



Cal Poly Organic Farm

Community Supported Agriculture Newsletter

www.calpolyorgfarm.com

CPOF ANNOUNCEMENTS

* **Memorial Day is this week, Monday, May 26!** CSA members who normally pick-up their veggies on Monday will instead get their boxes on Tuesday, the 27th. Thursday pick-ups will be unchanged.

* **CAL POLY ORGANIC FARM SUMMER CSA STARTS JUNE 16!** Both 10- and 14-week shares will be available. Sign up forms can be found at our website, located at www.calpolyorgfarm.com.

For those of you who signed up for the 24-week CSA season and opted for the payment plan, your second payment will be due no later than June 30, 2008. If you have any questions regarding your membership status or the balance you owe, please call the Cal Poly Organic Farm at 756-6139.

* The **Shea Green Expo** is coming to Trilogy Central Coast on Saturday, May 31 from 11 a.m. to 3 p.m. Select local businesses and organizations will be there to display and sell green products and share information about environmental services and programs at no charge. The Cal Poly Organic Farm will be having a booth at the event. The new Monarch Club will offer food, beverages and entertainment. Call Susan McDonald at 788-4430 for reservations or more information.

Driving Directions to Trilogy Central Coast: Take U.S. 101 south to the Tefft St. exit in Nipomo. Turn right on Tefft. Go to Pomeroy Rd. (signal light) and turn right. Follow Pomeroy to Willow Road and turn left. Follow Pomeroy to Via Concha and turn left. You will drive into the Trilogy Central Coast community. Follow signs to the Monarch Club/Trilogy model homes.

* **The Importance of Food Choices:** Cal Poly's Student Community Services and HopeDance Films are collaboratively hosting *The Real Dirt on Farmer John* at The Sandwich Factory on the Cal Poly campus on Wednesday, May 28th starting at 8 p.m.

This is the story of Farmer John, known as a pariah within his community, who transforms his farm into a place of free expression and revolutionary agriculture amidst the failing economy, arson, and vicious gossip circles. Films are free and open to the public. For more information, please contact Tracy Owens at towens@calpoly.edu (or call 310-938-0709) or HopeDance at <http://www.hopedance.org> (or call 805-544-9663).

Week 8 Produce

May 25 – May 31, 2008

Full Shares expect 10-12 items

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

Carrots - Shredded raw carrots and chopped carrot greens make great additions to salads.

Bunched onions - All onions should be stored away from potatoes, as they will absorb their moisture and ethylene gas, causing them to spoil more readily.

Kale - Before eating or cooking, wash the kale leaves thoroughly under cool running water to remove any sand or dirt that may remain in the leaves.

Red or Green cabbage - If you need to store a partial head of cabbage, cover it tightly with plastic wrap and refrigerate.

Spinach - The nutrients in spinach can also help with conditions in which inflammation plays a role.

Leeks - With a more delicate and sweeter flavor than onions, leeks add a subtle touch to recipes without overpowering the other flavors that are present.

Parsley - Use parsley in soups and tomato sauces.

Turnips (mixed) - Turnips are an ancient vegetable that is thought to have been cultivated almost 4,000 years ago in the Near East.

Cauliflower - Cauliflower florets are the part of the plant that most people eat. However, the stem and leaves are edible too and are especially good for adding to soup stocks.

Beets (no tops) - Marinate steamed beets in fresh lemon juice, olive oil, and fresh herbs.

Kohlrabi - Slice, dice, or grate, and add to salads. Use on raw vegetable platters or serve with a creamy dip. Substitute in recipes calling for radishes.

Sugar Snap Peas (TKP Farms) - Thin sugar snap puree with extra virgin olive oil, add a little lemon juice and seasonings to create a tasty salad dressing.

Broccoli (Boni-Pak) - Sprinkle lemon juice and sesame seeds over lightly steamed broccoli.

Strawberries (A&A Farms) - Mix chopped strawberries with cinnamon, lemon juice and maple syrup and serve as a topping for waffles and pancakes.

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

VEGETABLE OF THE WEEK: PEAS

Food historians express differing opinions on the exact homeland of peas that are part of the legume family. The general consensus is that peas could have originated in the region that spans from the Near or Middle East across to Central Asia. Peas were one of the earliest cultivated food crops. Cultivation brought stability to once nomadic tribes, a factor that made it possible for peas to be brought by travelers into the countries of the Mediterranean as well as to the Far East.

The Greeks and Romans were cultivating this legume about 500 to 400 BCE. During that era, vendors in the streets of Athens were selling hot pea soup. Apparently take-out foods are not a modern-day innovation after all. The question remains of how peas arrived in Greece. Scholars ponder whether they traveled from the area around Switzerland southward into Greece, or whether they arrived via an eastward route from India.

During the Middle Ages, dried peas became a staple food of the European peasants. In their dried form peas had the capability of long storage throughout the winter months. They were inexpensive and plentiful and made a filling wholesome meal the poor could afford.

The familiar garden pea was readily accepted and quickly became popular in Europe during the 16th century. Some areas of France became so well known for their extraordinary little peas that the names of the towns of Saint-Germain and Clamart were attached to the names of recipes that incorporated the little peas.

Peas became a familiar Lenten dish not only in France, but in England, too. Lent was not the only time that peas were a staple on the English menu. During the mid-1700's, major changes occurred in England's agricultural laws, designating large plots of farmland to private farming estates. King George III's Enclosures Act denied access to the poor, who relied on small pieces of land to grow enough to feed their families. Unable to grow their own vegetables, they turned to simple foods like dried peas that could be purchased cheaply.

Thomas Jefferson, elected third president of the United States in 1800, was an avid gardener. He thought so highly of peas that he and James Hemings, his slave-chef who was trained in Paris, planted 30 varieties of them. Peas, apparently, were his favorite vegetable. During his presidency, he sent orders to his gardener to cultivate a particular plot and devote that area "to Ravenscroft peas, which you will find in a canister in my closet."

During colonial times in Southern United States peas provided nutritious sustenance. In fact, peas took precedence over beans and appeared in dishes like Hoppin' John that was a favorite of both the poor and the rich. In an effort to tempt new colonists to settle in the South, one writer boasted the land was so fertile that peas grew ten inches in ten days.

Peas come to market fresh, frozen, canned, or dried. Here are some of the more common varieties:

- ◆ English Green or Garden peas or Shelling peas (*Pisum sativum*): This variety is commonly grown in home gardens where they are picked fresh and eaten raw or cooked. When consumed soon after picking, they are very sweet. However, their sugar content turns to starch rather quickly and some sweetness is lost.
- ◆ Field peas: At one time this variety was bestowed the scientific name *S. arvense*. Later it was decided the field pea was just another variety of the cultivated English pea that was left to revert back to its wild form. Its present scientific name is *S. sativum var. arvense*. While this variety is rarely available in the supermarket in its fresh form, it can be found in dried form sold either in packages or in bulk.
- ◆ Snow peas or Chinese peas (*P. sativum macrocarpum*): Most of us are aware of the thin, almost flat pea pods that are a common ingredient in Chinese dishes, either very lightly cooked or eaten raw. Inside the flat pod are tiny flat peas. They are sweet, crisp, and bright green in color and have become so popular that most supermarkets will have them in their specialty produce sections.
- ◆ Sugar Snap peas: A cross between Snow peas and English Green peas, these crunchy, sweet, succulent pods are usually eaten raw in their entirety. The peas inside are fully developed, plump, round, and delicious. The French called them mange-tout, translated as "eat the whole thing."



Selection and Storage

- ◆ When selecting fresh peas, look for pods that are bright green, shiny, plump, and moist. When the pods have a dull, lusterless look about them, they are old, have lost moisture, and have very likely lost their flavor as well as many of their nutrients. Purchase 3 pounds of shelling peas to make 4 servings as a side dish.
- ◆ Use fresh peas as quickly as possible, either by cooking or eating raw. The sugar content of shelling peas begins to turn to starch within hours after harvesting. If stored for too many days, they lose their sweetness, leaving them with a bland, starchy flavor.

- ◆ The supermarket may have shelling peas in the spring, but by the time the peas reach the market they may be several days old and have lost a great deal of sweetness. Sugar snap peas, on the other hand, cling to their sugar stores and almost always retain their exceptional sweetness unless they are old and dried up. Snow peas have become so popular they can be found year round in supermarket chains as well as Asian markets. Select those that are crisp and bright green. Avoid snow peas that are wilted, limp, shriveled, and yellowish in color. These are no longer fresh and will have lost their flavor and much of their nutritional value.
- ◆ Store sugar peas and snow peas in a plastic bag in the refrigerator. Most will keep up to one week, but are best when consumed within 3 days.

Nutrition

This food is very low in saturated fat, cholesterol and sodium. It is also a good source of riboflavin, Vitamin B6, pantothenic acid, magnesium, phosphorus and potassium, and a very good source of dietary fiber, Vitamin A, Vitamin C, Vitamin K, thiamin, folate, iron and manganese.



Preparation Tips

- ◆ Fresh shelling peas, sugar snap peas, and snow peas can all be eaten raw. Shelling peas do not have edible pods, while sugar snaps and snow peas can be eaten pods and all.
- ◆ Break open the pods of the shelling peas, also called peas in a pod, run the thumb along the edge where the peas are attached to the pod to loosen them, and collect the peas in a bowl or cooking pot.
- ◆ Sugar snap peas and snow peas have strings, but whether or not they are removed is a personal choice or habit, not an obligation. The only thing that you may want to remove if the growers did not is the calyx or cap at one end.

A Few Quick Serving Ideas:

- ◆ One bite into a crisp, fresh sugar snap pea or snow pea will reassure one that nature provides us well. The sweet, succulent flavor brings instant pleasure. The only preparation these peas require is washing. Both varieties are ideal in salads and raw soups.
- ◆ Puree sugar snaps to create a delicious dip or filling to wrap in a lettuce leaf. Season the puree with a little cayenne and use the puree as a zesty topping.
- ◆ The pod of the snow pea makes an ideal appetizer with a filling of a chunky or pureed mixture of seasoned vegetables and sprouted grains.
- ◆ Try boiling snap peas for about 3 minutes and refreshing them in ice water to set their bright color, and then use them in a stir-fry with other vegetables. They can also be cooked on their own with butter and herbs or put into cold preparations like pasta salads. You can also prepare peas by blanching them for no more than a minute in boiling water. Drain them and cool them promptly in cold water, and they are ready to be added to salads and pasta dishes.

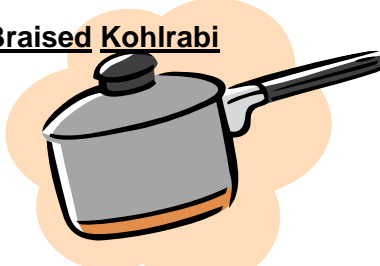
Sugar Snap Peas

1/2 pound sugar snap peas
 1 tablespoon olive oil
 1 tablespoon chopped shallots
 1 teaspoon chopped fresh thyme
 kosher salt to taste

1. Spread sugar snap peas in a single layer on a medium baking sheet, and brush with olive oil. Sprinkle with shallots, thyme, and kosher salt.
2. Bake 6 to 8 minutes in a preheated 450°F oven, until tender but firm. *4 servings.*

Braised Kohlrabi

2 tablespoons butter
 3 to 4 medium kohlrabi
 2 cloves garlic, minced
 1 cup chicken broth, or to cover
 1 tablespoon lemon juice
 Salt and pepper, to taste



1. Heat butter in a medium saucepan over medium-low heat. Slice kohlrabi into thin strips. Sauté kohlrabi in the butter with garlic for about 2 to 3 minutes.
2. Add chicken broth and lemon juice. Cover and simmer for 20 minutes, or until kohlrabi is tender. Add salt and pepper, to taste. *Serves 4.*

Kohlrabi and Apple Salad with Creamy Mustard Dressing

1/2 cup heavy cream
2 tablespoons fresh lemon juice
1 tablespoon coarse-grained mustard
3 tablespoons finely chopped fresh parsley leaves
1/2 teaspoon sugar
2 bunches kohlrabi (about 2 pounds), bulbs peeled and cut into julienne strips, stems and leaves discarded
1 Granny Smith apple

3. Place the kohlrabi and 1/2 teaspoon salt in a saucepan. Cover with water, and bring to a boil over medium-high heat. Cook until kohlrabi can be pierced with a fork, but remains firm, about 5 minutes. Drain, reserving 1 cup of cooking water. Place kohlrabi in a bowl, and cover.
4. Place the butter into the same saucepan, and melt over medium heat. Whisk in the flour, and stir until the mixture becomes paste-like and golden brown. Gradually whisk the milk and reserved cooking water from the kohlrabi into the flour mixture, stirring until thick and smooth. Stir in the cream, 1 teaspoon salt, nutmeg, white pepper, and parsley until well blended. Continue whisking until sauce thickens, then cook 10 minutes more. Stir in the kohlrabi, tossing to coat evenly with sauce. *8 servings.*

Turnips with Bread Crumbs and Parsley

4 small turnips (about 3/4 pound), peeled
1 tablespoon unsalted butter
2 tablespoons fresh bread crumbs
2 teaspoons minced fresh parsley leaves
1/2 teaspoon freshly grated lemon zest



1. In a large saucepan of salted boiling water cook turnips 15 minutes and drain. When turnips are cool enough to handle, cut each into 8 wedges.
2. In a large skillet cook turnips in butter over moderate heat, stirring occasionally, until almost tender and golden on the edges, about 10 minutes. Stir in bread crumbs, parsley, zest, and salt and pepper to taste and cook, stirring occasionally, until turnips are tender, about 5 minutes. *Serves 2.*

Kale with Garlic and Bacon

2 1/2 pounds kale (about 4 bunches), tough stems and center ribs cut off and discarded
10 bacon slices (1/2 lb), cut into 1/2-inch pieces
4 garlic cloves, finely chopped
2 cups water

1. Stack a few kale leaves and roll lengthwise into a cigar shape. Cut crosswise into 1/4-inch-wide strips with a sharp knife. Repeat with remaining leaves. If using small leaves, just coarsely chop them.
2. Cook bacon in a wide 6- to 8-quart heavy pot over moderate heat, stirring occasionally, until crisp, then transfer with a slotted spoon to paper towels to drain.
3. Pour off and discard all but 3 tablespoons fat from pot, then cook garlic in remaining fat over moderately low heat, stirring, until pale golden, about 30 seconds. Add kale (pot will be full) and cook, turning with tongs, until wilted and bright green, about 1 minute. Add water and simmer, partially covered, until just tender, 6 to 10 minutes. Toss with bacon and salt and pepper to taste. *Makes 8 servings.*

Cole Slaw With Creamy Tangy Dressing

1 medium head green cabbage
1 carrot, shredded
1 tablespoon minced onion
1 1/4 cups mayonnaise
1/3 cup sugar
1/4 cup vinegar
1/4 teaspoon celery seed
1/4 teaspoon ground black pepper, or to taste
salt, to taste



1. Shred cabbage into a large bowl; add shredded carrot and onion.
2. Combine mayonnaise, sugar, vinegar, and celery seed. Whisk or shake in a jar. Taste and adjust seasonings, adding salt and pepper to taste, or more mayonnaise and a bit more vinegar if too sweet for your taste.
3. Add dressing to the shredded cabbage mixture until well moistened. Refrigerate to chill thoroughly. *Serves 6 to 8.*