

Small CSA Contents:

- 1 whole pasture raised chicken
- 2 lbs organic cornmeal
- 1 bunch cilantro
- 1 bunch radishes w/ tops
- 1 head assorted leaf lettuce
- 2 hydroponic cucumbers
- 1 quart farmstead yogurt

Large Add-Ons

- Small bag plus items below
- 1 lb grassfed ground beef
- 1 hd bok choy
- ½ lb mixed organic salad greens
- 1 bunch swiss chard or leaf spinach
- 1 pickled product – hot or medium Hungarians or pepper butter

Vegetarian Subs – in place of chicken

- 1 pack Luna burgers
- 1 lb rhubarb
- 1 lb asparagus
- 1 bunch green onions

Vegan – replace chicken & yogurt

- Vegetarian substitutes
- 2 lbs hothouse tomatoes
- 1 bag tatsoi

Welcome to Fresh Fork

Thank you very much for subscribing to the Fresh Fork Summer CSA. Each week I'll provide you with a newsletter to help guide you in your local journey. The topics will range from farming techniques to recipes and preservation techniques.

The first few weeks of this year's CSA will focus on staples and pantry items. This is partly by design and partly by necessity due to the weather. These first few weeks you will sample grass grazed milk and butter, fresh ground cornmeal and flours, eggs, grassfed ground beef, and more. Some of these items, such as milk, won't appear regularly in the CSA but are available to purchase as add-ons each week.

2011 Season Outlook

There is nothing I hate worse than to talk about the weather; however, a lot of my customers have been asking how this spring will affect our season. I'm happy to answer this question because it helps fulfill part of my mission in running a community supported agriculture program – to connect us all with our food supply and recognize farming as a business.

Before the rain started I knew that 2011 would be an interesting year. While there were still a couple feet of snow on the ground I was working with my farmers on planning production, buying seeds, and locking in prices for this season. The producers I use are small, family farms, and while they aren't growing necessarily commodities, their price points are influenced by the commodities market. Field

corn, for example, was expected to bring about \$8 per bushel this year. Last year it was \$3. For anyone with tillable land, corn is easy money then. Much easier than growing fruits and vegetables. So one of my early outlooks was to expect many farmers to plant more row crops and less vegetables, therefore decreasing the supply and increasing the price, particularly at auction and terminal point markets. I worked with my producer to lock in my volume and prices on the vegetables I needed.

Some experts doubted whether corn would go to \$8 per bushel and stay there. I'm convinced it will. In the third week of May, Farm and Dairy reported that only 7% of Ohio's field crops had been planted. Last year it was 77%. This was all directly the result of the rain. Vegetables are in a similar situation. Plants I had intended to have for the early season – green onions, carrots, kale, radishes, mustard greens, etc – are four weeks behind schedule. Worse yet, the weather may get too hot and some of these plants may not ever be usable this year.

The rain and cold caused two problems this spring. First, anything that was in the ground wasn't getting the heat and sun that it needed to grow. Second, the farmers simply could not get in the fields to work the land. Their tractors and horses would get stuck; the soil would clump; and their planters and plastic layers wouldn't do anything. So while the farmers were waiting to get in the fields, their transplants were growing larger and larger in the green house. For some, the transplants outgrew their cells or disease struck the greenhouse and they lost their transplants, only to start over again.



Utilizing your Chicken...multiple times (by Parker Bosley)

What are you going to do with that whole chicken? Set it on the counter for a half hour. Dry it well. Heat the oven to 450 degrees. Place a rack in a roasting pan or cover the bottom of the pan with chopped onions, carrots and celery. Season the chicken inside and out with salt and pepper. Lather it with soft butter. Place the bird breast side up in the roasting pan and put it into hot oven. Reduce the heat to 400. After 20 minutes reduce the heat to 350. Roast the chicken for about 1 hour and 30 minutes. Remove from the oven. Don't over-cook the chicken.

Set the roasted chicken on the counter and let it cool for two or three hours. Now you have the center piece for a perfect summer meal. Salad, potatoes with olive oil and herbs. You don't have to fire up the grill or the stove. Cook in the morning. Enjoy in the evening.

Here is another idea. This involves a little work. Place the chicken on the cutting board, breast side up. Remove the thigh-leg pieces. Push the thigh away from the body by placing your thumb and fingers between the thigh and the body and then opening your hand. Carefully cut the skin that should be stretched by this action. Once the flesh is exposed put the knife aside. Hold the carcass with one hand and break the thigh-leg piece from the body. It should pop at the joint. Now you can cut across and remove it from the body. Do the same with the other side.

With the point of the knife and keeping the knife perpendicular to the body cut along the breast bone to remove the breasts. The knife blade should be scraping on the bone. Carefully peel away the meat from the rib cage. Cut between the wing bone and the carcass leaving the wing attached to the breast. Remove the first two joints from the wings. Now you have two leg-thigh pieces and two boneless breasts—four portions. You may choose to separate the thigh from the leg to create four pieces.

Choose your favorite method for preparing the thigh-leg pieces. For the boneless breasts you can be a little more creative. Goat cheese, herbs and butter with a little minced garlic scape placed under the skin works well. Blanche some spinach. Mix it with goat cheese and herbs. Place this mixture under the skin.

Brown the chicken breasts skin side down in some butter and olive oil. Get a good brown crust on the skin. Turn the breasts and cook for one or two minutes. Place them on a plate and let them finish in the oven.

Weather you roast the chicken whole or take in apart, you have the makings of a good batch of chicken stock. Place all the bones on cooked or from the roasted chicken in a heavy-bottom pan. Add some chopped onion, celery and carrot. Add enough water to cover the bones and vegetables. Bring to the boil and skim for a couple of minutes. Reduce the heat to low. Add some dried thyme and a bay leaf. Cook for 4-5 hours. Add more water to keep the level above the bones and vegetables.

Let the stock cool for a few minutes then strain it through a damp towel. Refrigerate the stock over night. The next day, remove the fat from the top. Strain again. Return the stock to the pot and boil until the volume is reduced by 1/3. Cool the stock. Freeze it in small containers for future use.

If you can't make stock this week, freeze the carcass and bones and make it in the future. Never throw out chicken bones!

Radishes

One of the first spring crops is the radish. Sadly, few people appreciate the radish. It's a salad garnish for many. But here are some different ideas for how to use it:

Pickled

I had to twist Heather Haviland's (Lucky's Café) arm to take some beautiful radishes two weeks back. She hates radishes and I knew that. Heather, her sous chef, and I spend about an hour together each Saturday shooting the breeze and figuring out what they can do with some of my extras. I cringed as I said radish.

After a few minutes though, we found a use. Heather was going to feature a smoked turkey breast sandwich the next weekend. Pickled radishes would add a kick and contrast to the turkey.

To pickle the radishes, coarsely grate them or slice them into thin slices. Slice a small onion as well. In a separate bowl, mix together a half cup of sugar, 2/3 cup of vinegar (white wine, rice, or something else light in flavor), and 2 tps salt. Once the salt and sugar are dissolved, mix the radishes and liquid together. Cover with plastic wrap and refrigerate for two days before serving.

Roasted

Slice your radishes into thick slices or small cubes. Sauté with butter in a skillet and serve.

Also, you can toss them with butter or olive oil and roast in the oven.

Roasted Radishes with Brown Butter, Lemon, and Radish Tops (from Bon Appetit, April 2011)

Ingredients:

1 large bunch radishes
1.5 tablespoons olive oil
Kosher salt
2 tablespoons unsalted butter
1 tsp fresh lemon juice

Preheat oven to 450°F. Brush large heavy-duty rimmed baking sheet with olive oil. Cut off all but 1/2 inch of green radish tops; reserve trimmed tops and rinse them well, checking for grit.

Coarsely chop radish tops and set aside. Cut radishes lengthwise in half and place in medium bowl. Add 1 1/2 tablespoons olive oil and toss thoroughly to coat. Place radishes, cut side down, on prepared baking sheet; sprinkle lightly with coarse salt. Roast until radishes are crisp-tender, stirring occasionally, about 18 minutes. Season to taste with more coarse kosher salt, if desired.

Over medium-high heat you will brown the butter. Add butter and a pinch of coarse kosher salt to skillet and cook until butter browns, swirling skillet frequently to keep butter solids from burning, about 3 minutes. Remove skillet from heat and stir in fresh lemon juice.

Transfer roasted radishes to warmed shallow serving bowl and drizzle brown butter over. Sprinkle with chopped radish tops and serve.

Variation: You may also sauté the radish greens to eat with the radishes.

Rhubarb

First, don't eat any bit of the leaves on the stalk. Most of the leaves have been removed. The leaves are mildly toxic and will give you stomach pains.

Rhubarb is used to make jams, sauces, and for baking. I was going to write about how to make rhubarb jam...but there are so many variations that it is scary! In general, you are going to cook rhubarb in a small amount of water. The rhubarb contains lots of water so it will stay liquidy. Other sweeteners such as sugar or even fruits such as apples and strawberries are added to the rhubarb to mellow out the bitter taste. At this point, one may either continue to make jam (adding pectin, etc) or use the rhubarb as a sauce for dressing desserts, serving over a nice pork roast, pork chops, or chicken or duck.

For a very good article on rhubarb, please visit Wikipedia. Their article is rather thorough on the uses.

To recap, you may:

Make a jam: search the web for countless recipes on jams

Make a sauce: this will be a sweet and sour sauce containing rhubarb, a sweetener (sugar, honey, other fruit), and optionally apples. This will pair well with pork and turkey, kind of like a chutney. Try serving it on a pork chop, pork roast, sliced turkey, or the ham loaf from a few months back.

Bake with it: Rhubarb pie! I haven't made one so I feel bad suggesting how.

Cornmeal

Anyone who has done the CSA before or has dined at my house knows I love cornmeal. Below is one of my favorite recipes. I'll also have a cornmeal recipe in next week's newsletter for breakfast corn cakes.

Crusty Spoonbread (Julia Childs)

Ingredients:

3/4 cup yellow corn meal
1/4 cup bread flour or all purpose flour
1 tablespoon sugar
3/4 tsp salt
1 tsp baking powder
1 cup milk
1 beaten egg

Sift together dry ingredients. Stir in the beaten egg and milk. Beat the batter until well blended (by hand).

Melt 2 tablespoons of butter into an 8x8 baking dish. Ceramic or cast iron are best. Pour in the batter and pour over the top 1/2 cup milk. Place in 375 degree oven for approximately 45 minutes. The top should be good and crusty around the edges and soft in the middle. Serve hot/warm. The time varies some depending on depth of your pan.

Pasture Raised vs Free Range

This is a topic I will rant about all summer and continually educate you on. Free range simply means the birds aren't caged up. To many industrial producers, such as Tyson or Gerber, that means free range within a large chicken barn. So they never see green grass!



Pasture raised means that the birds are outside on pasture. The device you see in the photo above is chickens in a "chicken tractor." This is a 14' by 14' cage with an open bottom. The cage contains about 50 birds and is moved twice per day; the cage protects the chickens from predators and promotes high density grazing, which is good for both the birds and the pasture. When the cage is moved it looks like the grass has been mowed, hence the name chicken tractor.

The idea behind this is that the birds receive fresh air, sunshine, and can eat all the grass, clover, and bugs they can find in the organic pastures. In general, the chickens get about 30% of their diet from this forage. The chicken manure left behind is in turn great fertilizer for the pasture.

While this process is more labor intensive and doesn't scale as well, I think you will notice the quality difference in these birds!

Upcoming Events

Wine Country Tour: Sun, June 26, 9 – 6 Cost: \$83. Tour 4 Ohio wineries, bus transportation, lunch, snacks, and wine tastings included. Learn about growing grapes, making wine, tasting and pairing. Only 24 seats left on our bus.

A link to the reservation page can be found on the Events page at www.freshforkmarket.com

Beet Beet Revolution: Sun, Jun 12, 2 PM. Cost \$15.

Join Fresh Fork at the Grovewood Tavern at 17105 Grovewood Ave for a day of fun with beets. Beth, Tadas, and Chef Josh will demonstrate five or six different recipes and techniques about how to use beets. You will then be provided samples of each of the dishes.

There is a lab fee of \$15 for this event that covers the cost of your samples. Drinks not included.