



LOON ORGANICS

Laura Frerichs & Adam Cullip

23229 200th St Hutchinson, MN 55350

Phone: 320.587.0140

loonorganics@hotmail.com

www.loonorganics.com

What's in the box 7/3:

Baby Bok Choi: the whole plant is edible (leaves and stems). See last week's newsletter for a great fried rice recipe.

Cilantro: chop cilantro to add to salad dressings, burritos, enchiladas, fried rice, or salsa.

Green top Colored Beets: these are a two for one vegetable! The greens and the roots are edible. Gold, red, and candy-striped varieties. They all have similar flavor.

Rainbow Chard: Check the week 1 newsletter for chard recipes. Leaves and stems are both edible.

Fresh Garlic: The skins haven't dried down yet around the cloves. You'll have to peel them back to get to the fresh cloves.

Summercrisp Head Lettuce: A cross between a leaf lettuce and an iceberg. This is a more heat tolerant variety. Leaves are crunchy and sweet.

Summer Squash/Zucchini: First pick of the year! Chop or grate and sauté with onions, garlic, and ground cumin.

Fennel: More info. and recipes for fennel on page 2.

Broccoli: The broccoli is coming in strong! Stems are also tender and sweet—just peel skin off with a paring knife.

Sugarsnap and Snow Peas: The whole pod is edible. Snap top off and the string down the side of the pea will come with it. Eat raw or lightly cooked.

CSA: Week Four

Happy 4th of July! Hope you all have a festive and happy holiday week!

Our farm is participating in the **Harvest for the Hungry** program for the 3rd year in a row this year, and we made our first delivery of kohlrabi and baby bok choi to the food shelf last week. This year the program has expanded thanks to Finnegans Beer (likely sold at your local liquor store!). Finnegans donates 100% of its MN profits to the Harvest for the Hungry program, which buys food from local, organic farms at \$1/lb and the food is distributed for free to MN food shelves. This year, we have a special partnership with our local McLeod County Food shelf to supply nearly 1,000 pounds of produce to them. We are excited about keeping it local this year! Many CSA members made a donation to Harvest for the Hungry, which makes even more produce donations possible. Thank you! If you drink beer, you can turn beer into food by purchasing Finnegans beer at the liquor store or at your local restaurant. The CEO of Finnegans visited our farm a month ago and we can say that this program is truly legit and a model for supporting local farms and getting local, organic, FRESH food into food shelves. Awesome!! Tell your friends and family about this and spread the word about the great work Finnegans and Harvest for the Hungry are doing together. In 2011, over 60,000 pounds of produce were donated to MN food shelves from the Harvest for the Hungry partner farms.

Weather, Crops, Next Week's Box

The hot weather is kicking all the veggies into high gear and lots of crops are coming in all at once. The great part about that is that there are bountiful vegetables for the CSA boxes right now! As we head into July, new seasonal veggies start to come in and we bid farewell to the first Spring veggies. **Last week of:** peas and baby bok choi. **New veggies next week:** Chinese cabbage? Red new potatoes! Basil. More summer squash/zucchini and broccoli. **Coming soon...** Green Beans in 7-14 days and the first sungold tomatoes in the hoop house are ripening up. Hopefully in another week or two, there will be enough to start putting in boxes! Woo hoo!

This hot weather sure makes us glad that we dug our big irrigation well this Spring! It is coming in handy right about now. We set up irrigation to four fields this past weekend and now we are making the rounds around the farm to get every field watered this week. As we learned during last year's hot spell in July, many vegetable plants do not care for extreme heat and it is the warm nights above 70 degrees that make pollination of fruiting crops difficult. We will be monitoring the tomatoes, peppers, squashes, cukes, and melons for signs of blossom drop and hoping that they fare ok. So far, most of those crops have been coming along nicely. Looks like the temps will be back down by the end of this week, at which point we will breathe a little sigh of relief for us and the plants.

Garlic Note: This is fresh garlic, meaning that it hasn't been cured and the bulb and clove wrappers have not dried out. There are thick skins around each garlic clove that you will need to peel off to get to the fresh garlic clove. The fresh garlic cloves are a bit milder due to a higher water content, but have a delectable juiciness to them. Enjoy your veggies and have a great week! —Laura, Adam and crew

Produce Storage: All produce this week should be stored in the fridge in plastic bags, if it isn't packed in one already, to keep in moisture and prevent greens from wilting. Everything should last over a week if stored properly. The broccoli is probably best if eaten within 5 days.

Preserving Tips: Cooking greens like kale, chard, beet greens, kohlrabi greens, collards can all be blanched or steamed for a few minutes and then frozen for later use in soups, stews, quiches, etc. Broccoli and beets should also be lightly cooked before freezing. Cilantro can be made into pesto or just chopped and frozen raw. Summer squash and zucchini is best if shredded and frozen raw and then can be used in baked goods like breads or muffins later on. We haven't tried freezing baby bok choi before, but it likely could be done if lightly cooked first.

More Recipe Ideas.....

*On the Loon [Recipe Page](#):

- Fennel Egg Salad
- Fennel Antipasto
- Beet Salad
- Beet Chocolate Cake
- Chard and Caramelized Onion Tacos

*[Fennel Pesto](#) (from our Week 9, 2011 Newsletter)

*Check last week's newsletter for:

-Baby Bok Choi Fried Rice

-[Broccoli Spears with Garlic Sauce](#) (epicurious.com)

-[Broccoli Frittata](#) (foodandwine.com)

Contact us:

Laura and Adam

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Recipe Corner

Fennel: Is a vegetable in the same family as dill and its leaves resemble dill leaves. The white bulb is the most prized part of the fennel plant. We include some of the fronds for you because they are a delicious addition to salads and make a great pesto (there is a link to the pesto recipe below). The stems can be used like celery, although they are a bit tougher. You may want to discard/compost the stems. Fennel has an anise-like flavor which can be strong to some. We like to chop the bulb up finely to add a delicious crunch to salads. The following are a couple recipes that include fennel in a more minor role, and they are a great introduction to this delicious Mediterranean vegetable. Hope you enjoy it as much as we do!

Tomato, Fennel, and Italian Sausage Sauce for Pasta

2 Tbsp. olive oil, divided 2 Tbsp. tomato paste
1-1/2 pound Italian sausage links or loose Italian sausage
1/2 C red wine (or veggie/chicken broth) 1 C finely chopped onion
Pinch sugar 2 Tbsp. minced garlic
Red pepper flakes 1 C finely chopped fennel stalk
Salt and pepper 1 tsp. fennel seed
2 Tbsp. minced fennel leaves (optional) freshly grated Parmesan cheese
2- 28 oz. cans whole peeled, tomatoes, pureed, or 7-8 cups, chopped fresh tomatoes
Heat 1 Tbsp. olive oil in large skillet over medium flame. Add Italian sausage links (or ground sausage) and brown on all sides. Drain on paper towels. Heat remaining 1 Tbsp. olive oil in a large saucepan. Add onion, garlic, chopped fennel stalk, and fennel seed. Cook, stirring often, until vegetables are tender. Stir in tomatoes, tomato paste, wine, sugar, and a pinch or two of red pepper flakes. Bring to simmer and cook, stirring occasionally, 20-30 minutes. Slice sausages into rounds and add to sauce. Continue to simmer 30 minutes or more. Season to taste with salt and pepper. Stir in minced fennel leaves just before serving, if desired. Toss with hot, cooked pasta (use a short, thick type, like penne or corkscrew) or serve over hot polenta, with Parmesan cheese. Makes 8-10 servings.

We made this chicken salad for a quick lunch and served it on a bed of lettuce with a vinaigrette dressing, bread, and cheese. It's a refreshing lunch for a hot day! The finely chopped fennel bulb and fronds add a nice crunch and flavoring with the creamy dressing. Recipe adapted from www.culinate.com. Check out their website for a version with lemon mayo.

Chicken Salad with Fennel, Dried Cranberries, and Almonds

2 cups cooked chicken, chopped into bite-size pieces
3/4 cup sliced almonds, (toasted, if desired)
1 cup fennel bulb and fronds, chopped (not stems)
1/3 cup dried cranberries (golden raisins or dried cherries are also good)
1/2 cup plain yogurt 2 Tablespoons sour cream (optional)
Dash of olive oil and apple cider vinegar
Salt & Pepper
Mix yogurt and sour cream (if using) in a bowl and add a Tablespoon or so each of olive oil and vinegar, just enough to thin the yogurt mixture a bit. Add the fennel bulb and fronds to the dressing, and mix well. Stir in the chicken, almonds, and cranberries, and season to taste with salt and pepper. Serve on a bed of lettuce with a balsamic vinaigrette dressing or serve on bread as a sandwich. Makes 2-4 servings.

Fresh Fennel Bulb Salad with Orange Dressing

1 fennel bulb 2 Tablespoons white wine or red wine vinegar
2 Tablespoons frozen orange juice concentrate, partially thawed
1 teaspoon Dijon mustard 2 Tablespoons extra-virgin olive oil
Salt and pepper
Remove fronds from fennel bulb. Slice fennel bulb into very thin pieces (or grate). Make dressing by combining vinegar, mustard, 1/4 tsp. salt, and orange juice concentrate in bowl. Gradually whisk in olive oil. Pour over fennel and allow to marinate at room temperature 20 minutes or longer. Season to taste with pepper and addl. salt. Serve alone as a side-dish or spoon over lettuce for a salad. The fennel and citrus are a perfect pairing! Adapted from **From Asparagus to Zucchini Cook Book**.