



Sogn Valley Farm

CSA Newsletter June 6-7, 2017

www.sognvalleyfarm.com

Greetings,

We've finally arrived at the first week of our 2017 CSA season! Each box will be accompanied by a newsletter like this one, which will include a listing of the items in the box, a recipe that uses one or more items included in the share, and a little blurb from me (Dana) about what's happening on the farm or what's on my mind.

To repeat the plug made in our May email newsletter, the other good way to stay up to date is to follow us on Facebook or Instagram, where we post more regular updates, including more photos than you'll find in these newsletters.

It has been a very busy spring at the farm, with the usual spring planting along with some new infrastructure projects. The weather this spring has been like a pendulum, swinging back and forth from extremes in temperature and moisture. We started off beautifully in early April and got a lot planted. Then it turned sharply colder, and much that we had planted just stagnated and grew very little over two weeks or so. Then we warmed up, but remained dry. That was followed by a very wet and chilly period of 10 days or so, during which we got about six inches of rain in four days. And now here we are in early June, with days in the upper 80s and not a drop of rain for almost two weeks (and a dry forecast ahead).

With all that weather drama aside, the crops are looking pretty good. We have almost six acres planted out in the field, and tunnels filled with tomatoes, peppers, and English cucumbers. While the rainy period in the first half of May did throw off some of our successions by delaying planting, we have a wide array of things growing for your upcoming boxes.

Outside of the horticultural tasks, one major project was renovating our packing shed. We were awarded a grant from the Lakewinds Food Co-op to insulate our packing shed and construct interior, washable walls to make our post-harvest facility compliant with new food safety regulations. We're so thankful to have received this funding for the materials for the project. Since we did the majority of the construction work ourselves, it turned out to demand much more of my time than I had initially thought. We finally finished the project and cleared out the construction materi-

What's in the box?

Salad mix: A tasty mix of eight different kinds of baby-leaf lettuce. This variety of lettuce has more body to it than standard clamshell spring mix, and it usually has great shelf life (1-2 weeks). Pre-washed and ready-to-eat!

Red radishes: Slice these up for a slightly spicy addition to your salad. Also, don't toss the greens! They can be sautéed like many other cooking greens and have fairly mild flavor. We recently combined them with some spinach in a scrumptious scrambled egg breakfast.

Green leaf lettuce: Chop it up and add some extra bulk to your salad mix, or use it as a wrap for your quinoa patty (see recipe on back).

Cilantro: We often recommend cilantro as an herb to accompany Mexican dishes, cabbage slaws, and salads, but recently added it to a batch of quinoa patties. It was delicious—check out this week's recipe.

Broccoli: We usually prepare broccoli by steaming it for 2-3 minutes and lightly dressing with olive oil, salt, and pepper. Simple and delicious. Broccoli that matures in hot weather tends to not be as sweet as broccoli that matures in cool weather (which is why I say fall broccoli is the best), but this stuff is still good eating.

Green curly or Lacinato kale: A versatile and nutritious leafy vegetable. People ask us what dishes we use kale in...we respond, "what dishes *don't* we put kale in?!" Add it to eggs, stir fries, or raw in a massaged kale salad.

Spinach: The spinach in this week's shares came from two different plantings. Some of you will receive somewhat larger, bulkier leaves, and some will receive smaller, pointier leaves that re-grew after our first harvest a few weeks ago. The recent heat hasn't been kind to the spinach (it likes growing in 60 degree weather, no in the 90s), so we've had to do quite a bit of sorting to pull out substandard leaves. With that said, you might still find a blemished leaf here and there. It's all edible, and nutritious, and delicious.

Red leaf lettuce (full shares only)

Arugula (full shares only): This arugula is moderately spicy and tender enough to be eaten raw. For those who don't like the hotness, try lightly cooking it.

Strawberries (rotational): Only certain pickup locations will receive strawberries from this first, small harvest of strawberries. Next week, another group of members (or perhaps all members) will receive them. These small-medium sized berries are sweet and full of flavor.

On Deck

Each week, we'll give some hints about what new items may show up CSA shares in the next 1-2 weeks. Please note, this is not a guarantee, but our attempt to give you an idea of what's coming up.

Kohlrabi — Chives — Strawberries — Dill — Salad turnips — Snap peas

als just a couple of weeks ago.

We also put up a few more hoop houses for growing tomatoes and peppers, as these crops thrive in the warm and rain-free environment provided by these structures. We opted for *caterpillar tunnels*, which are three-season, low-tech greenhouses that are built and taken down each year, allowing us to move the structure from year to year to accommodate crop rotation.



Two of our caterpillar tunnels, with sides scrunched up for ventilation.

We hope you enjoy the veggies in this first box. For those of you who haven't been CSA members before, you may feel that there are lots of greens and salad-y things in this box, but this is typical of the early season harvest in Minnesota. With recent heat, we've seen a surge of growth in our cucumbers, tomatoes, and other warm-season crops, which will find their way into CSA boxes in due time. But for now, put on your salad hat and enjoy these greens!

-Dana

Quinoa Patties with Cilantro

Our friend Jen sent us a photo of her dinner plate yesterday—it had two quinoa patties (with herbs she bought from us at the farmers' market) with a side salad. It looked delicious, so we tried it out with some cilantro we planned to have in the first CSA box. We loved it, and thought you might, too. Wrap these in lettuce leaves and serve alongside a salad containing our salad mix, spinach, arugula (full shares only), radishes, and perhaps broccoli?

Ingredients:

2 1/2 C cooked quinoa
4 eggs, beaten
1/2 tsp salt
2-3 Tbsp chopped cilantro
1/2 C finely chopped onion
1/3 C grated Parmesan cheese
3 cloves garlic, finely chopped
1 C bread crumbs
1-2 Tbsp extra-virgin olive oil
Lettuce leaves
Hot sauce, mustard, or other condiment of choice

1. Combine quinoa, eggs, and salt in a medium bowl.
2. Stir in the cilantro, onion, cheese, garlic, and bread crumbs. Let it sit for a couple minutes so bread crumbs can absorb some of the moisture.
3. Heat the oil in a large, heavy skillet over medium-low heat.
4. Form 10-12 patties from the quinoa mixture and add half of them to the pan. Cook for 8-10 minutes, or until the bottom of patty is deeply browned. Flip and fry for another ~5 minutes
5. Serve on a bed of leaf lettuce, or cut a patty in half and wrap in a lettuce leaf.

This recipe was adapted from <http://www.epicurious.com/recipes/food/views/little-quinoa-patties-365029>