



# Harmony Valley Farm

An update for our Community Supported Agriculture Members - Since 1993

[www.harmonyvalleyfarm.com](http://www.harmonyvalleyfarm.com)

June 24-25, 2016

## Strawberry Day...We had so much fun!

by Andrea Yoder

This past weekend we hosted our annual Strawberry Day CSA event. We had a gorgeous, sunny day for the party and were thrilled to have over 200 CSA members in attendance! While we had many members who were enjoying their first visit to the farm, we also enjoyed seeing some of our longtime members and friends return to enjoy the day. We also had a group of happy campers enjoy a night under the stars in our valley!

We started the party with a picnic potluck lunch, and let me tell you this was one of the best potluck spreads I think we've ever seen! We also enjoyed delicious iced maple latte made with Kickapoo Coffee's cold-pressed coffee, Castle Rock Organic Dairy's milk and Alvin Miller's organic maple syrup. The other cold beverage treat we enjoyed was a special batch of strawberry-basil kombucha made by NessAlla with HVF strawberries and basil! Once we had all satisfied our mid-day hunger, we piled onto 5 wagons and ventured to the fields. Our first stop was near the kale and collard field. Farmer Richard walked the field with some of the members on his wagon. Together they decided red curly kale was the first variety we should harvest for this week's boxes.

Next stop along the way was at our Hammel Farm. At this stop we checked out the broccoli, cauliflower and cabbage crops that will all be ready for harvest within the next few weeks. We jumped back on the wagons and circled around the farm to get a good look at the peppers, tomatoes and tomatillos....all of which are looking great!! Along the way we had the opportunity to answer a lot of excellent questions about the crops, the land, farming techniques, methods for controlling pests, how do we decide what to grow and how much and even a few equipment questions that I had to recruit some help from the crew members. We were very impressed with the interest and thoughtful questions everyone asked this year!

After we left the Hammel Farm, we journeyed to our final stop along the tour....the strawberry field!!! Everyone was anxious to start picking and eating the warm, juicy strawberries. You could smell their aroma as we got close to the field and we were all in strawberry heaven! After careful instructions from Farmer Richard, everyone got busy picking strawberries. Farmer Richard, ever the teacher, created a lasting memory for the

## This Week's Box

**GARLIC SCAPES:** This is our final week of garlic scapes. Next week we'll start harvesting fresh garlic!

**PURPLE SCALLIONS:** Take advantage of the vibrant flavor in the green tops. You can add them anywhere you are looking for onion flavor. They are excellent in cold salads or add them as a garnish to soups and other cooked preparations for optimal flavor.

**KOHLRABI:** Check out the slaw recipe in this week's newsletter which pairs kohlrabi and beets. If you're looking for a quick and easy snack to take with you, just slice the kohlrabi and sprinkle it with lime and chili powder.

**RED CURLY KALE:** Try the Kale Caesar Salad with Brioche Croutons recipe featured on [www.alexandracooks.com](http://www.alexandracooks.com) (my new favorite vegetable related blog).

**SUGAR SNAP PEAS** These peas have edible pods! Simply peel the stem and string off the top of the pod. Pop it in your mouth for a quick snack or toss them into a stir-fry.

**REDLEAF LETTUCE** Make an entrée salad for dinner. Toss the lettuce with a creamy dressing and add chunks of chicken, hard-boiled eggs, chickpeas, kohlrabi, green onions and broccoli florets.

**STRAWBERRIES:** Strawberry shortcake! Use sweet cream biscuits or pound cake as the base. Top with whipped cream or heavy cream and a touch of honey....heavenly.

**BROCCOLI:** Don't forget to use the stem too! Just peel away the outer layer and enjoy the tender, sweet stem. Lightly steam it and toss with butter or shred it into a vegetable slaw.

**ZUCCHINI:** Add grilled zucchini slices to your next pizza or toss grilled zucchini with pasta, olive oil and Parmesan cheese for a quick dinner.

**GREEN TOP GOLD BEETS:** See this week's newsletter for more information and recipes using beets!

day when he had the opportunity to pick strawberries with a young CSA kiddo. As Richard reflected on the day, he lamented that there were so many people and so little time, but this little guy "made my day." Richard taught this little guy how to pick strawberries. Did you know that strawberries like to hide? Well, they do and the trick to picking them is learning how to "find them." His student quickly caught on and filled his pint container in no time. He handed it off to his mom and got started on another one! If you can't tell, Richard has a soft spot in his heart for children and I'm sure he'll remember this strawberry day picking experience years from now after this youngster is grown up and moving on to college and beyond!

After strawberry picking we were all hot and ready to enjoy a bowl of refreshing strawberry ice cream. I think it's safe to say that EVERYONE loved the ice cream... Captain Jack was right, it is some of the best strawberry ice cream we've ever tasted! A big thanks to the folks at Castle Rock Organic Dairy for making this special batch of ice cream just for us!

It takes many hands in the community

to make this day a success. Richard and I would like to thank all of our crew members who worked hard to get things ready for the day and many of them helped with the party as well. A big thanks to our friends Bob & Carol who helped prepare food for the potluck. They were a joy for me to cook with and made the process of preparing hot dogs and chili sauce for over 200 people seem like no big deal. We'd also like to thank Pam & Jim for their help with sharing Richard's beautiful wood products at this party. It was quite a display of unique, one-of-a-kind products made from specially selected trees we've harvested. We'll have more things to share with you by the Harvest Party, just in time to start your Christmas shopping!

All in all it was a great day. We appreciate everyone who carved out time to come visit our farm and be part of the day with us. We love getting to meet our members face to face and be able to share a little piece of our daily lives with all of you. Your joy and appreciation for the work we do is what encourages us to continue doing what we do. Thanks again!

## Vegetable Feature: Green Top Beets

by Andrea Yoder

When customers at market ask me what a beet tastes like, my answer is often “sweet and earthy, but not the flavor of dirt.” We grow three different colors of beets including the traditional red beets as well as golden beets and Chioggia beets (also known as candy-striped beets). Red beets generally have the most intense beet flavor while golden and Chioggia beets are usually more mild in flavor, but equally sweet. Early in the season we harvest beets with their tops still attached. The tops are edible as well, so it’s like getting two vegetables in one!

Beets can be eaten raw, however they are usually cooked. They can be roasted, boiled, baked, sautéed and grilled. They should be cooked whole with the skin on and the root tail intact in order to retain all of the valuable water-soluble nutrients. Once beets are cooked it is much easier to peel them. The pigments found in beets that give them their characteristic colors are actually phytonutrients and antioxidants that have a whole host of health benefits. Additionally, beets and their greens are packed with fiber, calcium, iron and vitamins A, C and K to name a few. If you usually discard the tops, I’d really encourage you to try finding a use for them this time. They can be lightly steamed, wilted or sautéed and served on their own or alongside the beet root as is done in the recipe below. Beet greens can also be incorporated into any dish or recipe that uses chard or spinach. Additionally, beet greens may be eaten raw in salads or enjoy them in a green smoothie to jump start your day.

Beets pair well with some bold ingredients such as horseradish, mustard and rich dairy products including yogurt, cream, sour cream and aged cheese. They also play well with other vegetables including carrots, potatoes, fennel, onions and a variety of salad greens. They are also delicious paired with fruits including apples, oranges, lemon, currants and pears.

Yield: 4 servings

### Balsamic Glazed Beets & Greens

This recipe was created by Peter Berley and was featured in *Food52 Genius Recipes*. Here’s what the Food52 editors had to say about this recipe in its introduction. “I’m afraid we don’t understand beets as well as we could. ...This (recipe) allows us to cook beets faster, like all the other vegetables we know better. Then, as Berley writes, ‘The greens are placed on top of the roots, the manner in which they grew.’ They steam and wilt, then get stirred throughout the glaze...Yes, we get to use the whole beet in one pan—including the greens and the peel—so there’s no hanging onto the tops with some unidentified goal, only to forget and throw them away a week later.”

- 1 medium red onion, cut into ¼ inch crescents (may substitute the bulb portion of 1 bunch of spring scallions, green tops reserved for another use)
- 4-5 fresh beets with tops (1 bunch), roots scrubbed, trimmed and cut into 4-6 wedges, greens & stems chopped into bite-sized pieces
- 3 Tbsp balsamic vinegar
- 2 Tbsp unsalted butter or extra-virgin olive oil
- 2 sprigs fresh tarragon, leaves finely chopped\*
- Coarse sea salt and freshly ground pepper

1. In a heavy pan wide enough to hold the vegetables in a snug single layer, combine the onion, beet roots, vinegar, butter, tarragon and ½ tsp. salt. Pour in enough water to barely cover the vegetables and bring to a boil over high heat. Reduce the heat to low and simmer, covered, for 25 minutes or until the beets are nearly but not quite tender.
2. Raise the heat and boil, uncovered, until the liquid has reduced to a syrup and the beets are fork-tender.
3. Add the beet greens, reduce heat and simmer, covered, for 5 minutes.
4. Uncover and turn the greens over so they mix with the roots and onions. Add pepper and additional salt to taste. Simmer for 2 minutes more and serve.

\*Note: If you do not have fresh tarragon, use another fresh herb in its place. When I tested the recipe I used fresh savory and the dish was delicious.

Yield: 6 servings

### Root Vegetable Slaw with Labneh

This recipe was borrowed and adapted from *Jerusalem a Cookbook*, by Yotam Ottolenghi and Sami Tamimi. Here’s how they introduce this recipe in their book. “We make this salad in the winter or early spring, before any of the summer crops are around. The labneh can be substituted with Greek Yogurt, well-seasoned with some olive oil, crushed garlic, and salt and pepper. It can also be left out altogether, if you prefer to keep it light and simple.”

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| 3-4 medium beets*                   | 3 Tbsp sherry vinegar                            | ½ Tbsp grated lemon zest                       |
| 1 medium kohlrabi, peeled*          | 2 tsp superfine sugar                            | Scant 1 cup labneh or Greek yogurt (optional)  |
| 2 medium carrots*                   | ¾ cup cilantro leaves, coarsely chopped          | Salt and freshly ground black pepper, to taste |
| ½ celery root*                      | ¾ cup mint leaves, shredded                      |  |
| 4 Tbsp freshly squeezed lemon juice | ¾ cup flat-leaf parsley leaves, coarsely chopped |  |
| 4 Tbsp olive oil                    |  |  |

1. Peel all the vegetables and slice them thinly, about 1/16 inch thick. Stack a few slices at a time on top of one another and cut them into matchstick like strips. Alternatively, use a mandolin or a food processor with the appropriate attachment to cut the vegetables into thin strips or thick shreds. Set the vegetables aside while you make the dressing.
2. Place the lemon juice, olive oil, vinegar, sugar and 1 teaspoon salt in a small saucepan. Bring to a gentle simmer and stir until the sugar and the salt have dissolved. Remove from the heat.
3. Pour the hot dressing over the vegetables, mix well and leave to cool. Place in the fridge for at least 45 minutes.
4. When ready to serve, add the herbs, lemon zest and 1 teaspoon pepper to the salad. Toss well, taste, and add more salt if needed. Pile onto serving plates and serve with some labneh on the side (optional).

\*Note: You can adapt this recipe according to the seasons. When you make this slaw early in the summer before carrots or celery root are available, just use a bit more of what you have. I made this slaw using only beets and kohlrabi. Just make sure you have a total of about 4 cups of vegetables overall.