



Harmony Valley Farm

An update for our Community Supported Agriculture Members - Since 1993

www.harmonyvalleyfarm.com

June 7 - 8, 2019

VEGETABLE FEATURE: Pea Vine

By Andrea Yoder

Pea Vine is actually an immature pea plant that is harvested before the vine starts to develop blossoms. It has a mild, sweet pea flavor and may be eaten raw or lightly cooked. We look forward to pea vine every year because it has such a bright, gentle pea flavor and is a nutrient dense green that just seems to leave you feeling invigorated and refreshed!

While the tendrils and leaves are tender, the main stem can sometimes get tough depending on how mature the plant is at harvest. This week's pea vine is at an in between stage. Most of the upper stem is still tender while the lower portion may be a little more coarse. In past years we've had members comment that the pea vine is "stringy." Here's how we tackle this issue. If you find this to be the case, pick the tender leaves, tendrils and thin stems off the main stem. I must admit, I don't like to spend a lot of time sorting through a bunch of pea vine and I prefer to use as much of the bunch as I can...plus there is a lot of flavor in the stem! Thus, when the pea vine is more mature and some of the stems are more tough, I tend to use pea vine in ways that allow me to blend it in a blender or food processor. The other way I like to use pea vine is in sauces, soups or broth. I generally chop the pea vine into smaller pieces and add it to hot broth or a sauce base. Let the pea vine simmer briefly to extract the flavor, but don't overcook it or you'll lose the bright pea flavor. Once you've infused the flavor of the pea vine into the sauce or broth, you can strain it out to remove it. If you'd like to extract just a little more flavor, blend the mixture before straining it.

Pea vine goes well with cream, butter, cheese, pancetta, prosciutto, bacon and ham, lemon, lime, mint, parsley, chives, spring onions, green garlic, radishes, asparagus, and mushrooms. Some of my favored ways to enjoy pea vine are in **Pea Vine Cream Cheese**, **Pea Vine Pesto Pasta Salad** and **Spring Noodle Bowl with Pea Vine Broth**.

What's In The Box?

POTATO ONIONS: The entire plant, except for the root base, is edible. The lower white-yellow portion many need a touch more cooking time than the tender green tops.

GREEN GARLIC: Some of the green tops are thicker and not quite as tender as before, however they're full of flavor. Tie them together and float them in a pot of soup, or add them to rice while it cooks to impart a gentle garlic flavor.

GREEN TOP RED RADISHES: Check out the recipe for **Radishes with Vanilla Butter & Salt** in this week's *Cooking With the Box*. Vanilla in a savory spread... simple enough for a snack yet classy enough to serve as a party appetizer.

ASPARAGUS: Asparagus season won't last forever, but we're hoping we'll have it for another week or so. Check out this week's featured recipe for a pasta dish featuring both asparagus and pea vine.

BABY WHITE TURNIPS: Check out *last week's blog post* for a feature article about this vegetable and a recipe for **Creamy Turnip Grits & Greens** (and be sure to make the **Brown-Butter Hot Sauce Vinaigrette** to put on top..it's delicious!)

CILANTRO: In the *Cooking With the Box* article this week, you'll find a recipe for **Cilantro-Lime Vinaigrette** with options to prepare it with three different variations. Use it as a dressing on either the spinach or salad mix. Save extras for next week as we'll have more head lettuces coming your way!

PEA VINE: Read more about this vegetable in our *vegetable feature* article this week! Store it in a plastic bag until ready to use.

SALAD MIX: This is a delicate blend of baby lettuce and greens. It's best tossed with a light vinaigrette as opposed to a heavy, creamy dressing that may weigh it down.

MINI ROMAINE LETTUCE: We grew these little head lettuces in one of our tunnel greenhouses with a dirt floor. All the leaves, even the outer ones are edible. Cut them off the main core, wash and dry thoroughly before using in salads or wraps.

We have 2 newsletters: This is the "What's In The Box" newsletter. Check out the red folder at your site labeled "**Main Article Newsletter**" for a second bi-weekly newsletter.

This newsletter is published Every Other Week and will include a full length, informative article covering a wide variety of topics which may include how we grow different vegetables, crew profiles, updates from the farm or topics of interest in the news, etc. We want to make sure everyone has an opportunity to read these articles, which is why we will be writing a new article once every two weeks. This way, customers who only pick up every other week will have an opportunity to see these informative articles and no one will miss out!

Strawberry Day is June 16th! Come join us for an afternoon of fun and see what the farm looks like in the early summer. The highlight of this event is eating warm, sweet, juicy strawberries right out of the field!

- Noon-1pm Picnic Potluck Lunch
- 1:15pm Wagon Tour
- 3-5pm U-Pick Strawberries & Strawberry Ice Cream

Weather doesn't stop us from having fun, so check the radar before you come and be prepared. Don't forget to leave enough room in the car to transport all of your strawberries home! Check your email this week for a party invite with more details.

As I mentioned in the introduction, pea vine, as with many greens, is packed with nutrients. Farmer Richard always says “Eat your greens every day!” Why is this so important? Greens are rich sources of a variety of minerals, vitamins, enzymes and antioxidants. When we include them in our diets on a daily basis, we’re essentially giving our bodies the daily boost they need to remove toxins from our systems, support our immune system and fuel our metabolic pathways that produce energy. Of course this is a very simplified explanation of what really happens in our amazing, intricate body systems, but the bottom line is pretty simple...eat your greens! From time to time you might even want to “drink your greens!” Some of you may be accustomed to adding greens such as kale and spinach to a fruity smoothie. You can also make more savory green drinks that are not only a great nutrient boost, but they’re convenient to take with you to work as part of your lunch or an afternoon snack. In addition to nutrients, they’re also a great way to meet your daily water intake and, if you don’t strain them, you’ll get some fiber as well! So this week I included a very simple green drink recipe that includes not only the vibrant, delicate flavor of pea vine, but it also includes spinach and cilantro. It’s simple, refreshing and if you’re simply running short on time and need something quick you can pull this off in short order.

I hope you enjoy and appreciate the delicate flavor of pea vine this week and remember, within the next month we’ll be enjoying peas in the pod!

Pasta with Asparagus & Avocado-Pea Vine Cream Sauce

Yield: 4 servings

8 oz small pasta (e.g., orecchiette, macaroni, fusilli, etc)	¼ tsp freshly ground black pepper
1 bunch pea vine	1 pound asparagus, cut into 1-inch pieces
1 stalk green garlic, chopped finely	1 Tbsp extra-virgin olive oil
1 medium ripe avocado	3-4 green onions (1 cup thinly sliced)
¼ cup plain Greek yogurt or sour cream	2 cups fresh baby spinach or arugula
2 Tbsp fresh lemon juice	Freshly grated Parmesan, for serving
½ tsp salt plus more to taste	

1. Bring a large pot of salted water to a boil. Add the pasta and cook until al dente. Reserve 1 cup of pasta water, then drain the pasta and set aside.
2. While the pasta cooks, prepare the sauce. Cut the bottom one-inch off the pea vine stems. Finely chop the pea vine, leaves and stem. Place the pea vine and chopped green garlic in a food processor or blender. Cut the avocado in half, remove the pit and scoop the flesh out of the skin. Add it to the food processor along with yogurt, lemon juice, ½ tsp salt and ground black pepper. Process on high for 20-30 seconds. Stop and scrape down the bowl. Continue to process until the mixture is well combined. It will be very creamy, but not completely smooth.
3. Once the pasta is cooked and the sauce is made, Heat olive oil in a medium saute pan over medium heat. Add the green onion and saute briefly until softened. Add the asparagus and saute for several minutes, stirring periodically, until the asparagus is bright green and cooked al dente (tender but still a little crunchy).
4. Add the baby spinach along with a few tablespoons of the pasta water. Cover the pan and steam just until the spinach is wilted, 1-2 minutes. Remove the lid and add the cooked pasta and the sauce to the pan. Stir to combine. Add additional pasta water if the sauce is too thick, or simmer for a few minutes if the sauce is too thin. Once warmed through, taste and adjust the seasoning with additional lemon juice, salt and pepper as needed.
5. Serve hot with freshly grated Parmesan.

This recipe was adapted from one entitled “**Avocado Pasta with Asparagus and Peas,**” originally published on www.wellplated.com.

Pea Vine & Spinach Green Drink

Yield: 1 quart

3 cups roughly chopped pea vine	4 Tbsp lemon juice
2 cups fresh spinach	2 Tbsp apple cider vinegar
½ cup chopped cilantro	1 to 1 ½ cups ice cubes
2 cups water	¼ tsp salt, plus more to taste

1. Put all ingredients in a blender. If you can’t fit all the greens in the blender cup, just put about half in at first with the remaining ingredients. Blend briefly to create more space and then add remaining greens.
2. Blend on high speed until all ingredients are finely chopped and the mixture is smooth.
3. If you want a very smooth, velvety juice, pour it through a fine mesh strainer before serving. If you don’t mind a little thickness in your juice from the vegetable pulp, then skip the straining step. There may also be a layer of foam on top from the high speed blender action. Just take a spoon and skim it off the top.
4. Adjust the seasoning to your liking with more salt and lemon juice. Serve over ice for a cold drink or gently and briefly heat it to lukewarm on the stove top for a warm drink. Store any extras in the refrigerator. The juice will separate in storage, just shake it before serving.

Recipe by Chef Andrea