixture and boil, whisking, 1 minute. Season sauce with salt and pepper.
4. Cook onion in remaining 2 tablespoons butter in a wide 8-quart heavy pot over moderately low heat, stirring, until softened. Add chard stems, remaining nutmeg, and salt and pepper to taste and cook, stirring, until vegetables are tender but not browned, about 8 minutes. Increase heat to moderately high and add chard leaves and spinach by large handfuls, stirring, until all greens are wilted. Season with salt and pepper.
5. Transfer vegetables to a colander to drain well and press out liquid with back of a large spoon. Be sure to drain as much liquid as possible from vegetables so gratin isn't wet. Toss vegetables with cream sauce and transfer to a buttered 12-inch oval gratin or 2-quart shallow baking dish, spreading evenly.
6. Top vegetables with bread crumbs and bake in middle of preheated 400°F oven until bubbling and topping is golden, about 20 minutes. *Makes 6 servings.*

• *Gratin may be prepared, without baking, 4 hours ahead and chilled, covered. Bring to room temperature before baking.*

Kale with Sautéed Apple and Onion

1 Granny Smith apple
2 tablespoons olive oil
1 medium onion, cut into 1/4-inch wedges
1/4 teaspoon curry powder
1 lb kale, tough stems and ribs removed and leaves coarsely chopped
1/2 cup water

1. Peel, quarter, and core apple, then cut into 1/4-inch-thick wedges.
2. Heat oil in a 5-quart pot over moderately high heat until hot but not smoking, then sauté onion, stirring occasionally, until golden. Add apple and curry powder and sauté, stirring, until apple is almost tender, about 2 minutes.
3. Add kale and water and cook, covered, stirring occasionally, until kale is tender and most of liquid is evaporated, about 5 minutes. Season with salt. *Makes 2 servings.*

Glazed Carrots

4 medium carrots
2 tablespoons butter
2 tablespoons sugar
Mint or thyme, optional

Wash carrots. Cook in boiling salted water until tender. Drain. Cut in slices. Melt butter. Add sugar. Add carrots. Cook until slightly browned and glazed. Add a teaspoon of chopped fresh mint leaves or thyme to the butter and sugar mixture, if desired.



Kale with Garlic and Bacon

1 slice of bacon chopped
1 garlic clove, minced
6 cups torn kale leaves, washed
1 cup water

In a large heavy skillet cook the bacon over the moderate heat, stirring, until it is crisp and transfer it to paper towels to drain. In the fat remaining in the skillet cook the garlic, stirring, until it is golden, add the kale and the water, and simmer the mixture, covered, for 10 minutes, or until the kale is wilted and tender. Simmer the mixture, uncovered, until most of the liquid is evaporated and stir in the bacon and salt and pepper to taste.

Pasta with Lentils and Kale

1/2 cup French (small) green lentils
2 cups water
3/4 teaspoon salt
6 tablespoons extra-virgin olive oil
1 large onion, finely chopped (2 cups)
1/4 teaspoon black pepper
3/4 pound kale (preferably Tuscan; sometimes labeled "lacinato")
3/4 pound dried short pasta

Accompaniments: toasted bread-crumbs topping and/or grated Parmigiano-Reggiano

1. Simmer lentils in water (2 cups) with 1/4 teaspoon salt in a 1- to 1 1/2-quart saucepan, uncovered, adding more water if necessary to keep lentils barely covered, until tender but not falling apart, 20 to 25 minutes. Remove from heat and season with salt.
2. While lentils simmer, heat 1/4 cup oil in a 12-inch heavy skillet over moderately high heat until hot but not smoking, then sauté onion with pepper and remaining 1/2 teaspoon salt, stirring, 1 minute. Reduce heat to low and cook, covered, stirring occasionally, until onions are soft and golden (stir more frequently toward end of cooking), about 20 minutes. Remove lid and increase heat to moderate, then cook, stirring frequently, until onion is golden brown, 5 to 10 minutes more.
3. While onion cooks, cut out and discard stems and center ribs from kale. Cook kale in a 6- to 8-quart pot of boiling salted water, uncovered, stirring occasionally, until just tender, 5 to 8 minutes. Transfer kale with tongs to a colander to drain, pressing lightly. Keep pot of water at a boil, covered.
4. Coarsely chop kale and add to onion along with lentils (including lentil-cooking liquid), then simmer, stirring, 1 minute. Season with salt and pepper.
5. Add pasta to kale-cooking liquid and boil, uncovered, until al dente. Reserve about 1 cup pasta-cooking liquid, then drain pasta in a colander. Add pasta to lentil mixture along with about 1/3 cup of pasta-cooking liquid (or enough to keep pasta moist) and cook over high heat, tossing, 1 minute. Season with salt and pepper and drizzle with remaining 2 tablespoons oil. *Makes 4 servings.*

• *Lentils and onions can be cooked up to 5 days ahead and chilled, uncovered, until completely cooled, then covered. Reheat over low heat, thinning with water as necessary.*

Toasted Bread Crumb Topping

3 (1/2-inch-thick) slices whole-grain bread
2 tablespoons extra-virgin olive oil
Sea salt to taste
Preheat oven to 350°F.

Cut bread into cubes; grind to crumbs in a food processor. Spread in a shallow baking pan and bake in middle of oven, stirring occasionally, until golden, 10 to 15 minutes. Pour crumbs into a bowl; stir in oil and salt. *Makes about 1- 1/2 cups.*