

Victory Garden Initiative

CSA Newsletter

2019
Week 2 -- June 18th

What's in your box?

Radish
Spinach
Lettuce
Baby Leek
Collard Greens
Cilantro
Thyme
Green Rhubarb



Use the same way as red!
Just a different variety, we
promise!

Farm Fresh Facts

Green with Envy

This time of year your boxes will be teaming with green, leafy crops! This can be intimidating, we know! Just how many salads can one person eat?! Luckily, there are lots of other things to do with greens! Try some of these ideas:

- Big, thick layers of greens go with any sandwich! Or, use them as a wrap!
- Add spinach, kale, chard, and collards to any soup for extra bulk.
- Cook them with eggs! Scrambled, fritatas, quiche, omelet, the options are endless!
- Add them to pasta dishes. Particularly cheesy ones!
- Bulk up your smoothies with extra fiber and nutrients!
- Experiment with heat. Lots of greens can withstand a quick stir fry or grilling, actually!

Field Report

Well, week two brings us deeper into the growing season and I feel it is important to have a discussion about how this crazy weather affects your local farmer. Coming from our industrialized food system, it is easy to overlook the challenges farmers face and how difficult this business can be. No matter what, we see the same vegetables in the produce section of our grocery stores. There are tomatoes and strawberries in the middle of January and bucket loads of perfectly crisp lettuce and blemish free apples. But that produce is shipped to us and is in no way the reality of your Wisconsin farmers who bring your produce to the farmer's market, local co-op, and your CSA box. To the farmers whose kids are in the same class as yours, who go to the same dentist and are pumping gas right next to you.



Flooded fields in north west Illinois. 6-13-2019 Photo courtesy of CNBC. Credit: Tom Polansek

Right now, Midwest farmers are feeling the beginnings of fear as fields still lie fallow, too wet to get a tractor in, as tiny seedlings start to wither from being pot bound, and as plants that should be in harvest mode already are barely beginning to fruit. Did you know that not a single strawberry farm in Southeast Wisconsin has opened for U-Pick?! We're usually reaching peak season right now, and no one even has red fields yet! Cedarburg Strawberry Fest is June 22nd and there are still no berries. Let that sink in.

That's not to say everything is doom and gloom! There is much to be thankful for, some crops are loving the rain, and we are seeing produce pour into local farmer's markets! It just means that some of your anticipated summer crops will show up later and that your pre-payment and patience is helping farmers to absorb the stress and financial blow-back of climate change. So we thank you for participating in this beautiful CSA model with us!

Weekly Recipe

White Bean and Hearty Greens Soup

- 1 lbs cooking greens (collards, kale, chard), chopped with tough ribs discarded
- 2 tbsp olive oil
- 1 large leek, diced
- 2 cloves garlic, minced
- 2 celery stalks, chipped
- 2 large carrots, sliced 1/4
- 1-2 large potatoes, diced
- 5-6 cups vegetable broth
- 2 cans white beans, drained
- salt and pepper to taste
- Optional: red pepper flakes or paprika, springs of fresh thyme and oregano



In a large stock pot, add oil and put on medium heat. Add fresh herbs (if using) and garlic for a quick sizzle then add leek, carrot, celery, and potato. Stir and turn down heat.

Cover and sweat vegetables for 8-10 minutes or until soft. Stir often to prevent sticking. You can add a tablespoon or two of water as needed to prevent burning/sticking. Remove herb sprigs.

Turn heat up and add collards and other hearty greens. Stir until softened. Add stock and beans until veggies well-covered. Bring to boil and then bring back down to simmer for about 20 minutes until greens are very tender. Adjust seasoning then cook for another minute. Serve with crusty bread, if that's your thing!

Community Corner

Roadside Farmstand

Every Tuesday during the CSA pick-up we will run a Pay-What-You-Can style Farmstand! This stand helps provide low and no cost produce to our neighbors and allows CSA members to supplement their weekly box. You are even welcome to trade an item from your box for something else at the stand!

Tuesdays, 4-6pm
240 E. Concordia Avenue

All Together, A Milwaukee Sing-In

Join 15+ community song leaders for a day of workshops and group singing for empowerment, healing, friendship, and growth. There is a fee, but with pay scales and waivers available. Lunch includes VGI produce and VGI staff will be there!

Saturday, June 22nd
VGI's Farm (9:30-5pm)
Alice's Garden (6:30-9:30)
<http://www.mkesingin.org/>



My name is Montana, VGI's new Community Events & Programs Manager. I grew up in Milwaukee and went to Shorewood High School but left to pursue a Master's in Social Justice & Community Organizing. I just moved into a house about half a block from our Urban Farm and I'm ready to work with my local community to break down the walls of racism, sexism, fascism, and oppression focused around local food and positive, healthy, and nature based interactions. I organized the 2019 BLITZ which was a roller-coaster but one of the most rewarding things I have done and I'm proud to say it was a huge success! I will be spending my summer organizing the Farmraiser for September and spending my afternoons on our urban farm. Please stop by and say Hi!