



Cal Poly Organic Farm Community Supported Agriculture Newsletter

Welcome to Week 23! As always, life on the farm is grand!

Greetings CSA Members,

Mandarins from the Cal Poly Citrus Project have been included in the boxes this week as part of your share. We wanted to provide a bit of information to pique your interest in this new product as well as elaborate on how they were grown. We hope you enjoy the tasty tree candy as much as we do and as always welcome your feedback.

The Cal Poly Organic Farm welcomes relationships with other Cal Poly enterprises that are led by educators who are mindful of sustainable agricultural practices. Mark Welch, M.S. in Agriculture, manages Cal Poly's Avocado, Citrus and Wine grape production for the campus and promotes sustainable farming practices through these projects. In working with colleagues and students, the team identifies and applies the most environmentally sound and economically sustainable farming practices, while maintaining and/or improving the quality and flavor of Cal Poly's avocado, citrus and wine grapes. The mandarin tangerines are very popular with the community. "We compost and mulch the trees every year and teach students about the need for soil biodiversity in disease and pest control," Mark explained. Mandarin plantings are between 5-10 years of age and are farmed using the following principles of sustainable farming practices:

- Promote healthy soils
- Rely on natural mechanisms as first line of defense against pests and diseases
- Promote biological control for insect pests
- Reduce reliance on pesticides

Mark stated that he is confident in leading the charge for the university to be a model for sustainable fruit and wine grape growers. He is knowledgeable about biodynamic practices and is a part of the sustainable viticulture group, Central Coast Vineyard Team. It is important to promote the public trust of stewardship for natural resources. Enjoy your mandarins which are also available at Farmers' Market on Thursday night.

Fall/Winter Season 2006 - 2007

Week 23 Produce

18 February - 24 February

*Pistachios - NPO
Mandarins - Cal Poly Citrus
Beets - CPOF (full only)
Butternut or Jarradale/French
Pumpkin - CPOF
Cilantro - CPOF (full only)
Collards - CPOF
Napa or Green Cabbage - CPOF
Parsley - CPOF
Radishes - CPOF (full only)
Spinach - CPOF
Tat Soi - CPOF
Turnips - CPOF

* Certified Organic

Vegetable of the Week



Parsley

Parsley is the world's most popular herb. It derives its name from the Greek word meaning “rock celery”.

Parsley (*Petroselinum crispum* and *P. sativum*) is a member of the Apiaceae or Umbelliferae family of plants. It is a hardy biennial herb native to Mediterranean lands. The family Apiaceae contains 300–400 genera of plants found in a wide variety of habitats, mostly in northern temperate regions. Most are aromatic herbs with feathery leaves. The flowers are often arranged in a conspicuous umbel (a flat-topped cluster). Many species are poisonous, including poison hemlock. Popular members of the family include carrot, celery, parsnip, and fennel. Species used as herbs and spices include anise, dill, coriander, caraway, and cumin (*Cuminum cyminum*).

MYTHS AND SUPERSTITION

There is an old superstition against transplanting parsley plants. In ancient times parsley was dedicated to Persephone, the wife of Hades and goddess of the underworld. Parsley is slow to germinate. Folk legend explains this characteristic with the myth that parsley must first visit Hades seven times before it may freely germinate and flourish on the earth. It was also believed that the herb would flourish only in gardens where a strong woman presides over the household.

Parsley was used as a ceremonial herb in ancient Greek and Roman cultures; it was reputed to have sprung from the blood of a Greek hero, Archemorus, the forerunner of death. The Greeks sprinkled parsley on corpses to cover the stench, planted it on the graves of loved ones, and made wreaths with it for adorning tombs. Greek gardens were often bordered with Parsley and Rue. Though the Greeks did not eat parsley, according to Homer warriors fed parsley leaves to chariot horses and victorious athletes at the Isthmian games were crowned with chaplets of Parsley. Roman gladiators ate parsley before facing foes in the arena.

In the Middle Ages parsley was known as merry parsley and was credited with lethal powers. It was believed that one could bring certain death to an adversary by pulling a parsley root from the earth while calling out the enemy's name.

Though the medicinal virtues of Parsley are still recognized, in former times it was considered a remedy for more disorders than it is now used for. Its imagined quality of destroying poison was probably attributed to the plant from its remarkable power of overcoming strong scents, even the odor of garlic becomes almost imperceptible when mingled with that of Parsley.

Parsley is said to be fatal to small birds and a deadly poison to parrots, also very injurious to fowls, but hares and rabbits will come from a great distance seeking it. Sheep are also fond of parsley, and it is said to protect them from foot-rot, if given to them in sufficient quantities.

NUTRITION INFORMATION

Parsley contains three times as much vitamin C as oranges, twice as much iron as spinach, is rich in vitamin A and contains folate, potassium and calcium. What's more, parsley is also recognized for its cancer-fighting potential. Some of the potent chemicals in parsley include:

- **Polyacetylenes**, which seem to protect against certain cancer-causing substances found in tobacco smoke. It may also help to regulate the body's production of prostaglandin, which is a powerful tumor promoter.
- **Coumarins**, which help prevent blood clotting, reducing your risk of arterial blockages that can lead to heart attacks.
- **Flavonoids**, some of which act as anti-oxidants that neutralize dangerous free radicals, others that have been shown to prevent or slow the development of some cancers.
- **Monoterpenes**, which are thought to have cancer-delaying properties, especially with breast tumors, and to reduce cholesterol.

The following information was taken from the Encyclopedia of Alternative Medicine:

General Use

Parsley's taproot, leaves, and seeds are used medicinally. Parsley's volatile oil, particularly the oil from the seed, contains the chemicals apiole, also known as parsley camphor, and myristicin in varying quantities depending on the variety of parsley. These constituents are diuretic, and also act as uterine stimulants. The diuretic effect of parsley appears to be related to increased retention of potassium in the small intestine.

Internal Uses

In folk tradition, parsley has been used to promote menstruation, facilitate childbirth, and increase female libido. Its emmenagogic properties can bring on delayed menstruation. Parsley juice also inhibits the secretion of histamine; it is useful in treating hives and relieving other allergy symptoms. A decoction of parsley root can help eliminate bloating and reduce weight by eliminating excess water gain. Parsley has also been used traditionally as a liver tonic and as a means of breaking up kidney stones. The German Commission E, an advisory panel on herbal medicines, has approved parsley for use in the prevention and treatment of kidney stones. The saponin content of parsley may help relieve coughs. Parsley root is laxative and its carminative action can relieve flatulence and colic. Parsley is rich in vitamins and minerals, including A and C, as well as calcium, thiamin, riboflavin, niacin, zinc, potassium, and iron. The boron and fluorine in parsley give strength to the bones. Parsley's high chlorophyll content makes this beneficial herb a natural as a tasty breath freshener.

External Uses

The freshly gathered leaves of parsley have been used as a poultice to relieve breast tenderness in lactating women. Parsley poultices may also soothe tired, irritated eyes, and speed the healing of bruises. The juice will relieve the itch and sting of insect bites, and serves well as a mosquito repellent. A juice-soaked gauze pad can be applied to relieve earache or toothache, or used as a face wash to lighten freckles. The powdered seeds, sprinkled on the hair and massaged into the scalp for three days, are a folk remedy said to stimulate hair growth. Parsley has also been used as a hair rinse in efforts to eradicate head lice.

Precautions

A chemical found in the oil-rich seeds of parsley has abortifacient properties. For this reason, women should not use parsley during pregnancy or lactation. Parsley irritates the epithelial tissues of the kidney, increasing blood flow and filtration rate; therefore persons with kidney disease should not take this herb internally without consultation with a qualified herbalist or physician. According to the *PDR for Herbal Medicine*, the daily dose of parsley in medicinal preparations is 2.1 oz (6 g). Parsley's volatile oil is toxic in high doses, and overdose can lead to poisonings.

Side Effects

Parsley contains furocoumarins—compounds that can cause photosensitivity in fair-skinned persons exposed to sunlight after "intensive skin contact" with the freshly harvested herb. Parsley may also cause allergy in sensitive persons.

Interactions

No interactions have been reported between parsley and standard allopathic medications.

RECIPES Using Parsley

Pasta and Chickpeas

with plenty of parsley and garlic Serves 4

For pasta, the organic whole wheat shells made by Bionaturae in Italy are suggested as their flavor is robust enough to stand up to the chickpeas. There are lots of ways to play with this dish – see the variations after the instructions – and it's vegan if you don't add the cheese.

- 1 tablespoon olive oil, plus extra to finish
- ½ large onion, diced
- a few pinches of hot red pepper flakes
- 1 ½ cups cooked chickpeas or 1 15-ounce can, liquid reserved
- 1 big bunch of flat-leaf parsley, the leaves stripped from the stems
- 3 plump garlic cloves
- small handful sage leaves
- salt and pepper
- ¾ pound whole wheat pasta shells
- freshly grated Parmesan

1. Bring a large pot of water to the boil for the pasta.
2. Heat the oil in a wide skillet and add the onion and pepper flakes. Cook for a few minutes, then add the chickpeas. While they're warming, chop the parsley, garlic, and sage together, then toss a third of it into the pan. Season well with salt and pepper, add a little water or chickpea broth to the pan, and cook slowly, adding more liquid as it cooks away.
3. Salt the pasta water and cook the pasta. When done, drain and toss it with the chickpeas, the rest of the parsley mixture, and extra olive oil to taste. Taste for salt and season with freshly ground pepper. Grate some cheese over the top and serve with additional pepper flakes.

Variations:

- In summer, cut up a few tomatoes and add them at the very end.
- Enliven the dish with some grated lemon zest.
- Dark green or black lentils are a great addition to the chickpeas or use them instead of the chickpeas.
- Mild ricotta or more pungent slivers of ricotta salata are both good in this pasta.

Parsley Salad with Parmesan Serves 4 to 6

- 2 ½ cups parsley leaves
- 1 tablespoon chopped marjoram
- 1 tablespoon chopped mint
- Salt and freshly milled pepper
- Sherry or Lemon Vinaigrette
- Thin shavings of Parmesan or dry Jack

Pluck the parsley from the stems, then wash and dry well. Toss the herbs, a few pinches of salt and pepper to taste, then enough vinaigrette to coat lightly – perhaps 2 tablespoons. Serve covered lightly with thin shavings of cheese.

You can sprinkle this over hot pizza, grilled eggplant, a baked potato, or warm chickpeas. The heat brings out its flavor and softens the leaves. You'll need no more than ½ cup per person.

... And lot of other winter produce also

Winter Squash Lasagna

with sage, walnuts, and kale

Serves 6

The finished squares of squash lasagna are served on a bed of kale.

Begin with the béchamel sauce so that the milk can absorb the flavor of the aromatics, then turn to chopping the squash, onion, and herbs. While the squash is cooking, finish the sauce and compose the dish. You don't need to cook the kale until 30 minutes or so before serving.

3 ½ cups milk	1 cup lightly toasted walnuts or hazelnuts finely chopped
aromatics: 1 garlic clove, 1 slice onion, 1 bay leaf, 1 parsley sprig	sea salt and freshly ground pepper
1 large butternut squash (3 pounds or a little less)	3 ½ tablespoons butter
4 plump garlic cloves	3 ½ tablespoons flour
20 or so sage leaves or 1 ½ tablespoons dried	1 8-ounce package no-boil lasagna noodles
packed ½ cup parsley leaves	1 cup grated Gruyere cheese
½ cup olive oil	1 cup freshly grated Parmesan cheese
1 large onion, cut into ½ inch squares	3 bunches of kale, washed
	pinch of hot red pepper flakes

1. Butter or oil a 9- by 12-inch baking dish. Preheat the oven to 375 F. In a small pot, slowly heat the milk with the aromatics. When it's nearly boiling, cover the pot, turn off the heat, and let it stand.
2. Peel the squash and chop it into a rough dice about ½-inch across or less. Chop 2 of the garlic cloves with the sage and parsley. Heat 2 tablespoons of the oil in a wide skillet or Dutch oven. Add the onion and squash and cook over high heat, stirring frequently, for about 15 minutes. Reduce the heat to medium and continue cooking, stirring occasionally, until the squash is fairly tender and caramelized in places, about 10 minutes longer, then turn off the heat. Season with salt and pepper to taste.
3. Melt the butter in a saucepan and stir in the flour. Reheat the milk and pour it through a strainer into the roux, whisking briskly. Turn the heat to low and cook, stirring occasionally, until the sauce thickens and the flour is cooked, 15 to 20 minutes. Season with ½ teaspoon salt and pepper to taste.
4. Spread ½ cup of the sauce in the baking dish and lay 3 noodles over it. Cover with half the squash mixture, 1 cup of the sauce, half the Gruyere, and a third of the Parmesan. Repeat, then add the third layer of noodles. Spread the remaining sauce over them and top with the remaining Parmesan and tent with foil. (At this point the lasagna can be held in the refrigerator until you're ready to bake it.) Bake for 30 minutes, then remove the foil and continue baking until bubbly and golden, 20 minutes longer. Remove from the oven and let rest while you cook the kale. (Lasagna, once well wrapped, can be frozen for up to a month. Allow it to return to room temperature before baking at 375F.)
5. Strip the kale leaves from their rosy stems and cut them into ½-inch strips. Heat the remaining oil in a skillet, add the rest of the garlic cloves, peeled and crushed, and cook long enough for it to perfume the oil and turn pale gold. Add the pepper flakes and the kale. Season with a few pinches of salt, toss in the pan to coat with the oil, then add 2 cups water. Lower the heat, cover the pan, and cook until the leaves are tender, 12 to 20 minutes, depending on their toughness. Don't undercook. Taste for salt.
6. To serve, divide the kale among 6 plates and top each with a square of the lasagna.

RECIPES using Kiwifruit

Kiwifruit Stacks with Cinnamon Mascarpone



This is an easy elegant desert
Preparation time: 15 minutes

For four servings you will need:

- 4-6 kiwifruit
- 1 orange, rind finely grated rind and juiced
- ¼ cup mascarpone
- ¼ teaspoon ground cinnamon
- 1 teaspoon honey

Peel and slice the kiwifruit into rounds. Sprinkle with orange rind and juice.
Combine the mascarpone with the cinnamon and honey.
Stack the kiwifruit on four flat serving plates and top with a little Cinnamon Mascarpone. Extra ground cinnamon could be sifted over the mascarpone.

Kiwifruit Salsa Verde

Peel 2 kiwi fruit (about 7 oz. total). Cut 1 kiwi fruit into 1/4-inch chunks and place in a bowl. In a blender or food processor, combine remaining kiwi fruit, cut into chunks, 1/4 cup lightly packed fresh cilantro, and 1 tablespoon lime juice. Whirl until puréed; mix with fruit in bowl. Stir in 1 tablespoon minced fresh red jalapeño or Fresno chili and salt to taste.
If making sauce up to 1 day ahead, cover and chill.

Makes about 1 cup
Serving size 1 Tablespoon

NUTRITION PER SERVING:

CALORIES 7(0.0% from fat); FAT 0.0g (sat 0.0g); PROTEIN 0.1g; CHOLESTEROL 0.0mg;
SODIUM 0.8mg; FIBER 0.4g; CARBOHYDRATE 1.7g

Kiwifruit muffins

Yields 12 Servings

¾ cup white flour

½ cup cornmeal

½ cup whole wheat flour

3 teaspoons baking powder

½ cup oil

½ cup sugar

½ cup Kiwifruit, peeled, chopped

2 eggs

½ cup milk

Preheat oven to 400oF, prepare pans, or line them with muffin papers. Sift flour & baking powder into a bowl and add cornmeal, whole wheat flour & sugar. In another bowl beat eggs, oil & milk. Gently stir kiwifruit into wet mixture. Add dry mix to wet mix and stir until JUST combined. Spoon batter into pans & bake at 400F for 15-20 minutes.