

North Creek Community Farm NEWSLETTER

Week One Tuesday, June 14



IN THE BAG:

Lots of lettuce
Arugula
Cilantro (just a little bunch from the hoophouse)
Red Russian Kale
Rhubarb
Spinach
Fresh garlic (use like regular garlic)
Herb pots

WELCOME to the new season for the farm. If you were a member last year, welcome back and if this is your first year, I think you are in for a wonderful adventure of learning about new vegetables and eating some of the freshest produce you have ever had. One thing about farming is that you never know what will happen next with the weather and crops so buckle your seat belt for a great ride!

Already this season has been a Mr. Toad's Wild Ride of weather with lots of ups and downs. Farmers have persuaded plants to produce what we want, but if pushed too far, they decide its survival mode time. They really have one goal in mind, and that is to reproduce and make seeds, tubers or bulbs. This is fine if we are going to eat the tubers as with potatoes but we don't really want spinach seeds, we want their beautiful leaves. This weather, first cold and wet and now very dry and hot and then cold again has them wondering. I hold my breath and hope they stay happy and produce leaves as long as possible. So far so good as you will see in your bag.

Garlic Harvest Festival Update

The Garlic Harvest is scheduled for July 9. That was my best guess in January but the garlic may have other ideas. I will keep you posted. Because of the cool spring, it may not be ready on July 9 and will need another week.

About the vegetables:

We are in for a run of greens that need to be eaten sooner, not later. Wash lettuce and spinach in three rinses of water. Lift the leaves out of the water and then pour it out so that the grit doesn't re-settle on the leaves. Put them in enough water so the dirt can go to the bottom. After you wash it, either spin it dry or wrap it in a clean dishtowel so that it won't sit in water at the bottom of the bag. I like to put Arugula in a salad with goat cheese and toasted walnuts. The kale is good cooked with garlic and then sprinkled with balsamic vinegar. Remove the tough ribs and then sear the kale in a hot pan with olive oil and then add the garlic. Don't add garlic too soon and burn it because it will add a bitter taste to the dish.

The herb pots have rosemary, thyme and basil. They need to be transplanted to a sunny spot in your garden or individual pots for a bright windowsill. Enjoy!

Want more news from the farm? Please follow my Blog at www.nccfnews.blogspot.com or join the "Friends of North Creek Community Farm" on Facebook. I just posted a little video of the greens in the field. Enjoy.

Newsletters can be found on the website shortly after delivery day. They don't always match just what you got in your bag because things change rapidly.

Cannellini and Kale Ragoût

Bon Appétit | March 2004

The oversize croutons add a nice crunch to this warming dish, which is a cross between a soup and a stew. Serve with: Romaine salad with sliced oranges, black olives, and balsamic vinaigrette.

Yield: Makes 4 servings

6 tablespoons extra-virgin olive oil, divided
4 1 1/2-inch-thick slices Italian bread, crusts removed, each slice quartered
1 teaspoon plus 1 tablespoon chopped fresh thyme

3 garlic cloves, finely chopped
1/4 teaspoon dried crushed red pepper
5 cups (packed) thinly sliced kale (about 1 large bunch)
1 14 1/2-ounce can vegetable broth
1 14 1/2-ounce can diced tomatoes with green pepper and onion in juice
1 15-ounce can cannellini (white kidney beans), drained

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Heat 2 tablespoons oil in heavy large pot over medium-high heat. Add bread and 1 teaspoon thyme; cook until bread is golden on both sides, turning with tongs, about 2 minutes total. Transfer croutons to bowl; sprinkle with salt and pepper. Add remaining 4 tablespoons oil, garlic, and crushed red pepper to same pot; sauté over medium heat 30 seconds. Add kale and broth; bring to boil. Reduce heat to medium-low, cover, and simmer until kale wilts, about 5 minutes. Add tomatoes with juice, beans, and remaining 1 tablespoon thyme. Cover and simmer 15 minutes. Season with salt and pepper. Ladle ragout into shallow bowls. Top with croutons and serve.

Test-kitchen tip:

To cut fresh kale easily, roll leaves into cylinders and slice crosswise into 1/4-inch-wide strips.

Arugula Salad with Lemon-Parmesan Dressing

Bon Appétit | April 2009

by Tori Ritchie

It makes a great side dish, but this salad is even better as a pizza topping. Brush the pizza crust with olive oil, sprinkle it with sea salt and shredded mozzarella, then bake. When the pizza comes out of the oven, top it with the salad.

Yield: Makes about 3 1/2 cups

1/3 cup freshly grated Parmesan cheese
5 tablespoons extra-virgin olive oil
2 tablespoons fresh lemon juice
1 teaspoon finely grated lemon peel
4 cups (packed) baby arugula
1 cup halved cherry tomatoes

Blend first 4 ingredients in processor. Season dressing with salt and pepper. Transfer to bowl. Cover; chill up to 3 days.

Combine arugula and tomatoes in large bowl. Toss with enough dressing to coat.