



# Harmony Valley Farm

An update for our Community Supported Agriculture Members - Since 1993

May 31 - June 1, 2013

## Spring Field Update

by: Farmer Richard

Every year of farming has its own set of challenges and opportunities. The 2012 growing season will be remembered as an unusually early, warm spring followed by a mid-summer drought and extremely hot days. This year is starting off as a polar opposite season and just might have set the record for being the coldest, most wet spring I've experienced in over 40 years of farming! Add those stats to the fact that it is also the latest spring I've ever seen and we could say this season is much different from last year! Every year we prepare for the worst case scenarios and do everything we can to overcome the challenges. In the end we just have to roll with the punches and do what we can to have the best year possible. Despite the slow start to the season, we're grateful to finally have some fresh, green vegetables to eat and pack in your CSA boxes!

This is the kind of year when excellent management, a well-trained crew, a detailed plan and great crew moral and willingness to get the job done really pays off. We have had three brief periods of dry weather that opened a window of opportunity to get out into the fields. While it is quite a challenge for a hands-on manager, we pulled together and accomplished a lot in a short period of time. On more than one day this spring we had the following activities happening simultaneously: two transplanting crews, a crew finishing planting potatoes and then asparagus, two people planting salad mix, one person running the other planter planting beets and carrots, a crew laying plastic mulch and several people working independently shaping beds and preparing more fields for planting. Whew!

Sunday is the one day of the week the crew never works (aside from helping out at our farm events!) This year, for the first time, we worked on Sunday. We had just come off of a week of rain and the skies cleared for the weekend. We had a productive Saturday and Sunday... and woke up to the sound of rain Monday morning. Most of the field crew took Monday morning off and slept in. While we don't plan to make this a regular part of our schedule, we certainly appreciate everyone's willingness to get things done during those two critical days. We have all the early crops in and we took full advantage of a little extra crew time to stay on top of hand weeding and cultivating. Now we are just waiting for some warmer

## This Week's Box

**SALAD MIX:** A blend of tender Asian greens and lettuce. Simply toss with a light vinaigrette

**ASPARAGUS:** Get your daily boost of fiber, folate and potassium with this super food. For a quick side dish at home, coat your asparagus with oil and sprinkle with salt and pepper. Throw onto a charcoal grill. When the asparagus is cooked to your liking, finish the dish with a salty cheese of your choice, pine nuts, fresh green garlic, and lemon juice.

**RHUBARB:** For an easy sweet Saturday morning, try mixing your favorite scone recipe with some rhubarb. In Chef Beth's home, she tops her rhubarb scones with a streusel mixture consisting of; brown sugar, flour, cinnamon, and soft butter. Blend your favorite cup of coffee to accompany it, and you have your very own coffee shop in your home!

**GREEN GARLIC:** To add some great garlic flavor to a seasonal soup, mix in a happy helping of green garlic, it will add a slight dimension to make a full flavored soup combination

**PEA VINE:** You can eat pea vine raw or sautéed lightly. Check out this week's veggie feature and recipes.

**RED OR FRENCH BREAKFAST RADISHES:** Eat these raw for a sweet crunchy snack, or sauté with green garlic and chive and place within a delicate egg white omelet. Don't forget to eat the radish greens too! They are delicious sautéed or stir-fried with other greens or added to soup.

**CHIVES:** When you are roasting vegetables at home, such as the overwintered parsnips, make a chive and green garlic marinade with oil, salt and pepper. The purple flowers or buds are edible too. Pull apart the blossoms and toss into a salad.

### CHOICE:

**HERB PACKS:** One for each EVERY-OTHER-WEEK 'BROWN WEEK' VEGETABLE share on the list this week. Sharing households should share one pack. Great for the garden or containers!

If you or your share partner took an herb pack last week, please do not take another one!

Rosemary	Thyme	Savory
Oregano	Sage	Italian Parsley
Basil	Basil	Curly Parsley

**PLANTING TIP:** Spring is taking it's time rolling in this year, and we still may have some chilly nights ahead of us. If you plant your herbs in an outside garden or in a pot that you are keeping outside, be aware that chilly nights may cause damage to your herb plants. Basil in particular is susceptible to chill injury at temperatures less than 50°F. If you do have herb plants outside, be sure to cover them with a lightweight sheet or other cover to prevent chill injury.

weather and sunshine so things can grow!! We're hoping to see some warmer temperatures toward the latter part of the week, but we did have to break down and start a fire in the wood stove last weekend to take the chill off!

Our crew has been magnificent! All the things that can go wrong—wrong seed spacing, planting too deep, planting too shallow, etc. — did not happen. The corn and beans were planted just right and they are up and already cultivated. Our plastic laying crew did an awesome job this year laying very straight rows.... which means the transplanting crew could do a beautiful job transplanting as well!

We have completed four salad plant-

ings and we're hoping to do another one this week. The first two plantings of dandelion greens are in as well as all of our spring cabbage, cauliflower, kohlrabi, etc. The head lettuce looks really nice right now as does the little fennel. Chard, carrots and beets are all up and look good. Everything is there...just growing slowly.

We've lost some row covers to high winds and have had to clear some downed trees after storms. We've had a few restless nights listening to thunderstorms during the night, but despite some challenges we continue to take advantage of the rainy days to get ready for the sunny days as well as clean up our pastures, do maintenance and repair on

*Continued on next page*

fences and buildings and there are always rocks to pick out of fields!

Our farm is green and beautiful. Just this evening I drove past the strawberry field and noticed thousands of strawberry blossoms. Jack can hardly wait for the Strawberry Day party and is counting down the days until you, our members, come to visit the farm. We thank you for your continued support and hope to see you soon! (Plan to bring your rain jacket just in case....we don't plan to let a little rain ruin the day!)

### Save the Date!

Our Strawberry Day Farm Event is  
Sunday June 23rd!

Come for a farm tour, potluck (bring a dish to pass!), strawberry picking and some delicious strawberry ice cream by Castle Rock Dairy with Harmony Valley Farm Strawberries!!



## Vegetable Feature: Pea Vine

By: Chef Beth

The delicate Pea Vine is an unfamiliar delight to adventurous home cooks. Pea vine is actually an immature pea plant that is harvested before it blossoms and forms pea pods. We grow pea vine from a snow pea seed variety called Dwarf Gray Sugar. It is an old heirloom that is characterized by its small size and vigorous ways of standing up to cold temperature soil. This variety also produces a more delicate leafy green vine, which is considerably delightful to eat. Since the pea plant that we grow can germinate well in cold soil, it is conveniently planted in the early spring on the farm and serves as the taste teaser to prep our palates for the tasty snap and snow peas still to come. While it takes longer for pea pods to develop, pea vine is harvested just four to five weeks after it is planted. We always try to harvest the pea vine when it is young and tender, which in some years is just a window of a few days.

It is said that the pea vine has been cultivated for thousands of years. Charles Darwin's book of 1865, "The Movement and Habits of Climbing Plant," was one of the first noted literatures to analyze the pea plant. He followed the group of legume plants and learned that these plants naturally take nitrogen from the air to sustain their plant lives and fix nitrogen in the soil, thus forming a natural fertilizer. We use peas on our farm both as a crop to be harvested and eaten as well as a cover crop in the fall.

Pea vine is great accompaniment to many dishes and can be eaten raw or lightly cooked. The lower portion of the stem, closest to where it was cut from the ground, can be tough. As you wash and prepare the pea vine for use, take care to trim away this section of the stem. Simply remove the leaves and tender side shoots from the main stem. As you work your way up the stem, it will progressively get more tender and can be eaten along with the leaves and tendrils. The delicate and tender pea vine can be used in a raw salad or lightly wilted or sautéed. The tough portion of the stem that is less desirable to eat can be bundled together and used to add great flavor in a soup, stock, or risotto. Pea vine is best when simply prepared to preserve the delicate pea flavor.

### Miso Pea Vine Soup

Recipe by Chef Beth

Serves 5

4 ½ cups water  
2 tsp dashi flakes  
3 Tbsp miso paste  
5 oz tofu, extra-small dice  
1 cup pea vine, tender stems, leaves and side tendrils torn into bite-sized pieces  
1 stalk green garlic, sliced thinly (use the white and green parts)  
2 oz chives, minced

1. Combine the water and dashi in a large sauce pan over medium heat. Bring the liquid to a boil. You will need to stir the water and dashi granules frequently until the dashi is fully incorporated.
2. Once the liquid has reached a boil, lower the heat to a gentle simmer and stir in the miso paste.
3. Once the miso is fully incorporated, add the tofu, pea vine, green garlic and chives. Simmer for another four minutes. Serve hot.

### Pea Vine and Grilled Asparagus Salad

Recipe by Chef Beth

Serves 4

#### Salad:

1 ½ cups asparagus spears, cut into 2 to 3-inch pieces  
1 Tbsp olive oil  
1 cup pea vine, tender stems, leaves and side tendrils torn into bite-sized pieces  
4 oz spinach, torn into bite-sized pieces (approximately 3 cups)  
1 tsp salt  
½ tsp coarse ground black pepper  
8-10 red or French Breakfast radishes, cut in half  
½ cup walnuts, toasted and chopped

#### Dressing:

2 stalks green garlic, rough chopped  
½ cup rice vinegar or white wine vinegar  
½ cup extra-virgin olive oil  
1 ½ Tbsp honey  
1 tsp salt  
¼ tsp coarse ground black pepper

#### Special Material:

Blender, Emulsion Blender, or Food Processor

1. In a bowl, toss asparagus with the olive oil. Put prepared asparagus on a hot grill with a set of tongs. Using the tongs, rotate the asparagus for about 6 minutes, charring the outsides and infusing that wonderful grill flavor. After the asparagus is done and charred, take off the grill and put into a large bowl.
2. Place the following ingredients in the bowl with the asparagus: pea vine, spinach, salt, ground pepper, radishes, and walnuts. Toss these ingredients together and set aside.
3. To prepare the dressing, combine the green garlic, vinegar, olive oil, honey, salt and pepper in a blender or food processor. Blend the ingredients until the dressing has formed a smooth emulsion.
4. Just before you are ready to serve the salad, lightly pour some of the dressing over the salad ingredients in the bowl. Toss with tongs to combine all the ingredients and lightly coat the greens. Add more dressing if needed.