



Harmony Valley Farm

An update for our Community Supported Agriculture Members - Since 1993

November 3, 2011

We are fortunate to be able to hire a chef (or two) each growing season, to both nourish our bodies and inspire our culinary endeavors. The chef's job is seasonal, cooking lunch for the crew during the growing season, mid April to early November. Besides cooking, we also ask the chef to contribute to our CSA newsletters, researching recipes and vegetables, as well as preserve the bounty of summer for the long cold winter (and next spring's chef). Boni & Brigitte's time here at the farm is coming to a close, and we asked them to reflect on their season here at our farm.

Chef Boni's Reflections: A typical day for me at Harmony Valley Farm starts at 6 am in the morning, the coffee is perking and I go open the door on the chicken coop to let out the roosters and hens. The roosters have been crowing since 4 am but I have ignored them until now. I walk past the pig pasture and they grunt at me and I remind them that breakfast isn't until 7 am. Did you know that pigs snore? I swear they do, not every night, but often on a hot summer evening when I have my windows open I can hear them. The billy goat is pastured right beside the pigs and he has been a quiet neighbor for the most of the summer, but lately as fall approaches he has begun to call out for a female companion. It is getting colder so someone to cuddle up with would probably make him happy. In case you haven't figured it out, I am staying very close to the animals this summer. My camper is parked just a few feet from the pens and pastures. It has been amusing to watch their antics and enjoy the baby chicks and goats that have blessed us this summer. I enjoy my coffee and then head for the kitchen where I will make the noon meal for the crew.

Before I begin to cook, I can be found walking from cooler to freezer with my bright orange cloth bags. I fill the bags with the vegetables and meats that I will need for that day's menu. I really enjoy stacking all the beautiful vegetables on the sink. In the spring there were the wild ramps, fresh spinach, nettles, and sorrel

followed by spring salad mix, walking onions, and green garlic. Each week the harvest was different and so were my menus. The availability of so many fresh, organic vegetables has made cooking an enjoyable experience. What chef wouldn't enjoy having so much right at her fingertips?

The summer has moved along so fast, it is now fall and winter is fast approaching. I have had a busy, full, summer and my intention when I took this job was to learn as much as I could about Organic farming and Harmony Valley has provided me that opportunity. I think one of the major lessons I have learned is that it is not the quantity of food I consume but the quality of that food. I want to take with me the importance of eating fresh, seasonal, locally grown foods. The crew here has put in long arduous hours to grow and harvest the freshest and best tasting vegetables possible, and they have succeeded in doing just that.

I take with me the friendships and warm memories of this season, it has been more than I expected.

Chef Brigitte's Reflections: Is it the end of the season already? What an incredible journey it has been. Splitting my weeks between the farm in Viroqua and the restaurant in Madison has been challenging professionally, emotionally, and physically. The two hour drive between the cities has been filled with hours of phone calls, radio station scanning, sunsets and sunrises and a couple police officers (seems I have a lead foot). At each job, I have been pushed to keep learning, keep improving and keep experimenting. Living in my secluded, tiny, wooden condo here on the farm has provided an opportunity to be introspective and also catch up on all the old episodes of *The Office* and *Bones*.

When I'm not in a kitchen, I am mostly like to be found perched on my two-in-one work and sleep station, with my Mac-

THIS WEEK'S BOX

ESCAROLE: So versatile! Use the darker, outer leaves in soups or sautés. The milder, lighter inner leaves can be cooked but can also be used in a raw salad. Cooking will mellow the flavor.

PORTUGUESE KALE: See veggie feature on the back of the newsletter

CARROTS: Lovely in a fall slaw. Shred and mix with other veggies and a creamy dressing; add fresh chopped cranberries or apples for color.

SWEET POTATOES: Will store for a month or more if you keep them in a cool, dry place around 60°F. Do not refrigerate; the cold will damage them.

RED ONIONS: Store onions in a cool, dry place with good air circulation (such as a hanging basket) to get the longest life.

GARLIC: Be careful not to overcook or brown garlic when sautéing in oil. If overcooked, it will become bitter and unpleasant tasting.

SALAD MIX OR ARUGULA: Perfect for a busy day! Plan a meal around a bag of greens when you don't have time for a lot of meal prep.

SPINACH: Wilt slightly and serve with fried or scrambled eggs and shredded cheese.

BUTTERNUT OR SUGAR DUMPLING SQUASH: Sauté chunks of squash in butter with apples, raisins, walnuts and maple syrup for breakfast! Add sausage and greens if you are so inclined.

BROCCOLI OR CAULIFLOWER OR ROMANESCO: Store loosely wrapped in the fridge and use within 5 days.

CHOICE: RED RADISH

bookPro on my lap and a heap of books and magazines spread around me. I've woken up several mornings still surrounded by open books and cuddling my trusty notebook. I have at least one writing utensil within an arm's reach at all times, ready to be sprung into action in case of the need to take down a verbal recipe or jot a note of a possible dish for a newsletter recipe. Several folders have been added to my computer memory and filled with newsletter articles, recipes, prep lists and photos. I have never felt a more urgent demand to learn as much as possible, as quickly as possible. I feel like a sponge in a sink full of water. Soaked to capacity, yet still aware of all the water yet to be absorbed. This urgency and demand has pushed me to rise to the occasion.

Produce Plus

<http://www.harmonyvalleyfarm.com/SpecialOffer.pdf>

New!

15# Winter Squash \$15

15# Sweet Potatoes \$30

10# Orange Carrots \$20

Plus Garlic, Onions, Shallots, and Garlic Braids!

Upcoming Delivery Dates: Brown, Green & Weekly Veggies:

November 17/18/19

December 1/2/3

December 15/16/17

Full & Winter Fruit:

November 17/18/19

December 1/2/3

December 15/16/17

January 5/6/7

January 19/20/21

Extended Season Veg:

January 5/6/7

January 19/20/21

Coffee & Cheese:

November 17/18/19

December 1/2/3

December 15/16/17

January 5/6/7

January 19/20/21

Vegetable Feature: Portuguese Kale

We are excited to offer you one of our new vegetables this year, Portuguese Kale. You'll be able to identify this veggie pretty easily this week. It has large broad leaves that are mostly flat but do have a little waviness on the edges. They are green with thick, sturdy white ribs. We spotted this veggie in a seed catalog a year ago and it caught our eyes as a vegetable with the potential to be pretty interesting. It's been really fun watching this plant grow—first forming the large outer leaves, and then more recently the plants seem to be forming more of a center head. First it resembled collards, now the plants are behaving like cabbage. We spaced the plants pretty far apart which has allowed them to grow up to 2 feet high and wide in some cases!

In Portugal, this kale is the key ingredient in one of their national dishes called *Caldo Verde*. There are many versions of *Caldo Verde*, but all of them include several basic ingredients that characterize Portuguese cuisine. Some of the ingredients that complement Portuguese kale include potatoes, onions, beans, and chorizo. The recipe we've included in this newsletter is our favorite version of this Portuguese National soup.

One of the interesting things about this kale that is a little different from other kales is that the thick ribs can be eaten raw. Simply remove the leaf from the rib. Thinly peel off the outer layer of the rib to expose the tender, sweet flesh—very similar to peeling and eating the stem of broccoli. The rib can be cooked separately or eaten raw. The leaves should be cooked. If you slice them thinly, they do not need quite as much cooking time. You should plan to cook the leaves in some kind of liquid—either added to soup, steamed, or simmered in a small amount of water or stock. Store your Portuguese kale in the refrigerator wrapped loosely in a plastic bag. We hope you enjoy and appreciate trying this new kale as much as we've enjoyed growing it for you!

Caldo Verde/Portuguese Kale Soup

Serves 6-8

¼ cup olive oil

1 large onion or 2 leeks, diced

2-3 cloves garlic, thinly sliced

1 cup of Portuguese kale ribs, peeled and sliced in ½" pieces

5-6 medium potatoes, peeled and large diced

8 cups cold water or pork/chicken stock

10 ounces chorizo, diced

4 cups Portuguese Kale leaves, thinly sliced

Salt and Ground Black Pepper, to taste

--In a large pot, heat the olive oil over medium heat. Add the onions or leeks and cook until they are translucent. Add the garlic and kale ribs.

Cook for 3-5 minutes.

--Add the potatoes, and water or stock. Cover and simmer over low heat for about 15 minutes or until potatoes are tender.

--Remove the soup from the heat and take off the cover. Allow the soup to cool for 5-10 minutes. Puree the soup in a blender until smooth.

--Return the soup to the pan and put it over low heat. Add the chorizo, cover and simmer over low heat for about 5 minutes. Add the kale leaves, return the cover and simmer for another 5-10 minutes or until the kale is tender. Adjust seasoning with salt and black pepper to your liking. Serve hot.

****Note: If you'd like to make a vegetarian version of this soup, you can eliminate the chorizo and season the soup with a bit of smoked paprika.****

Join the HVF Meat Club!

3-pack delivery: \$375 (45 lb. total)

5-pack delivery: \$665 (75 lb. total)

<http://www.harmonyvalleyfarm.com/HVFMeatOrderForm.pdf>

Next delivery is November 10/11/12! **Order Soon!**

Delivery also available on December 8/9/10 and
January 19/20/21.