



Harmony Valley Farm

Producers of Fine Organic Produce & Beef

An Update for Our Community Supported Agriculture Members - Since 1993

Madison And Local Edition

Strawberry Festival 2007 Recap

By Andrea Yoder

Although the morning started out with a refreshing shower, the clouds moved on and the sun came out to give us a hot, but beautiful day to celebrate our plentiful strawberry crop. About 180 CSA members from Madison, the Twin Cities, and places in between made the journey to Harmony Valley Farm to enjoy a day filled with food, fields, and lots of fun. The festivities started Saturday evening down at the farm campground. About 8 families set up tents and built a fire, then pulled up their chairs to enjoy the pleasant evening beneath the stars. The kids had fun exploring the creek, chasing fireflies and squealing when they caught a toad. Several people entertained with violins and mandolins to complement the music of nature. I don't know how much sleep everyone actually got, but they all seemed to enjoy their outdoor adventure. There was plenty of room at the campground, which is available for all CSA members to use anytime during the summer. If you are looking for a summer camping destination, we invite you to enjoy a night in our valley.

Sunday afternoon started by sharing a potluck meal with some delicious and interesting dishes. It was fun to see some of the vegetables return to the farm again, this time as part of some wonderful pasta and vegetable salads, desserts, etc. After lunch, we wasted no time loading up the tour wagons to visit the fields. The trek included stops at the beet field which is a neighbor to the field where the bok choy, kohlrabi, and Napa cabbages you have been enjoying came. Next stop was the summer squash field. This year we have yellow summer squash, zucchini, and patty pan squash that are just now reaching a harvestable stage. Some



CSA Members Ellen Armdarter and her son enjoy their bounty of strawberries

members enjoyed a walk down the field to twist off squash to take home with them. The tour continued down the road to check out the onion and pepper fields, then turned around to head back to the peas. Everyone had the chance to experience, and hopefully develop an appreciation for how labor intensive it is to harvest sugar snap and snow peas. Although we try to stagger the crops to spread out the work, there is only so much you can do, and then you are at the mercy of nature. Right now, the crew is hustling to keep up with harvesting two kinds of peas in addition to the entire two acre strawberry field!

After a loop around the salad field, the final destination was the strawberry field where members plucked beautiful ripe berries straight from the plants and into their mouths. There truly is no better way to enjoy a strawberry than eating it right in the field. Everyone had the chance to pick four pints to take home, and some chose to keep on picking with visions of jam and strawberry sundaes in December in their minds. I don't remember who picked the most, but I think about 80 pounds was the most picked by one family. About 240 pints were picked to take home for free. An additional 960 pints were picked and purchased, and we estimate at least 50 pints

This Week's Box

Brown Week

- ♥ **ARROWHEAD CABBAGE:** Shred and add to an Asian pasta salad
 - ♥ **BABY WHITE TURNIPS:** See feature on back
 - ♥ **BROCCOLI:** Steam and sprinkle with freshly grated parmesan and a squeeze of lemon
 - ♥ **LEAF LETTUCE, SPINACH OR SALAD MIX:** Pile high on a deli sandwich for a picnic in the park
 - ♥ **GREEN SCALLIONS:** Use as a background flavor for soups
 - ♥ **GARLIC SCAPES:** Chop finely and use in herb pestos
 - ♥ **SNOW OR SUGAR SNAP PEAS:** While snow peas are usually flat, the peas in your box this week have matured forming larger peas inside the pods. This means a sweeter pea! and while the pod is still edible, make sure you remove the strings.
 - ♥ **STRAWBERRIES:** Don't let the summer go by without a strawberry pie!
 - ♥ **SUMMER SQUASH, ZUCCHINI AND SCALLOP SQUASH:** Shred and use in breads or muffins
- ♥ While we do our best to harvest enough of a crop for all members to receive some in their box, there will be times when there is not enough of a crop to fill all the boxes and something else may be offered in its place. We appreciate your understanding when this happens.

were picked and eaten in the field. That is a grand total of 1250 pints that were picked in one day!

The afternoon was rounded out with strawberry shortcake and meandering walks through the greenhouses and the nasturtium garden, and visits with the animals. Richard had help with his

chores on Saturday night, as several brave, young campers helped carry buckets of feed across the creek and lead the cows to the feed bunk. We had many little hands help feed the goats and pigs on Sunday as well. Many stationary miles were put on the tractors as lots of children took advantage of their farm visit to practice their tractor driving skills.

I hope your visit helped to bring an even more personal touch to the food you enjoy every week. For those who weren't able to make it this time, we hope you will join us for our next event on Saturday, July 14. You'll have a chance to see what the farm looks like mid-summer, AND you can kick up your heels and dance into the night at our summer barn dance. Mark your calendars!

Looking for a change? May we be your match?

We have an immediate need for a well-rounded person with office skills. Some great new ideas have been generated and initiated for this season, and we are now in need of a diligent person to implement them. In this full-time plus position, you will be an integral member of the farm functioning as the conduit between farm operations and our CSA members. Responsibilities include responding to member emails and phone calls, and doing computer work, using such programs as Pagemaker, Photoshop, Access, Excel, and website maintenance. Knowledge and commitment to organic farming is essential, as well as good communication, organization, and writing skills, a customer-service focus, an attention to detail, and the flexibility to adapt to the ever-changing nature of a farm. The challenge is high and the learning curve is steep, but the food is excellent and the customer satisfaction is great. If you are interested in learning about organic farming, this could be your classroom. Richard promises to teach you all he knows about organic growing, if you have lots of interest and a couple of years to absorb it all! We can provide living accommodations for a single person in an on-farm cabin. If you are looking for a change and are willing to immerse yourself in an organic farming culture, we would love to invite you to be part of our team.

Please send your resume to Richard de Wilde at Richard@harmonyvalleyfarm.com.

BABY WHITE TURNIPS

I know I get excited with every new vegetable that ends up on my cutting board, but I think these baby white turnips are pristine and beautiful. While most people are likely familiar with larger turnips harvested in the fall, baby turnips are a special early summer treat. Baby turnips are more tender and have a bit milder flavor than larger, fall turnips. The flesh is snow white and crisp while the skin is tender, thus no need to peel them. The turnip tops are also edible, and have just as or even more flavor than the root bulb—so don't discard these!

Turnips are thought to have originated in Siberia and West Asia and are related to radishes and mustards. In Persia, turnips used to be boiled and eaten as a cure for the common cold. It is understandable why turnips would be the therapeutic choice for treating a cold, as turnips are very high in vitamin C, an antioxidant and nutrient important in strengthening the immune system.

Because they are young and tender, baby turnips can be cooked quickly with a variety of different methods. Steaming, boiling, braising, and eating them raw in salads are all great uses for this little plant.

Baby Turnips with Honey Mustard Dressing

Serves 3-4

1 bunch turnips, greens removed	1 Tbsp flat-leaf parsley, chopped
1 Tbsp vinegar	1 Tbsp mint, shredded
1 tsp honey	Salt, to taste
½ tsp dry mustard powder	Ground black pepper, to taste
1 Tbsp olive oil	

-Place turnips in a saucepan, cover with water. Bring to a boil, then lower the heat under the pan and simmer for 8-10 minutes or until the turnips are just tender.

-While turnips are cooking, combine vinegar, honey, and mustard in a small bowl with a pinch of salt and pepper. Whisk briefly until smooth and set aside.

-Drain turnips thoroughly in a colander. In a small sauté pan, heat olive oil. Add turnips and sauté until lightly golden. Add vinegar-honey mixture and stir until well coated and the glaze begins to bubble in the pan.

-Add fresh herbs and serve.

Adapted from UKTV Food website: <http://uktv.co.uk/food/recipe/aid/512768>

Reusing CSA Boxes

We would like to encourage you to bring a canvas bag or a reused grocery store bag with you to pick up your produce at your CSA site, and leave your box at the site to be reused by us for future CSA deliveries. You may also bring old boxes back from home once you are finished with it to your CSA site on delivery days to be reused. While the wax on the boxes helps them stay strong while holding wet produce, it makes them unrecycleable. However, if we reuse these boxes, we can still save a few trees! Instructions are available at your CSA site on how to unfold them and where to leave them. Thank you for your help!