



Cal Poly Organic Farm

Community Supported Agriculture Newsletter

Greetings All,

Hope you had a wonderful Spring Break! Below you will find a listing of volunteer opportunities related to the Cal Poly Organic Farm. Your assistance is always appreciated! Prior to volunteering or continuing to volunteer at the Farm, all volunteers must review CPOF's training manual, sign a risk waiver form and submit a volunteer application form. Another formal training session will be held on Saturday, 4/12 from 9 a.m. to 10 a.m. If you are unable to attend, please reply to this e-mail so that alternate arrangements can be made.

Cal Poly Organic Farm Volunteer Opportunities:

- **Growing Gardens Work Day** - Thursday, 4/10 from 3 p.m. to 5:30 p.m.
We will be filling our raised beds with soil/compost and applying weed barrier to our paths and then covering with wood chips. These are both big tasks, so the more help the better.
- **Volunteer Orientation** - Saturday, 4/12 from 9 a.m. to 10 a.m.
Learn about Farm history, ongoing opportunities and safety considerations while working at CPOF.
- **Farm Beautification** - Saturday, 4/12 from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m.
Let's beautify before Open House Earth Day Celebration...weeding, planting, mowing, and cleaning
- **School Farm Tour** - Thursday, 4/17 from 9:30 a.m. to 11:30 a.m.
- **Cal Poly Organic Farm Open House/Earth Day Celebration** - Saturday, 4/19 from 11 a.m. to 4 p.m.
Help is needed all day at informational booths throughout campus and on the Farm.
- **Arbor Day Celebration** in San Luis Obispo - Saturday, 4/26 from 8 a.m. to 1 p.m.
Share information about the Farm at an interactive/educational booth.
- **Roll Out the Barrels** in San Luis Obispo - Thursday, 5/1 from 5 p.m. to 8 p.m.
Tell people about Farm related opportunities!
- **SLO Waterfest in Atascadero** - Saturday, 5/3 from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m.
Spread the word about Farm related opportunities and help host educational exhibits!
- Volunteers are also welcome during the week, especially on Monday and Thursday mornings from 8 a.m. to noon.

Week 2 Produce

April 13 – April 19, 2008

Full Shares expect 10-12 items

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

Navel oranges* (CP Fruit Science) – A single mutation in 1820 in an orchard of sweet oranges planted at a monastery in Brazil yielded the navel orange; produced via cutting and grafting, the navel oranges of today have exactly the same genetic makeup as the original tree.

Carrots – In early use, carrots were grown for their aromatic leaves and seeds, not their roots.

Beets (mixed) - Simply grate raw beets for a delicious and colorful addition to salads or decorative garnish for soups.

Turnips (White Butter or Purple top) – Turnips are high in Dietary Fiber, Vitamin C, Vitamin B6, Folate, Calcium, Potassium and Copper.

Parsley – Chinese and German herbologists recommend parsley tea to help control high blood pressure, and the Cherokee Indians used it as a tonic to strengthen the bladder.

Cilantro - The fresh coriander herb is best stored in the refrigerator in airtight containers, after chopping off the roots. The leaves do not keep well and should be eaten quickly, as they lose their aroma when dried or frozen.

Kale (Red Russian or Winterbor) – Until the end of the Middle Ages, kale was one of the most common green vegetables in all of Europe.

Red Butter lettuce – The Latin name of the genus are ultimately derived from *lac*, the Latin word for "milk",^[2] referring to the plant's milky juice.

Bunched onions – Onions are one of the oldest vegetables known to mankind, spanning almost the totality of the world's cultures.

Radishes – Radishes were a favourite food of *Fraggles*, *Gorgs* and *Doozers* in the children's television program *Fraggle Rock*

Spinach - *Popeye the Sailor Man* has a strong affinity for spinach, becoming much stronger after consuming it.

* Not certified organic; sustainable.

Unless otherwise noted, all vegetables are certified organic.
Unless otherwise noted, all vegetables are from the CPOF.

www.calpolyorgfarm.com

If you would like more information on any of the events/opportunities listed above or would like to volunteer please e-mail orgfarm@calpoly.edu or call 756-6139.

CPOF ANNOUNCEMENTS

- **Especially for those who visit the farm with children:** When visiting the Cal Poly Organic Farm, please be aware that it is a busy, working farm and that attention must be paid to the safety of all Farm visitors at all times. Watch out for uneven ground, holes, vehicles and the ponds. In particular, please do not allow children to climb any structures or be unattended at any time. Thank you for your cooperation. Feel free to call 756-6139 or e-mail orgfarm@calpoly.edu with any safety concerns or suggestions.
- **Cal Poly Organic Farm Open House/Earth Day Celebration**, Saturday, 4/19 from 11 a.m. to 4 p.m. Join us for a Farm tour or hands on activity.
- **TomatoMANIA** on Friday, 4/11 and Saturday, 4/12 from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. at the Poly Plant Shop featuring over 50 varieties of tomato starts for sale!
- **Arbor Day Celebration** at Laguna Lake Park from 9 a.m. to noon Stop by and say hello to the Cal Poly Organic Farm Representatives on hand with an interactive/educational display.
- **Green Living Expo** at the San Luis Obispo Mission Plaza on Saturday, April 26th. For more information, please call: 544-8529
- **FREE Healthy Gardening Workshops** on Friday, April 25th in Morro Bay and Saturday, April 26th in Los Osos. The City of Morro Bay and County of San Luis Obispo are hosting the workshops that will run from 9 a.m. to noon and will cover techniques for sustainable, healthy gardening including water quality issues and the connection between gardening practices and water quality, the importance of soil health, choosing appropriate plants, and Integrated Pest Management (IPM) practices. The presenter is Debi Tidd, who has over 30 years of experience teaching and developing curriculum, and is currently the Education Director at The Gardens at Heather Farm in Walnut Creek. Reservations are required, so contact Rachel Grossman at 805-772-6270 or rgrossman@morrobay.ca.us to reserve your spot!
- **Gathering of the Gardeners** in Cambria, CA on Saturday, May 3rd and 4th For more information, visit: www.gardenersevents.com/gogcambria.htm

VEGETABLE OF THE WEEK: BEET (*Beta vulgaris*)

Both beets and Swiss chard are different varieties within the same plant family (*Chenopodiaceae*) and their edible leaves share a resemblance in both taste and texture. Attached to the beet's green leaves is a round or oblong root, the part conjured up in most people's minds by the word "beet." Although typically a beautiful reddish-purple hue, beets also come in varieties that feature white or golden roots. No matter what their color, however, beetroots aren't as hardy as they look; the smallest bruise or puncture will cause red beets' red-purple pigments, which contain beneficial flavonoids called *anthocyanins*, to bleed, especially during cooking.

Beets' sweet taste reflects their high sugar content, which makes beets an important source for the production of refined sugar. Raw beetroots have a crunchy texture that turns soft and buttery when they are cooked. Beet leaves have a lively, bitter taste similar to chard. The main ingredient in the traditional eastern European soup, borscht, beets are delicious eaten raw, but are more typically cooked or pickled.

The greens attached to the beetroots are delicious and can be prepared like spinach or Swiss chard. They are incredibly rich in nutrients, concentrated in vitamins and minerals as well as carotenoids such as beta-carotene and lutein/zeaxanthin.

Nutrition

These colorful root vegetables contain powerful nutrient compounds that help protect against heart disease, birth defects and certain cancers, especially colon cancer. Beets are an excellent source of the B vitamin, folate, and a very good source of manganese and potassium, as well as dietary fiber, vitamin C, magnesium, iron, copper and phosphorus.

Selection and Storage

- Choose small or medium-sized beets whose roots are firm, smooth-skinned and deep in color. Smaller, younger beets may be so tender that peeling won't be needed after they are cooked.
- Avoid beets that have spots, bruises or soft, wet areas, all of which indicate spoilage. Shriveled or flabby should also be avoided as these are signs that the roots are aged, tough and fibrous.
- While the quality of the greens does not reflect that of the roots, if you are going to consume this very nutritious part of the plant, look for greens that appear fresh, tender, and have a lively green color.



- Store beets unwashed in the refrigerator crisper where they will keep for two to four weeks. Cut the majority of the greens and their stems from the roots, so they do not pull away moisture away from the root. Leave about two inches of the stem attached to prevent the roots from "bleeding." Store the unwashed greens in a separate plastic bag where they will keep fresh for about four days.
- Raw beets do not freeze well since they tend to become soft upon thawing. Freezing cooked beets is fine.

Preparation Tips

- Cook beets lightly. Studies show beets' anti-cancer activity is diminished by heat.
- Don't peel beets until after cooking. When bruised or pierced, beets bleed, losing some of their vibrant color and turning a duller brownish red. To minimize bleeding, wash beets gently under cool running water, taking care not to tear the skin since this tough outer layer helps keep most of beets' pigments inside the vegetable. To prevent bleeding when boiling beets, leave them whole with their root ends and one inch of stem attached.
- Beets' color can be modified during cooking. Adding an acidic ingredient such as lemon juice or vinegar will brighten the color while an alkaline substance such as baking soda will often cause them to turn a deeper purple. Salt will blunt beets' color, so add only at the end of cooking if needed.
- Since beet juice can stain your skin, wearing kitchen gloves is a good idea when handling beets. If your hands become stained during the cleaning and cooking process, simply rubbing some lemon juice on them will remove the stain.

A Few Quick Serving Ideas:

- Add chunks of beet when roasting vegetables in the oven.
- Serving homemade vegetable juice? A quarter of a beet will turn any green drink into a sweet pink concoction.
- Healthy sauté beet greens with other braising greens such as chard and mustard greens.
- Marinate steamed beets in fresh lemon juice, olive oil, and fresh herbs.

Roasted Beet Salad with Crumbled Feta

1 bunch red beets
 1 bunch golden beets
 ¼ cup crumbled feta cheese
 1 cup microgreens or baby greens, rinsed and dried
 ½ cup extra virgin olive oil
 1 lemon
 Kosher salt, to taste



1. Tear or cut the beet tops from the beets, leaving about an inch of stalk attached. Wash and thoroughly dry the beets.
2. Place beets in a roasting pan or on a flat baking pan or sheet pan. Drizzle with a bit of extra virgin olive oil and sprinkle with kosher salt. Roast in a preheated 400° F oven for 30-45 minutes, depending on size and the desired doneness. Test for doneness after about 30 minutes of cooking by piercing the largest beet with a knife. If the knife easily enters the beet with only a small amount of resistance, it's done. And the smaller ones will be, too.
3. Remove from oven and let cool for 20 minutes or so.
4. Slip the skins off the beets by hand. They should slip off easily, but you can use a paring knife on any stubborn spots. Just be careful not to cut away too much beet.
5. Cut the beets into ½-inch dice and toss in a stainless steel mixing bowl with enough olive oil to coat them.
6. Cut the lemon in half and squeeze the juice of about half of it in to the bowl, gently stirring to combine and checking the flavor as you go. Season to taste with kosher salt.
7. Whisk together 3 tablespoons olive oil and 1 tablespoon lemon juice and toss the greens in this dressing.
8. Spoon the beet mixture onto the center of a salad plate and top each portion with about 1 tablespoon of crumbled feta cheese and about ¼ cup of the dressed greens. Serve right away. *Makes about 4 appetizer-sized portions.*

Wilted Spinach or Lettuce Salad

1-pound fresh spinach or lettuce, washed, dried, chilled
 8 slices bacon, diced
 1-tablespoon brown sugar
 1/3 cup sliced green onions
 salt, to taste
 3 tablespoons vinegar
 1/4 teaspoon dry mustard

In a heavy skillet, fry diced bacon until crisp. Reduce heat; add sugar, onions, salt, vinegar, and dry mustard; bring to a boil. Pour the hot mixture over greens. Toss lightly and serve.

Beet and Cabbage Borscht

1 cup dried cannelloni other small white beans
6 large beets (about 2 lbs.)
2 tablespoons olive oil, vegetable oil, or butter
2 medium onions, halved and thinly sliced
1 teaspoon salt, plus more to taste
3 cloves garlic, minced (optional)
1 head green, Savoy, or Napa cabbage, cored and thinly sliced or shredded
2 teaspoons caraway seeds
8 cups chicken, beef, or vegetable broth
Lemon juice to taste
Plain yogurt or sour cream for garnish (optional)
Fresh chopped dill for garnish (optional)



1. Put beans in a large pot and add cold water to cover generously. Bring to a boil, cover, turn off heat, and let sit 1 hour. Drain and return beans to pot. Cover again with cold water, bring to a boil, reduce heat to keep a simmer and cook until beans are tender to the bite, about 20 minutes. Drain and set aside.
2. Meanwhile, preheat oven to 350°. Wrap beets in a large sheet of foil, place on a baking sheet, and cook until tender when pierced with a fork, about 45 minutes.
3. Let beets sit until cool enough to handle. Peel (skins should slip off after being roasted) and grate on the large-hole side of a box grater. Set aside.
4. In a large pot over medium-high heat add oil, onions, and salt. Cook, stirring occasionally, until onions are soft, about 3 minutes. Add garlic, if using, and cook until fragrant, about 1 minute. Add cabbage, stir to combine, and cook, stirring occasionally, until cabbage wilts, 3 to 5 minutes. Add caraway seeds and beets. Stir to combine and add broth. Bring to a boil, reduce heat to maintain a steady simmer, add beans, and cook until vegetables are tender and flavors blend, 15 to 20 minutes.
5. Add salt and lemon juice to taste. Serve hot, with a dollop of yogurt or sour cream and a sprinkle of dill, if you like.

Pickled Beets

12 to 16 small beets
1/2-cup sugar
1 1/4 cup vinegar
1 tablespoon whole pickling spices

1. Wash beets well; cut off leaves about an inch above beets. Cook in boiling water for about 30 to 40 minutes, or until tender.
2. Cool; rub off skins, trim, and slice.
3. Combine sugar and vinegar in a medium saucepan. Tie spices in a small piece of cheesecloth and place in saucepan. Simmer for 15 minutes; add sliced beets and bring to a boil.
4. Discard spices and chill pickled beets before serving. *Recipe for pickled beets serves 6.*

Spinach Salad

1-pound fresh spinach
2 tablespoons vinegar
1/4-cup olive oil
pinch of sugar
salt and pepper
1 avocado, diced
8 slices bacon
2 hard-cooked eggs, chopped

1. Wash and trim spinach; pat dry with paper towels. Combine vinegar, oil, sugar, salt, and pepper in large bowl; add avocado cubes, coating well with the dressing.
2. Fry bacon until crisp; drain and reserve drippings. Break bacon into large pieces; toss spinach, chopped eggs, and bacon with avocado and dressing. Pour 3 to 5 tablespoons bacon drippings over the salad. Toss spinach salad again and serve immediately. *Serves 4.*

Orange Blossom French Toast

3 large eggs
Rind of 1 orange, finely grated
1/3 cup orange juice
1/2 teaspoon orange extract
6 slices day-old white bread
2 large navel oranges
2 tablespoons (1/4 stick) unsalted butter
1-tablespoon light brown sugar
2 tablespoons canola oil

1. Beat together the eggs, orange zest, juice, and orange extract in a baking dish large enough to hold the bread slices in a single layer. Dip both sides of each bread slice into the egg mixture. Arrange the bread slices in a single layer in the dish and let the bread soak up all the egg mixture, about 10 minutes.
2. Meanwhile, peel the oranges, being careful to remove all the white membrane around the outside. Using a sharp knife, separate the oranges into sections, cutting between the inner membranes. Discard the membranes and any accumulated juice.
3. Melt 1 tablespoon of the butter and the brown sugar in a small saucepan over low heat. When the mixture foams, add the orange sections and cook, stirring, just until heated through, about 3 minutes. Remove the orange sauce from the heat, cover, and keep warm.
4. Heat the oil in a large skillet or brush it onto a large griddle over medium heat. Add the remaining 1-tablespoon butter. When the butter foams, add the bread slices and cook until golden brown, turning once, about 5 minutes per side. Serve immediately with the orange sauce. *Serves 2.*

Spinach Pesto Sauce

4 cups washed, torn spinach leaves, stems removed, well packed, 16 to 24 ounces
3 garlic cloves, halved
3 tablespoons pine nuts
1/2 teaspoon dried leaf basil, crumbled
1/4-cup extra virgin olive oil
1/3 cup grated Parmesan cheese
1/8 tsp. salt
hot, cooked spaghetti

1. Place a few spinach leaves, garlic, pine nuts, basil and a little oil in blender or food processor container. Cover and puree until leaves begin to look crushed. Continue adding spinach leaves a few at a time with small amounts of oil to blender, using a rubber spatula to help to combine pureed mixture.
2. Add Parmesan cheese and 1/8 tsp. salt. Cover and process until spinach pesto mixture is smooth.
3. Meanwhile, cook pasta according to package directions; drain in colander. Serve with the spinach pesto sauce.

Creole Orange Rice

1-tablespoon olive oil
1 cup chopped yellow onions
3/4-teaspoon salt
1/4 teaspoon ground red pepper (cayenne)
1 medium navel orange, peeled and chopped
1 bay leaf
1 cup long-grain white rice
2 cups water

1. In a large saucepan over medium heat, sauté the onions in the olive oil for 5 minutes, stirring frequently, until they begin to soften and turn translucent. Sprinkle the onions with the salt and cayenne and continue cooking for an addition 2 minutes.
2. Add the remaining ingredients to the pan, turn the heat to high, and bring the mixture to a simmer. Cover the pan, reduce the heat to the lowest setting, and cook for 20 minutes. Remove the bay leaf and stir before serving.

