

This week's share:

- Potatoes, red or gold
- Onions, yellow
- ("It's baa-aack...")Cabbage
- Radishes, Easter Egg or Altaglobe
- Baby salad mix*
- Spinach, loose leaf*
- Braising mix*
- Herbs: fresh oregano OR chives*

*=items from the hoopouses (i.e. "WOW! That grew in Michigan in the winter???)

Announcements:

1. Summer CSA membership: Shares are filling up fast! We want to be sure to save your spot for summer! Current members (you) have until **April 1, 2004**, to renew membership with a guaranteed spot.

After April 1, we will take new members (or renewals) on a first-pay, first-served basis. We are expanding membership from 25 to 50 shares this summer, but we don't want to give away your

spot! The sooner we receive a check, either for a **\$150 deposit** or the **full share price of \$350**, the better.

The summer session will run for 16 weeks, like spring, and a share is intended to feed a family of four, or three vegetable lovers. If you currently split a share and wish to get a full share for summer (or vice versa), that's fine – just send in a deposit or pay in full, and note that you want a full share for summer. (**We don't offer half shares**, but we'll try to match up folks who want to split shares).

Make checks out to **MSU**, and either drop them off at CSA pick-up (for those who pick up at the farm), or mail to MSU Student Organic Farm, c/o Michelle Ferrarese, Dept. of Horticulture, A288 Plant and Soil Science Building, East Lansing MI 48824.

In case you're undecided about renewing your share, consider this: **peas, sweet corn, basil, tomatoes, kale, melons, cucumbers, zucchini, sweet onions,**

**green beans, carrots,
strawberries,
broccoli.....**

2. All previous (Fall 2003) members – please fill out and return the Fall 2003 Member Survey sent on email last week. Thank you. Extra bonus items for those who return surveys!

3. VOLUNTEERS INVITED to the farm, this FRIDAY, MARCH 26, 4:00-6:00 p.m. We'll be planting potatoes in the big hoophouse, for early new spuds this spring. Come dig in the dirt with us.

Also, every Thursday and Friday are good volunteer days: SEEDS need to get planted, WEEDS need pulling, SOIL should be prepared for planting, PLASTIC and hoopouses can be repaired, and of course we're harvesting for your CSA shares. Every THURSDAY morning is CSA harvest, and the more hands the better. Every FRIDAY afternoon is seeding, weeding, soil prep, maintenance, etc. Drop me an email or just show up, with old clothes (dress in layers this time of year), rain

gear if necessary, and your favorite weeding tool (or use ours—there's plenty!).

4. If you cannot make it to the regular pick-up time (4-6 p.m. Thursday) at the farm, please send an email before Wednesday, so we don't over-harvest. If you CAN make it the next day (Fri) or Monday, also please let us know, and we'll leave your share, bagged, in the cooler at the farm, and you can pick it up then. Thank you.

CSA Poem: Thank you so much for this, Patti!

It's Thursday Again by Patti Kenney

The week has flown by, with its hustle
and bustle,
My body's so tired, I can't move a muscle,
I glance at my calendar, thinking, and
then
break out in a smile--it's Thursday
again.

Thursday--the day I pick up from the
farm
home-grown vegis, herbs, flowers,
grown pure without harm,
Twice blessed--by the ground and the
students who grow them,
and pick them, and sort them, and love
them, and know them.

I pick up my bundle, a colorful treasure,
The bounty and beauty a gift beyond

measure.

I take in the shapes and the textures and sizes,

And think of the flavorful meal surprises

we'll enjoy through the week, as we try out new dishes.

All organic and locally grown, as our wishes

to live more sustainably, purely, have shown us,

so I thank you for all the good stuff you have grown us!

What's up at the farm?

Planting potatoes! The moon is on the wax, Friday is a biodynamic root day, and CSA members seemed to love the early new spuds last spring, so we'll be **planting potatoes** in the big hoophouse this **Friday, Mar. 26, afternoon from 4:00-6:00 p.m.** Feel free to come early or stay late; there's plenty of other work (i.e. weeding! And maybe transplanting, too) to do. It's pretty nice to work in a greenhouse when it's raining and cloudy –it's like being outside and inside all at once. I hope we'll see you then.

As for the rest of the farm, we're still in gear-up mode... all of our early transplants (i.e. a few thousand onions

and leeks, a few hundred celery and celeriac, and the first flowers) are greening up the benches in the heated greenhouse. We finally got our germination chamber up and running, to provide a warm, moist incubator to encourage the little sweeties to sprout, and they are! This and next week will see peppers, eggplants, and tomatoes enter the chamber in the form of seeds and exit as seedlings –it is always such a leap of faith, putting a seed in the soil. There's sometimes very little connection between that act and the beautiful plant that results, for me. I never really know what to expect from seeds....

Several classes, both MSU and local high school classes, have visited the farm recently, including an Environmental Journalism class who interviewed the student farmers (thanks for being put on the spot, Tuesday crew!) and learned about sustainable ag, composting, and what we do. If *you* teach or are in a class that would like to visit the farm, either for fun or as part of the coursework, please contact Emily Reardon, our Education and Outreach

Coordinator, at reardone@msu.edu. We host walking tours, volunteers, interviewers, courses that use the farm as part of their curriculum, prospective or current farmers, and more.

Last month, a reporter and photographer from the Lansing State Journal came out to talk and photograph the farm – we’re going to be part of a larger piece on organic agriculture – check the Lansing State Journal for interviews and photos from YOUR farm.

Recipes

What is “braising” mix?

To braise, by definition, means to cook something briefly on high heat, then longer at a low heat, letting it “steep in its own juices.” I suspect that referred originally to meat, however, veggies do have juices! And braising mixes are gaining popularity in seed catalogs as well as in supermarkets. I suggest doing a quick, high-heat stir-fry with the braising mix, then covering and letting it stew and steam for just a few moments more. Serve with rice, or whatever you want.

SOF Braising Mix Stirfry

½ bag braising mix
1 large onion, chopped
Any other rooty, yummy stuff you have around(garlic,

ginger, etc.), chopped
Tamari or soy sauce
Any high-heat oil

Wash (and chop if you want) braising mix. Heat a stainless steel wok or large cast-iron skillet over high heat, add a good dash of oil, heat the oil, quickly add the onions. Stirring constantly, don’t let them burn. Dump in braising mix and garlic, ginger, etc. together, keep stirring around til everything turns bright, bright green, and just barely wilts. (This is an active job – no setting still and letting the veggies burn, OK?). Remove from heat, cover, let it all hang out for a few minutes in its own steam and juices. Before enjoying, add a good splash of tamari – personally I think “soy sauce” often tastes icky – if you’ve never tried tamari, try it. Or shoyu – that’s pretty good, too. Alternately, you can go the lemon juice or vinegar (balsamic is lovely with this mix) route. Have your rice cooked, hot, and ready to eat when the greens are done – no wilted, grey greens!

Chard or spinach crepes

Crepe filling :

A bunch of coarsely chopped chard or spinach

1 grated carrot (or parsnip? –MF)

1 small finely diced onion

1/4 cup of tomato based pasta sauce

1 tsp ground cumin

salt to taste

Saute onion and carrot, then add the rest and a little water and simmer about 15 minutes

Crepes :

2 cups milk

2 egg

2 tablespoon melted butter or oil

flour to consistency (about 1 1/2 to 1 3/4 cup)

Batter should be liquid enough to cover the bottom of the skillet with gentle rocking motion. Brown on one side and flip over briefly.

Spread filling on the crepes and roll up. Can add a mild shredded cheese inside with the filling and/or as a topping.

Thanks to Linda French for this delicious-sounding recipe.

Crepes are really pretty easy, despite their gourmet reputation – just pour batter with a light touch, and don't be tempted to overcook. -MF