



Harmony Valley Farm

An update for our Community Supported Agriculture Members - Since 1993

November 30-December 1, 2012

Survey Says...A Lot!

This is the time of year when we reflect on this past year, but we also are well into planning for next year! Retaining our members from year to year is important to us. We value your input, suggestions and feedback on your experiences as we make decisions for the future. Recently we sent out a survey to obtain some feedback on our 2012 CSA season. We received a lot of great feedback about the farm and our CSA program, along with some great suggestions as well. We want to say a big "Thank you!" to everyone who took time to share thoughts and comments with us. So what did we learn from the survey?

We were happy to receive just under 1,000 responses, which is just under half of our CSA members for 2012. We found that 96% of our members were either "satisfied" or "highly satisfied" with the box contents, overall value, newsletter content, share options, pick-up instructions and customer service. In addition, we also had hundreds of positive comments that ranged from "I love Harmony Valley Farm" to "Harmony Valley Farm has changed our lives for the better." Many comments also expressed our members' love for the variety of vegetables and the quality. It is very encouraging to see such an overwhelmingly positive response to our CSA, our farm and our food.

Aside from the wonderful comments like the ones mentioned above, others offered valuable suggestions for improvement. In the past, some of the best ideas have come from CSA members' suggestions. We are anxious to sort through all the comments to see which ones we can institute for the 2013 season. Some of the comments and suggestions reinforced some changes and improvements we feel are important and we are working on right now.

For instance, many members said "more pictures and descriptions!" We are in the process of creating a new website that will allow us to share a produce gallery where you can see pictures of the produce, read about it and learn more about storage, preparation and cooking. The ability to search for recipes on our website for the various produce will be enhanced as well! Overall we are hoping to make our website a more user-friendly resource for our members so you don't have to spend extra time searching the internet for information about your vegetables, but can just utilize the information on our website

Many members in the past have expressed that their favorite part of the newsletter is the recipes section. This sentiment held true again with this year's survey. We understand that your success as a CSA member hinges on your ability to utilize and enjoy your shares. We enjoy cooking and eating our food and want you to have a positive experience as well. We are continuing to look for and develop simple recipes that highlight not only veggies but also ways to incorporate fruit and cheese share products as well. At the same time, we understand

This Week's Box

FLOWERING KALE: Use this beautiful kale in the traditional Colcannon (Mashed potatoes with kale) or add it to a warm pot of Italian Minestrone.

GREEN SAVOY CABBAGE: This isn't just for creamy cole slaw and cabbage rolls! Shred thinly and toss with your choice of dressings—a few of my favorites include Honey Mustard with Lime & Cilantro, Miso-Sesame Vinaigrette and Creamy Roasted Garlic Dressing. Store in the crisper drawer of your refrigerator loosely wrapped in plastic.

BEAUTY HEART RADISH: These will store well into the winter if kept in the crisper drawer of your refrigerator in a plastic bag. Add to winter slaws, salads or just eat slices dipped in your favorite salad dressing.

CELERIAC: Shred celeriac and apples and mix with chopped cranberries. Make a dressing using sour cream, mayonnaise, a touch of cider vinegar and honey to sweeten. Mix dressing with the celeriac and fruit and serve as a side salad along with ham, pork roast or roasted chicken.

PARSNIPS: Parsnips pair very nicely with many fall fruits. Try a smooth and velvety parsnip-apple soup this week.

SWEET POTATOES: Based on a tip from a savvy CSA member, I tried the Sweet Potato and Kim-Chi pancake recipe at Epicurioius.com. It is now one of our annual favorites to make—check it out!

CARROTS: Simmer carrots, onions, garlic and ginger in coconut milk until veggies are tender. Puree until smooth, season with salt and pepper and garnish with cilantro and a squeeze of lime for an easy soup.

RED OR CHIOGGIA BEETS: Perfect for roasting in the oven. Drizzle with a little oil and wrap in foil. Roast at 350-375°F until tender (35-45 minutes), cool enough to handle and gently peel using a paring knife.

WHITE SUNCHOKES: Cut into chunks and roast with cloves of garlic, olive oil, rosemary and thyme. When golden brown and tender, remove from the oven and toss with lemon zest and a squeeze of lemon juice.

SCARLET TURNIPS: Having trouble identifying this veggie in your box? This is the bright, pinkish-rose colored root rolling around your box (not in a bag). It has rounded shoulders and narrows to a point on the root end. When you cut it open the flesh inside will be white with streaks of pink. No need to peel—just cut it up and use it!

RED OR YELLOW ONIONS: Store in a cool, dry place until you are ready to use.

GARLIC: Roast the entire head and then freeze the roasted cloves. When you are ready to use them, just pull what you need out of the freezer and thaw briefly.

FESTIVAL OR SUGAR DUMPLING SQUASH: Don't forget to save the tender seeds from this squash and roast them in the oven for a crunchy, delicious snack!

KABOCHA SQUASH: This squash is the bright orange, roundish one. The flesh is deep orange colored and the flavor is rich, sweet and flavorful. Use in pies, soups, stews, or just bake it and turn it into squash puree topped with butter—it's so sweet you won't need to add any additional sweetener!

recipes need to be manageable to prepare in the midst of our busy lives. In a recent brainstorm session at the dinner table we realized we need to be sharing more culinary tips, cooking methods, serving suggestions, etc. with our members. Richard often gets mini "Cooking 101" lessons at the dinner table, e.g. "How to properly cook Brussels sprouts." With our new website, we will be able to provide more helpful information and possibly even some videos to help you prepare and cook your veggies to perfection!

Additional storage information was also a high-request from our members. While your CSA calendars offer an extensive list in the back that outlines storage information for many of our vegetables, we are planning to develop a chart for the 2013 season for an additional resource that can be easily placed on the refrigerator for a quick reference as you unpack your vegetables each week. This information will also be much more thorough and accessible with our new and improved website.

In our survey, we gave you the opportunity to share your likes and dislikes and to voice your opinions about veggies you would like to receive more or less of. We received a lot of feedback! We plan to really dive into this information and use it to make our plans for next year's crop. Once we have a good tally of items that were most enjoyed and those that were enjoyed a little less, we can start sorting through our seed catalogues and making those decisions. We look forward to sharing those plans with

you once we put it all together!

We also received a significant amount of feedback on our specialty shares. One theme that was present across the board, regardless of the share, was the desire to sample them before committing to a full share. We listened and are offering samples yet this year! If you missed the email, look in your 'What's in the Box' email this week for the chance to order a sampler pack of fruit, cheese, coffee and/or meat for the final December delivery. This is a great chance to try a portion of our shares to see if you are interested before you make a commitment for the 2013 season.

We received some valuable feedback that was specific to our fruit and cheese shares. As a result of your feedback, your cheese monger (aka Andrea) has been back at the drawing board already plotting out next year's schedule of selections and talking to producers about what they will have to offer. We will be delivering a more balanced cheese selection next year with less cheddar selections and more non-cheddar cheeses. We have more great cheeses to choose from now than we did when we first started, so we are excited to start a new year! Comments regarding a desire for local fruit are valued, as it is great to see the desire to support local. When we are able to, we certainly do support local fruit farmers, like last week's cranberries from the Ruesch Century Farm in WI and apples and pears from Wisconsin and Minnesota when they are available. Unfortunately, very few local growers can supply the volume and consistent quality we need.

As for our meat shares, we received comments from members who would like to sample our meat selections in smaller quantities. We are offering a meat sampler as well to give you the opportunity to try our pasture-raised pork and grass-fed beef. Based on survey results, many of our members are purchasing non-organic, conventional meat. We strive to be a source of quality, certified organic meat for you and your family to complement your dedication to organic food. Cooking grass-fed and pastured meat is a little different than conventionally produced meat and we can help you learn how to cook and prepare it successfully. We recently started writing a meat newsletter to accompany every meat delivery. We include articles related to cooking methods for meat as well as information about utilizing specific cuts and recipes!

Along with all these changes, we also listened when it came to your inputs on our pricing. We have been reviewing our own costs, expenses, etc. for this year as well as checking in with the other producers and partners that we work with for coffee, cheese and fruit. Our 2013 sign-up form will be ready next week and here is what you can expect: We will not be increasing our prices for fruit or cheese shares despite feedback from some of our cheese producers that are planning price increases. The price of coffee is actually decreasing! There will be a slight increase in vegetable share prices, which will help us to give raises to some of our hard-working, dedicated employees that help our farm be successful. We encourage you to sign-up early and take advantage of early sign-up pricing!

When asking for suggestions for pick-up day improvements, several comments showed that members were happy with how things are! Several comments were made in regards to the site hosts and their willingness to help members and keep our site organized. There were many "thank you's" directed at site coordinators and we agree, they deserve the praise. A handful of comments mentioned small improvements that are quite feasible, such as ensuring enough lighting at the pick-up locations.

It was fantastic to see our results analysis end with 98% of our members saying that they are "very" or "somewhat" likely to recommend Harmony Valley Farm to others, with such a large portion of that being members who are 'very likely' to do so. Again, we are very grateful for all the members that took time to provide us such useful insights to help us make your CSA the best it can be.

And in case you are wondering - we have randomly selected our five raffle winners for those that opted to participate. These members are: Aggie Gretzinger, Andrea Moerer, Jill Wigert, Tracy Dales and Nicole Aulik! We will be in contact soon regarding your \$15 Harmony Valley Farm Gift Certificate! Congratulations and thank you to everyone for completing our survey. Our 2013 season is sure to be great!

Want to try out our Fruit, Cheese, Coffee or Meat Shares?

Now is your chance! Harmony Valley Farm is offering Sampler packs of fruit, cheese, coffee and meat to be delivered with your December 14-15 CSA deliveries. This is a one time opportunity to try out these shares before committing to a full season.

Also, keep in mind that these sampler packs make a great gift for family, friends and coworkers!

Fruit Sampler - \$15
Cheese Sampler - \$15
Coffee Sampler - \$11.50
Meat Sampler - \$44

Order forms and more information can be found in your 'What's in the Box' email. For questions or to order, call (608-483-2143 x2) or email csa@harmonyvalleyfarm.com

Produce Plus

Sweet Potatoes, 15 pounds - \$30
Porcelain Garlic, 3 pounds - \$26
Orange Carrots, 10 pounds - \$18
Beauty Heart Radishes, 10 pounds - \$18
Frozen Roma Tomatoes, 5 pounds - \$9.50
(washed, cored, vacuum sealed and frozen)

Order by 5pm on Wednesday, December 5th for delivery on **December 7-8.**

***Please Note that December 7-8 is a Meat and Produce Plus only delivery.**

To order, please call 608-483-2143 x2 or email csa@harmonyvalleyfarm.com

Please drop your check in the mail the same day that you place your order. Please be sure to include your name and pick-up location with your order!

Extended Season Shares!

Only one more CSA delivery left! If you want to keep receiving Harmony Valley Farm's fresh, organic produce into January, sign-up for our extended season share!

This share includes two deliveries in January of storage vegetables. If you are a full or winter fruit, coffee or full cheese share member, you will already be picking up shares on these days. Why not pick up some vegetables at the same time?

To order, please call 608-483-2143 x2 or email csa@harmonyvalleyfarm.com

**Vegetable feature and recipe
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Turnip the Sweetness!

Vegetable Feature: Scarlet and Gold Turnips

We're turning up the sweetness in this week's box just a little with our Sweet Scarlet Turnips. We grow sweet scarlet turnips and golden turnips to add to the boxes to offer a nice twist from the standard purple top turnip that many are most familiar with. Being that they are part of the mustard family, purple top turnips have more of a pungent, arugula- or radish-like 'kick. The sweet scarlet and gold turnips are more mild in flavor and more sweet. The sweetness of these vegetables is enhanced by the frosts that they have endured out in the fields.

Turnips were originally grown in colder climates such as northern Europe and Asia, as they are good for storing through the winter. Turnips provide an excellent food source in the winter months when other fresh vegetables are not available. If you are committed to eating locally, this is a vegetable to include in your diet. Our Sweet Scarlet turnips are the sweeter than the gold turnips, but just slightly.

Scarlet and gold turnips offer a wonderful background sweetness to soups and stews and add beautiful coloring to any dish. Because they do not have the mustard-flavor like many turnips, many people also enjoy eating them raw. They can be used in raw salads such as cole slaw. Turnips pair well with apples, pork and bacon; cream and other root veggies. Both scarlet and golden turnips are very firm and hold up to cooking, as in a stew. They may be stir-fried, sautéed, roasted, steamed or boiled. Store turnips in a plastic bag in the refrigerator. If you notice signs of dehydration (spongy or wrinkly) try soaking the turnip in water to prolong its freshness.

Sesame Noodles with Seasonal Variations

by: Andrea Yoder

Serves 4-6

1 Tbsp salt
½ lb Fettucine Noodles
¾ oz dried shiitake mushrooms
1 medium onion, small diced
2 cloves garlic, minced
1 ½ cups carrot, small diced*
1 ½ cups sweet scarlet turnip, small diced*
8 oz chicken (breast or thigh meat)
1 Tbsp vegetable Oil
½ cup soy sauce
⅛ - ¼ tsp dried red pepper flakes (optional)
3 Tbsp toasted sesame oil
½ cup sesame seeds, toasted

1. Heat 3 quarts of water in a 5-6 quart pot. Add 1 Tbsp of salt to the water. When water comes to a boil, add fettucine noodles and cook per package instructions to al dente (still with a little bit of firmness in the texture when you bite into it). Drain noodles in a colander and set aside.
2. Place dried shiitake mushrooms in a small bowl and cover with hot tap water. Set aside to rehydrate while you prepare the other ingredients.
3. Prepare all your ingredients before you start cooking. Dice onion and garlic and set aside in one bowl. Dice carrots and turnips and set aside in a separate bowl. If the mushrooms are soft, drain off the soaking liquid and thinly slice the mushrooms. Set aside with the carrots and turnips.
4. Slice chicken breast or thighs on the bias into bite sized strips. Heat a large sauté pan over medium high heat and add 1 Tbsp of vegetable oil. When the oil starts to shimmer in the bottom of the pan, add the chicken pieces to the pan. Cook for 5-6 minutes or until chicken pieces are golden brown. Using a spatula, stir the chicken to release it from the pan.
5. Add the onions and garlic to the pan and sauté along with the chicken pieces for about 2 minutes until onions are translucent.
6. Add carrots, turnips and mushrooms to the pan and stir to combine. Keep stirring the mixture to keep vegetables from browning too much. Sauté for about 5 minutes or until carrots and turnips start to soften but are still crunchy.
7. Reduce heat to medium and add soy sauce and noodles to the pan. Stir to combine and cook, while continuing to toss the noodles with the vegetables and chicken, until all the soy sauce has been absorbed and the noodles are hot. Remove from heat and stir in the red pepper flakes and sesame oil.
8. Portion the noodles onto individual plates and garnish with toasted sesame seeds.

Chef's Notes: This is intended to be a versatile and flexible recipe. Here are a few variations you could make.

Meat Based or Vegetarian: I have included chicken in this recipe, but you could substitute sirloin steak instead, or make it a vegetarian entrée by omitting meat or substituting firm tofu.

Gluten-free: Use wheat free soy sauce and substitute rice noodles for the fettucine noodles.

*Seasonal Variations: This recipe can be used throughout the seasons with different vegetables as they are available, just maintain the overall quantity of approximately 3 cups of vegetables.

Spring: Snow Peas, Red Radishes & Napa Cabbage

Summer: Sweet Peppers, Zucchini & Eggplant

Fall: Tat Soi & Daikon Radish

Winter: Carrots, Turnips, Beauty Heart Radishes & Savoy or Red Cabbage