

News from the farm ...

As the weather appears to finally have made a turn for sunny days and warmer nights, we hope that some of our long-ago planted beets, cabbages, and spring onions will make a jump. Cool weather is nice for the bitter greens and makes for pleasant evenings on the lawn mower – but not a friend to the tender tomato, cucumber, or pepper plant.

This is probably a good time to share a reminder that your baskets will not be the same amount of produce each week. As the season progresses, it will contain more than only 5 or 6 different items. Eventually we will reach those August weeks when your basket might have 12 or 13 different things, be bursting full, and we have to try very hard not to overload you. Over the course of the season, the weekly amounts averaged out will meet or exceed the size share you signed up for. This is the joy and the challenge of eating seasonally.

NEW: Check out the “Vegetable of the Week and Swap Box” at your pickup location. Each week we will try to offer an item for you to choose to add to your basket. It may be something that is in abundance or it may be a more unusual item for you to try. This box will also contain anything that other members prefer to share with you from their own baskets. They swapped it. So, after you get your basket, check out the box!

In the basket ...

More of the items you received last week along with a couple of new things this week. Everything but the asparagus and strawberries are certified organic.

Asparagus - We hope that you like this yummy spring treat. We had hoped to deliver you more than this, but asparagus is a tricky crop. Last season's rainfall affects this season's crop. As you may recall it didn't rain much last summer, so the roots did not build up the reserve they needed to produce in abundance this spring. Enjoy what we have, not a lot, but awfully tasty.

Vegetables of the Week: Mixed Braising Greens and/or Arugula

We have a mixture of kale, red kale, collard, mustard, and turnip greens. You can also choose to add arugula (another type of spring green) to your basket. This Astro Arugula has less deeply lobed leaves and a bitter, peppery taste while highly aromatic. It can be eaten raw in salads or cooked like any other greens.

Green Onions - These green onions are great in salads. Or you can sauté them. They are milder than large white onions. You can store them in a plastic bag in the refrigerator for up to a week.

Greens - Included are kale greens, you may have added from the swap box other varieties. Greens have a good deal of vitamins A and C, some B vitamins, folic acid, calcium, and iron. They are one of the healthiest foods to include in any meal. (Recipes are below to help you be creative)

Swiss Chard - This is a mixture of Bright Lights, Bright Yellow, Golden Sunrise, and Pink Passion. Bright Lights itself is a mixture of gold, pink, orange, purple, red, and white Chard. It has slightly curly leaves and a milder flavor than other types of chard.

Chard is a member of the beet family. To store, wash leaves and shake off the extra moisture. Put in a plastic bag in the refrigerator with a few pieces of paper towel. It will store for 3 to 5 days.

Lettuce and Spring Salad Mix -In addition to more of the salad mix chosen from our loose-leaf varieties, there is also head lettuce this week.

From what we have learned, there are four types of lettuce grown in this country – iceberg, which is crisp; butterhead, which is softer (Bibb lettuce is one type of butterhead); looseleaf, which does not head and is very tender; and Romaine or Coss lettuce, which grows in a V-shape.

Here at Elmwood, we grow everything but iceberg. It doesn't grow well in the hot weather of Kentucky and the center will tend to wither before

forming a head. This is our first year for two of the butterhead varieties, so we can't wait to see how they do on our farm. We've been growing most of the looseleaf and Romaine varieties for years, and they've done very well.

Potatoes, Blue or Gold -You had gold potatoes last week. This week you get to enjoy some wonderful organic blue potatoes. These are heirloom All-Blue potatoes that have a deep blue skin and a lavender blue flesh. They're very flavorful and can be roasted, boiled, or sautéed with the skins on.

Strawberries -Yummy, yummy! These don't need much explanation. Many of you who came to the farm saw our berries growing in our high tunnel and probably saw that we had lost some plants over the winter. Because of this, we added to our own harvest with berries from a fellow farmer – his growing practices are conscientious, while not organic certified.

Recipes to enjoy ...

Here are some recipes to try this week. Some tips for preparing any of the cooking greens, especially in a sauté or quick cook dish:

1. Fold the leaf in half along the stem. Slice along the top of the leaf down towards the bottom, removing the thicker stem.
2. Stack several leaves together and roll them into a cigar-shaped roll.
3. Cut slices of the roll, resulting in ribbons of the greens ready for cooking.
4. You can chop up the stems to prepare also – just remember that they take more time to cook than the leaves and should be popped into the pan first to soften before adding the greens.

Asparagus Crostini

This recipe is from a recent edition of Cooking Light. With this week's small asparagus portion, you may need to halve the bread and cheese.

24 1-inch slices baguette
1 pound asparagus, trimmed
1 ½ tsp extra virgin olive oil
¼ tsp salt

1/8 tsp black pepper
½ cup grated Parmesan

Preheat broiler. Place bread slices in single layer on baking sheet. Broil 1 minute. Remove from oven, turn over slices, and broil 1 more minute. Remove from oven.

Bring 1 inch of water in large skillet to a boil over medium-high heat. Add asparagus and cook for a couple of minutes or until crisp-tender. Drain and plunge into ice water. Drain again. Chop asparagus. Place in bowl with oil, salt, and pepper. Toss to coat. Top each bread slice with mixture. Then sprinkle with cheese. Broil 1 minute or until cheese melts.

The next two recipes are adaptations from the book *From Asparagus to Zucchini*.

Asian-Style Sauté

2 tbsp sesame oil
3 or 4 cloves garlic, chopped
½ pound mixed greens, chopped
1 tbsp vinegar
2 tbsp tamari or soy sauce
black pepper

Heat oil in large skillet over medium heat. Add garlic and sauté for a couple of minutes. Remove garlic and set aside. Sauté the greens until wilted. Remove from heat and stir in vinegar, tamari, pepper, and garlic. Makes 2 to 4 servings.

Spanish Chard

2 tbsp olive oil
3 cloves garlic, chopped
1 pound chard or other greens
salt and pepper
¼ cup raisins
3 tbsp pine nuts, toasted

Heat oil in large skillet over high heat. Add garlic and sauté until golden, about 30 seconds. Discard garlic and add greens to skillet. Season with salt and pepper. Cover and wilt greens for 2 or 3 minutes. Add raisins and nuts. Season again if desired. Makes 2 to 4 servings.