



# This Week's Word From the Farm

6/21/10

## What's In Your Box ?

- **Spring Garlic** – This fresh or “green” garlic is a gourmet treat and may be used without peeling the cloves
- **Bulbing Fennel** – Try shaved raw into a salad or added to your favorite sauté. The greens make a **great** fresh herb for fish
- **Fresh Herb Bouquet** – Use this sage, oregano, rosemary, thyme and savory now or dry it for the future.
- **Beets** – Roast, steam or boil until tender, then slip them from their skins and serve warm or chilled in a salad.
- **Arugula**
- **Kohlrabi** – This may be our most unusual looking vegetable but also one of the most versatile. Try it raw in a salad or as chip for your favorite dip. It is also delicious cooked.
- **Braising Mix** – A combination of young greens for a sauté or stirfry
- **Strawberries**
- **Polenta** – from Grass Valley Grains
- **Apricots** – from Chaffin Family Orchard

Dear Friends,

What a Spring it has been! And, here we are nearing the end of June and not a day of 90-degree weather behind us and none in sight. We started our first transplants on February 1<sup>st</sup> this year and brought our full crew together to start summer preparations at the beginning of April, yet with the late rains and the cool weather generally, most of the crops in our fields are about a month behind schedule. The cool weather has made it a real pleasure working in the fields, but we do hope for heat for the tomatoes, peppers, melons and other heat-loving crops.

For those of you who were able to make our Sunday potluck, many thanks for coming. After all the work of the past few months, it's great to have your company again at the farm.

We have a remarkable group of young people working here this season. We hope you'll take the time to introduce yourselves to them and find out a little bit about them. Working with them these past nearly three months has been a real pleasure for Jo and I, and I trust you'll come to appreciate their spirit, dedication and hard work. Thanks to them, the farm is especially well-tended and beautiful this season.

There are a couple of treats in the box this week. We're providing each share with apricots grown by Chaffin Orchards in Oroville. Many of you are already familiar with the quality of Chaffin's fruit. For those of you who aren't, they grow cherries, apricots, peaches, nectarines, grapefruit and olives, as well as eggs, poultry, and beef. You can find their fruit at the Nevada City Farmers' Market on Saturdays in downtown Nevada City.

You'll also find polenta milled this very morning by Reed Hamilton of Grass Valley Grains. Reed grows grain near Wheatland as well as other crops such as quinoa over on the Bierwagen place in Chicago Park. He makes great pancake mix and mills his own flour. We'll have a larger booth at the Nevada City Farmers' Market this year in order to provide space to sell Reed's grains and grain products. Reed is an extraordinary individual and a great farmer and we'd like to encourage all of you to stop by our Farmers' Market booth to see what he has to offer.

We extend an earnest welcome and give our heartfelt thanks to all of you who are joining us this farm season. There aren't too many things that are comparable to joining a CSA farm. You pay your money in the heart of winter to people you may never have met to get a product that hasn't been grown yet from a place you've never been. Still, as many of our veteran subscribers can attest, the rewards are clear: an abundance of fresh farm produce picked that very morning at the peak of flavor and quality offered to you by the very hands that have labored with care to bring the food to your table. For those of you coming to the farm, there's the added benefit of watching the progress of the season and the opportunity to gain a deeper appreciation of what a beautiful, extraordinary place Riverhill Farm is. Thanks again, and we look forward to seeing you each week!

## Recipes of the Week:

### Lemony Arugula Salad with Pine Nuts and Parmesan

- Approx. 4 cups fresh arugula
- 1/3 cup olive oil
- 1/4 cup fresh lemon juice
- 1/3 cup shaved parmesan
- 1/4 cup pine nuts
- Salt and pepper to taste

Rinse and dry the arugula thoroughly. Toast the pinenuts on a tray at 325 until lightly browned. Combine lemon juice, olive oil, salt and pepper and mix well until it begins to thicken. Toss arugula in a large bowl with dressing. Sprinkle with parmesan and pine nuts.

Arugula Pesto - a great alternative to traditional basil pesto, this peppery, bright green pesto can be used as a dip or tossed with pasta and veggies such as artichoke hearts, sun-dried tomatoes or olives for a tasty meal. Compliments of our intern, Simca.

- 4 cups arugula
- 1/3 cup olive oil
- 1/2 cup walnuts
- 2 cloves garlic
- Grated peel from 1/2 lemon
- Salt and pepper to taste

Combine arugula, walnuts, garlic, lemon peel, salt and pepper in a food processor and process, slowly adding the olive oil until a smooth paste forms. If not using right away, store the pesto in an airtight container in the fridge until ready to use. Covering the surface of the pesto with a thin layer of olive oil will help preserve the bright green color.

### Perfect Polenta

- 7 to 8 Cups cold Water
- 2 cups Polenta
- 3/4 cup unsalted butter
- 1 cup grated Parmesan cheese

Stir 7 cups cold water and the polenta together in a large heavy saucepan. Cook over low heat, stirring often and scraping the bottom of the pot, until thick and it no longer feels grainy on your tongue, about 30 minutes. Add more water if the polenta thickens too much before it's cooked. Stir in the butter and Parmesan and season to taste with salt. You can serve the polenta soft right out of the pot or pour it into a double boiler and keep it warm over simmering water. To sauté or bake, first spread the polenta onto buttered baking sheets and refrigerate until firm. Once it's cooled, cover it with plastic wrap. Cut the polenta into strips or triangles in the baking sheet. To sauté, cook the strips in butter or olive oil in a cast-iron skillet over high heat until golden on both sides. To bake, place the strips in a buttered dish and sprinkle with Parmesan cheese. Bake at 400 until hot and crusty.

We suggest topping your polenta with arugula pesto or roasted fennel, yum!