



BLACKBROOK FARM

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Cost/Value Dichotomy

We hope you enjoyed the last delivery. We are pleased to bring you another brimming box of spring veggies this week. We always know it will be a great box when we don't finish packing until the end of the work day on Wednesday. The best summer boxes frequently keep us working until about 10:00pm on Wednesdays. Harvesting, washing, packing, and delivery are actually around 60% of the cost of producing veggies. That makes sense when you see how much time we spend on those tasks. But it's all in a day's work for your humble farmers.

Well, speaking of the cost of producing veggies, I wanted to address the cost/value dichotomy that exists in most people's minds around the subject of food. Broadly speaking, Americans are incredibly cost sensitive when it comes to buying food. And who could blame us, thrift is an excellent virtue. However, with all the obsession around the dollar cost of food, which has led to the predominance of large box stores who sell food at rock bottom prices (Wal-Mart, Sam's Club, Cub Foods, etc), consumers have largely lost their eye for the value of the products they buy. Value is of course less tangible than dollar cost. It is easy to compare price tags while it is difficult to compare products on the basis of quality or taste or its impact on the world. Consumers are not entirely at fault for this. The advertising world has trained us to look at price tags. Some corporate businesses also do not only obscure information about how products are manufactured or grown, they actually spread misinformation on the subject. Peruse the Land O Lakes webpage, for instance, and you will read stories

What's in the Box:

- Kohlrabi-** So many things to do with a kohlrabi! Recipe included.
- Green Scallions-** Fresh and crisp green onions. Eat fresh or cooked. You can use the whole thing.
- Pea Shoots-** These will need to be chopped small or lightly cooked, as they are a bit tough on the bottoms. Otherwise, these are a sweet pea treat! Recipe included.
- Napa Cabbage/Pac Choi-** Half shares Napa Cabbage, Full shares Pac Choi- Use the recipe from the last couple of newsletters. These will not keep well in the fridge inside of a plastic bag. Google a kimchi recipe!
- Garlic Scapes-** These are the tops of garlic that need to be cut in order for the garlic bulb to grow well under the ground. It's double good, because they are really tasty! Mild garlic flavor, so great in scrambled eggs, in potato or egg salad or just chopped in any other dish. Use the whole thing. Recipe included.
- Red Butterhead/Red and Green Leaf Head Lettuce-** 2-3 heads of lettuce- best if washed and chopped into a bag right away for best storage.
- Braising Mix-** .5 lb of a mix of red/green mustards, tatsoi, baby kale, arugula and mizuna. We love to braise this with garlic, onion, olive oil and a little vinegar and maple syrup. You can then eat this with eggs, on a sandwich or just as a side for dinner. We also eat it as a fresh spicy salad.
- Green Curly Kale-** Who needs a kale explanation?! Eat more kale!
- Cucumbers-** 2 Cucumbers! They are coming in strong in the hoop house this year, despite a heavy cucumber beetle year.
- Radishes/Turnips-** Either one this week. Our first succession of turnips did not germinate well, so we are rotating them throughout the to



Ronia eating a strawberry straight from the field! Sula is always keeping watch on her



Packline pic

Box #3

of all the good they are doing around the world. Corporate farms submit these inflated claims to consumers in order to create a greater impression of value in their products. This really obscures the facts from consumers, most of whom would be very upset if they were to visit the CAFO dairies that provide the milk, or witness the multi-acre manure lagoons that lead to excess nutrient pollution of the land and water. This is true of the veggie industry as well. Ten thousand acre vegetable farms, organic or conventional, will give you happy stories and low prices, but the sacrifices are ecology, chemical residue on food, and low nutrient density. With consumers focused on cost, we've become less conscious of the value of our purchases.

The great thing about the CSA model is that we can bring you the best value money can buy. At the very same time, because of the direct relationship between you, the consumer and us, the producer, we get to cut out the middle man (a food distributor) and pass the savings onto you. That's the power of CSA, bringing you guilt free food at a reasonable cost.

On a house keeping note: We apologize to anyone who may have had a mix up with their box last week. There may have been a few people who got full shares instead of half shares, or vice versa. The contents varied slightly, though the value was the same. This was because of the trouble we've been having this year with labels adhering to your waxed boxes. We really haven't had this problem before, so it's weird to us. We are looking for new labels that will stick better and have begun taping some of the labels to the boxes. Our interns who deliver are also aware and will be diligent to assure that you get the correct box. Please let us know if you had troubles that you would like addressed.

Half shares will notice a flier in your boxes from Red Clover Herbal

make sure people get them. But radishes are pretty good, too!

Fresh Fresh Strawberries- All *Half shares and some full shares*. That's right, folks! We went out there this week thinking we might get around 20-30 qts and picked 98 qts! So, if you did not get strawberries this week (all half shares did get them) you will get them next week. Eat fresh (let them come to room temp for best flavor) they don't store well because they are picked when red, not green (like in California).

Apothecary, a small medicinal herb farm in our area that belongs to Ayla's mom, Nancy. We urge you to consider an herbal share from her which contains an abundance of practical and healing products. You can also customize your herbal share in a variety of ways.

That's all folks! Have a great week!

James, Ayla and Ronia

What in store for next week?
these are some of the crops we are hoping for next week:

Snap peas?
Arugula
Broccoli?
Swiss chard
head lettuce
Radishes/turnips
Cucumbers
Kohlrabi
Scallions
spring mix
cilantro
garlic scapes

Boxes and egg cartons:

Please return your box to your dropsite each week so that we can continue to reuse them. A good way to remember to do this is by bringing a canvas or reusable bag with you to your dropsite. Then you can unload all those fresh veggies into your bag and never even bring your box home! Egg Share members

Garlic Farm Legacy Scape Pesto Recipe

From the Garlic Farm

1 cup (or less) freshly grated Parmesan cheese or other sharp Italian cheese
1-2 tablespoons freshly squeezed lime or lemon juice, adjusted to taste
1/4 pound roughly chopped scapes
1/2 cup olive oil
salt to taste
Puree scapes, olive oil, and juice in a blender or food processor until nearly smooth. Gently stir in the cheese or gingerly pulse the cheese into the mixture; take it easy as you mix in the cheese to avoid making the pesto gummy by overblending. Taste and then adjust juice and salt to taste. Use within two or three days. freeze for longer storage.

Kohlrabi and Pea Shoot Patties with Cilantro Yogurt Sauce

From Asparagus to Zucchini.

1 bunch cilantro, stemmed, finely chopped
Juice of 1 lime
1/2 teaspoon salt
1 teaspoon honey
5 ounces plain yogurt
Patties:
1 tablespoon Dijon mustard
1 tablespoon minced ginger
1 tablespoon minced garlic
1 tablespoon curry powder
Salt and pepper to taste
1/2 cup packed pea shoots or (Asian) greens
3 medium kohlrabi or equivalent
2 tablespoons flour
1 egg
1/4 cup vegetable oil
1 cup bread crumbs
Combine sauce ingredients and let stand 30 minutes. Meanwhile, mix all ingredients for the patties except breadcrumbs and vegetable oil. Heat oil in a large nonstick skillet over medium heat. Form kohlrabi mixture into small patties, squeezing hard to remove excess moisture. Roll patties in bread crumbs. Fry patties on both sides until golden brown, about 4 minutes per side. Drain on paper towels. Serve with cilantro dipping sauce. Makes 6 patties.