



LOON ORGANICS

www.loonorganics.com

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This Week's Box:

Salad Mix- Mixture of baby salad leaves. Mix will change every week.

Baby Spinach- baby leaves are crunchy and clean-tasting.

Head lettuce: Red Butter/ Red Romaine and Green Romaine- head lettuce is at its prime right now!

Baby Swiss Chard- Small leaves are great raw or slightly cooked.

Herbs- Parsleys and Oregano

Baby Fennel- Whole plant is edible.

Garlic Scapes- Curly flower tops of garlic that we snap off to make the garlic bulb grow bigger.

Has a mild garlic flavor with a consistency of a green bean.

Green Garlic- young garlic plant; use like a leek or scallion. It is very fresh and juicy, with a stronger garlic aftertaste. White and light green parts are most tender—leaves are edible but tougher. Leaves are great for flavoring soups.

Let me know if you want to receive newsletters via e-mail as well—sent out on Tuesday afternoon and evenings.

Also, bread shares and meat shares are still available from Great Harvest Bread Co. and Sunshine Harvest. E-mail us and we'll send you the info!

Week 1: Welcome!

Hello to all new and returning CSA members! We are very happy to be delivering your first box of many this season. If you are new to our CSA, our weekly newsletters included with each week's box give us a chance for us to update you on farm happenings in the field and with your farmers. We talk a lot about the weather, some may say we are even slightly obsessed with the weather (but who isn't in Minnesota?) since that is the primary force that affects so much of the when, what, where, why and how of vegetable market gardening. First and foremost, a CSA share is an experience in eating *seasonally*, and our Loon Letter hopes to make it as easy as possible for you. Cooking, storage and preservation tips, recipes, and nutritional information about the weekly vegetables are always located on Page 2 of this newsletter. If you'd also like to receive an e-mail version of our newsletter, please e-mail me to get on the list.

The news from the farm this season is dominated by (what else is new?) the loony weather we've had—heavy rains, thunderstorms, high winds, cold temperatures, a late frost in May, pest problems, but most importantly, NO HAIL. Hail is a four letter word to any farmer (tornado is too bad to mention), and with each raucous storm system that has torn across Minnesota we cross our fingers that the hail stays "up there". So far so good. Heavy rains did wedge a lot of dirt way down into the heart of the lettuce. Although we have rinsed and washed your heads of lettuce, it will definitely need another thorough washing before you eat it. In general, we try to give you really clean vegetables just in case you want to break off a carrot or grab a handful of salad mix for the ride home (it also makes the vegetables look much more appealing and beautiful in your box), but it's always a good idea to wash everything again before you use it.

Most farmers in Minnesota, us included, are about 2 weeks behind, and even starting the CSA a little bit late this year, we are still sorry that there isn't a wider variety of vegetables in your box this week. Hopefully, you all are very hungry for fresh, crisp greens after a long winter of lifeless and often, tasteless faraway greens. Salad greens, lettuces, and spinach this time of year are extremely nourishing for your body—they act as a detoxifier and tonic to clean out and refresh your body after heavy winter comfort food. We've been making large salads for lunch every day with some crumbles of good cheese and a wedge of bread. It is satisfying and filling, even for a farmer! Other good produce is coming in soon though—next week we hope to include: baby beets, kale, maybe sugar snap peas. We will have at least 3-4 weeks of fat and juicy sugar snap peas this year: Hooray! Cucumbers and baby carrots on the horizon within 2 weeks too. Thanks for taking part! -laura

What Laura would do with your box:

This will be a weekly feature where someone (me or another cook, maybe you?) share what they would do with the box's contents, hopefully giving you ideas so that you can use and enjoy all of your CSA produce...

First things first, put everything in the fridge, wrapped in plastic if it isn't already. Leave the heads of lettuce out and take leaves apart, wash, dry lightly and put in fridge for salads, sandwiches and lettuce wraps over the next week. Take a few sprigs of various herbs and chop finely—mix with softened goat cheese or butter for a fantastic spread for bread and vegetables. For dinner wash green garlic stalks and fennel thoroughly and put on the grill whole (or broil in the oven) for around 10 minutes until soft and tender. Brush with melted herb butter. Garnish a plate with a few grilled stalks and serve with a spinach and mixed greens salad with bread and herbed cheese/butter. For another meal, I'd steam or braise baby Swiss Chard for 1 minute, dress with sesame oil and soy sauce, and serve with salmon dressed with fresh herbs. Finally, use the rest of the green garlic and garlic scapes to make a garlicky fried rice or an herbed pesto (add in fresh spinach to both!). Use leftover fried rice to make lettuce wraps—great for lunch or snacks.

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Recipe corner

Oh, but this weather has been awesome for the lettuce! Lettuce is made up of a lot of water, and with the rain and warmer temps, the varieties have grown big, fluffy, SO tender, and never bitter. We gave you a lot of lettuce this week, but this is THE time to eat head lettuce. It is at its seasonal peak right now and don't worry, we won't send this much home with you next week! Fresh salads are our number one recommendation for lettuce. Don't forget to add chopped green garlic or garlic scapes to your salad or salad dressing.

Baby Spinach, especially such young, tender leaves, are great raw for salads, but warm, wilted spinach salads are also very tasty—with more depth often than a raw salad. Try the following from Alice Water's fabulous cookbook, [Chez Panisse Vegetables](#). We modified it slightly to include green garlic/garlic scapes and omitting the bacon is always an option too—it's still good!

Warm Spinach Salad

Wash and dry very fresh spinach leaves. Prepare and fry some bacon until crisp. Save the rendered fat. Oil and toast small croutons of bread, if desired. Marinate diced green garlic or garlic scapes in red wine vinegar with a pinch of salt. Whisk in olive oil to taste, keeping the dressing rather sharp. Put the leaves in a stainless steel bowl and toss with dressing. Mix in the bacon and croutons and season with pepper. Put the bowl over a pan of simmering water and toss continuously with tongs while the salad heats. Remove when leaves are just wilted and serve immediately on warm plates.

Fettuccine with Walnut Parsley Pesto

3/4 cup walnut halves (3 ounces)

1/4 cup flat-leaf/curly parsley leaves, plus 2 tablespoons coarsely chopped

1/2 cup freshly grated Parmesan cheese, plus shavings for garnish

1/2 pound fettuccine

1 garlic clove, smashed or chopped garlic scapes

1/4 cup extra-virgin olive oil

Salt and freshly ground pepper

1/2 cup vegetable stock

1 tablespoon unsalted butter

Preheat the oven to 350°. Toast the walnuts in a pie plate for 7 minutes, or until golden; let cool. Coarsely chop 1/4 cup of walnuts and transfer to a bowl; add the 2 tablespoons of chopped parsley and half of the grated Parmesan.

In a large pot of boiling salted water, cook the pasta until al dente; drain. In a mini food processor, pulse the remaining 1/2 cup of walnuts with the 1/4 cup of parsley leaves and the garlic until finely chopped. Add the remaining grated Parmesan cheese and the olive oil and process to a coarse puree. Season the pesto with salt and pepper.

Return the pasta to the pot. Add the vegetable stock and butter and simmer until the liquid is nearly absorbed, 1 to 2 minutes. Off the heat, add the pesto and toss until combined. Transfer the pasta to a bowl, garnish with the walnut, parsley and Parmesan topping and Parmesan shavings and serve.

Recipe from: www.erinskitchen.blogspot.com She used soba noodles instead of fettuccine. You can also add in some fresh spinach to your pesto mixture if you want a larger quantity.

Hope you enjoy your box and we'll see you next week!

Your farmers, Laura and Adam