

THE TIPI TIMES

May 27, 2010, week 3 (green EOW)

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THIS WEEK'S BOX CONTAINS:

Asparagus, 1.4 lb.
Spinach, 0.8 lb
White salad turnips
Red bibb lettuce
Green garlic
Arugula
Escarole
Chive flowers

NEXT WEEK'S BOX WILL PROBABLY CONTAIN:*

Strawberries??, asparagus,
spinach, Romaine lettuce,
white salad turnips,
scallions and more

*depending on weather, critters &
other forces of nature.

EVOLVING CSA. I suppose it's time to introduce ourselves. In the first two newsletters, I focused on recipes and how to handle the produce. I am sure that new members are curious about the farm they have joined. You should be curious, as we will be choosing what you eat for the next 23 weeks. Don't worry, we put a lot of thought into what we send you. We are Beth Kazmar and Steve Pincus, owners of Tipi Produce. Together with our crew of farm hands, we raise 50 acres of fresh organic vegetables. We are fortunate to have a group of employees who enjoy this work (and enjoy working together). This year, only two of our 23 employees are new, the rest having from two to 14 years experience working with us.

When we began our CSA in 2004, we packed just 45 CSA boxes per week, using a tiny fraction of the total produce we raised. Our other crops were sold to natural food stores and markets in Madison, Milwaukee and Chicago. We will pack 500 CSA boxes per week this year. It is a big increase but the CSA has developed over seven years, so the change sounds more dramatic than it feels. What has changed is the relevance of the CSA to our farm. The CSA used to be a footnote on our farm, a novelty for our hardworking crew. An employee and I packed the boxes on a strip of concrete between the coolers. Basically, we were in everyone's way, and they were dismissive of the tiny amounts of produce we used. We've poured a lot of new concrete since then, and have a packing room dedicated to the CSA. Now, the CSA uses half of our produce during the growing season. That gets everyone's attention. We still sell a lot

of produce to natural food stores, eg. Willy Street and the Outpost coops. But increasingly we think of ourselves as a CSA farm first. Welcome aboard.

Beth

TENTATIVE STRAWBERRY U-PICK DATE

Here is a tentative date for our strawberry u-pick and farm party:

Sunday June 13, in the morning.

We will confirm or change this date as the strawberry crop develops. Strawberry ripening depends on the weather, so we cannot predict the u-pick date too far in advance. We might offer strawberry picking over two weekends. It all depends on the berries. Watch this newsletter for announcements.

FARM NEWS and VEGGIE NOTES. We were thrilled that over one inch of rain fell on Tuesday. We needed the rain and were going to have to irrigate soon, which is a big job. We are less thrilled about how much mud splashed into the vegetables. Wash your asparagus and greens very carefully. The asparagus grew quickly in the hot weather, so we have almost a pound and a half for each share this week.

Spinach - The spinach this week can be used for either salads or cooking.

Chive flowers - Chive flowers are tasty and make a beautiful garnish. They taste just like ... chives. Taste a floret and you'll understand. Pull the flowers apart and sprinkle over salads, omelettes, soups, etc. They can be sautéed briefly in cooked dishes. If you intend to eat the chives, you should refrigerate them. If you prefer, you can keep them as a bouquet.

White salad turnips (bunched white roots with green tops) - I know that returning members look forward to these sweet and delicious turnips, which taste nothing like the turnips that are harvested in fall.

Uses: Both the turnip roots and tops are edible. Slice the sweet roots and add to salads. They can be cooked and are especially good if lightly sautéed in butter. Stir as little as possible so they brown on at least one side. Treat the tops like any cooking green. They are easily combined with some of the other cooking greens we sent this week (spinach, arugula, escarole).

Storage: Refrigerate in a plastic bag.

Escarole (large green head that looks like lettuce) - This member of the chicory family can be eaten raw or cooked. Its slightly bitter flavor is a good addition to mixed salads. It is excellent cooked alone or mixed with other greens. It cooks quickly, but not as quickly as spinach. Refrigerate.

SPRING GREENS IN ABUNDANCE Our spring boxes are always filled with greens because that's what grows well in spring weather. If you are new to eating greens, this is the time of year to try them, as they are tender and mild. New CSA members occasionally ask if we plan to send this many greens all year. The answer is no, and there will soon be new crops to enliven the boxes. Strawberries and peas are not far away from harvest. Fine Cooking magazine has a nice article on greens titled "Eat Your Greens: An Essential Guide to Five Leafy Favorites". Here is a link to the article:

<http://www.finecooking.com/item/16023/eat-your-greens-an-essential-guide-to-five-leafy-favorites>

The article provides five useful recipes, each of which can be adapted to whatever greens arrive in your CSA box. Cooking times will need to be adjusted. Spinach and arugula cook quickly; escarole, bok choy and chard are intermediate; kale and collards require the longest cooking times.

[Rainbow Chard with Pine Nuts, Parmesan, and Basil](#)

[Tuscan Kale with Shallots and Crisp Salami](#)

[Stir-Fried Bok Choy with Garlic, Ginger, and Scallions](#)

[Quick-Sautéed Collard Ribbons](#)

[Creamy Dandelion Greens and Goat Cheese Gratin](#)

BRAISED CHICKEN WITH ESCAROLE AND SICILIAN OLIVES

Adapted from "Creating a Salad That Bites Back" by Kay Rentschler, New York Times, March 3, 2004

Time: 25 minutes, Yield: 4 to 6 servings.

Broadleaf endives, all escaroles, look like lettuce caught in a tornado -- crumpled leaves and twisted stems. Escarole hearts are mild enough for a salad, but rarely make their way there. In Italian cuisine, the outer leaves of escarole are chopped up and thrown in soups. Lightly stewed, however, whole escarole leaves are also a wonder: the stem remains succulent, but the leaf wilts into a tidy, compact sauce rag.

Beth's note: You can reduce or eliminate the butter added to finish the sauce. Endive can sub for escarole.

8 chicken thighs with bone

Fine sea salt

Freshly ground black pepper

2 tablespoons extra virgin olive oil

8 large garlic cloves, sliced (1/4 cup)

2 large shallots, sliced (1/2 cup)

2 tsp. dried thyme or 1 1/2 tablespoons fresh minced thyme

2 tsp. dried rosemary or 1 1/2 tablespoons fresh minced rosemary (*optional*)

3 tablespoons white wine

1/2 cup chicken broth

1/2 cup jumbo pitted Sicilian olives, quartered

1 large or 2 small heads escarole, separated into individual leaves (*or substitute endive*)

Juice of 1/2 lemon

4 tablespoons cold butter, cut into pieces (*this can be reduced or eliminated*)

1. Trim chicken thighs of excess fat, and dry well on paper towels. Heat 10-inch nonstick skillet over medium heat for 5 minutes. Place chicken in skillet, skin-side down, and sear until skin is well-browned, about 5 minutes. Turn thighs with tongs, sprinkle with salt and pepper, and sear until second side is golden, about 3 minutes more.

2. Pour off fat. Reduce heat to low, add olive oil, and half of the sliced garlic, shallots and the herbs, and sauté until soft and fragrant, about 40 seconds. Add wine and chicken broth, cover, and simmer 7 minutes. Turn chicken, and simmer until meat pulls easily from bone, about 7 minutes more.

3. Transfer chicken from skillet to plate. Add remaining garlic, shallots and herbs, olives, escarole and lemon juice to skillet. Sprinkle with salt and pepper, increase heat to medium-high, and cover. Steam escarole until it wilts, about 5 minutes.

4. Return chicken to skillet on top of escarole. Add butter, increase heat to high, and simmer until butter melts and sauce has emulsified slightly. (If sauce appears thin, transfer escarole and chicken to warm platter, then boil sauce until it has reached a pleasing consistency.) Taste to correct seasoning. Serve.