

CSA Newsletter

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“Nature can teach us everything.”

-Mokichi Okada

Shumei CSA Newsletter: Fifth Issue

Hello and welcome to the fifth issue of our CSA Newsletter! We appreciate your support of our farm; this support is one of our most invaluable assets, and allows us to continue to serve our community.

Hooray, spring has sprung! This month we celebrated the first day of Spring. In the northern hemisphere, this means it is again the time for new beginnings as the earth awakens from it's winter slumber. March is a very busy month for all farmers. Why you might ask? Spring is the time of year that planting occurs so that we may have summer crops ready for harvest.

This month we were very busy sowing

seeds in containers in the greenhouse such as; tomato, eggplant, and pepper seeds. Towards the end of the month, tomato, eggplant, and pepper seeds have sprouted, and now we are transferring them into larger pots, for later transplant into the field.

We are very happy to provide our vegetables to you again! I know many of you have missed receiving your vegetables every month. We are very grateful to you for your support, understanding, and commitment.

If you have any comments and suggestions, feel free to email or call us.

Masa, Eiko and the farm staff.

Farm News:

Community Garden Project

WWOOF Program/current WWOOFers

Our Video on You Tube

Fence and Gate Completion

By Rosann and farm staffs



We have started a community garden project for our CSA Members who might be interested in starting their own garden at our farm for a small fee of \$10.00 a month. Currently we have four CSA members that are excited about starting their gardens here in April.

We have posted our farm profile on the WWOOF website (World Wide Organization of Organic Farmers). The WWOOF program enables people who become members (WWOOFers) from around the world to volunteer their help on Organic Farms in exchange for a room/campsite/meals. Currently we have one WWOOFer with us from Santa Cruz. Early in the month we had a WWOOFer from Torino, Italy. They are impressed with our N/A methods and the taste of our vegetables. We have greatly appreciated their

enthusiastic volunteer work here at the farm.

Sam is a farmer here at the farm, and in his spare time he makes use of his talented hobby of photography, by taking great photos and videos of the farm, which led him to develop a special video of the farm. He posted his latest "masterpiece" on You Tube. Anyone can view it, just look for it listed as " Santa Cruz Farm". Don't miss this one!

Bill our local carpenter, has completed the natural redwood gate and fence project, which is the entrance to the farm. It is very beautiful, and certainly you won't find many fences or gates like this one. Check it out when you pick up your vegetables.

Profile of Farm Member Eiko Noda

By Rosann



She is a person that is very close to nature and it is a reflection in how she approaches life, with an open-hearted, giving, caring, and loving spirit. She loves working on the farm and taking care of her family, as well as running our CSA. When you meet Eiko Noda, (wife of our farm manager) she always has a smile on her face, and she beams with warmth and a happy spirit, even though she is hard at work and performing many tasks for Shumei Farm. Being hardworking and part of a team is a typical way of life in a traditional Japanese household. Eiko was born in Kobe, Japan on Oct 13, where she was raised and enjoyed her childhood there. When she was

19 years old, she attended Kobe University and studied Agriculture. Eiko wanted to study organic farming, but at that time most classes were about conventional agriculture. When she decided to work at a school orchard, she often experienced headaches that were caused by the fruit trees being sprayed with chemical sprays against pests. In her studies, she also learned that many conventional farmers are prone to cancer because of their use of chemicals in their farming practices. After she graduated from Kobe University, she obtained a job as a system engineer. Her ambitions were to work on a farm, so she started to help her friend who practiced Natural Agriculture on weekends. The farm work made her feel refreshed and happy. In 2001, she met Masa in Japan. They got married in Japan, and decided to make the U.S their home. Then, a few years later, Haruka and Shogo were born. Now she is a happy wife and mother working on a Natural Agriculture farm with her family.



Rodale Institute and Shumei

By Masahide

In our last newsletter, we introduced Yasushi Fujimoto, who came from the Rodale Institute, as an artist who sketched the plans for our new gate. Some people may wonder about the importance of the relationship between Rodale Institute and Shumei. For those who do not know what Rodale Institute is, I will explain briefly.

Rodale Institute is one of the world-renowned organic institutes, founded by J.I. Rodale in 1947. The institute has provided the information of which organic agriculture beats conventional agriculture based on scientific researches. Nowadays, most scientific articles that are written about organic agriculture use reports of Rodale Institute as a reference.

Rodale Institute and Shumei have collaborated since 1996 in order to expand organic and Natural Agriculture activities all over the world. It was started to provide workshops between Rodale Institute and Shumei, and then the collaborating project was developed, and a website was constructed, called "New Farm". While the website was being developed, a book whose title is "Farming to Create Heaven on Earth" written by Lisa M. Hamilton was produced. Just recently, a Natural Agriculture demonstration garden was opened at Rodale Institute last year.

The garden was created to bring beauty and sustainability together harmoniously. There is a Green Roof Building used as storage for seed, a relaxation area, and a dome greenhouse. The Green Roof Building has many benefits, because the natural insulation of the plants helps to maintain warm temperatures during the

winter and cooler temperatures in the summer. The Green Roof's plant is sedum. It can collect rain water for vegetables.

The Solar Geodesic Dome greenhouse, with no electricity, can maintain enough heat for vegetables to grow. Currently, there are two activities involving the Natural Agriculture demonstration garden; (Firstly), there is a workshop for those who want to practice Natural Agriculture in their backyard. (By practicing Natural Agriculture, people can feel nature and hopefully develop a lifestyle that closely follows nature instead of trying to control it). (Secondly), there is a program for abused children. The healing process can be encouraged for these children, by simply touching the soil and practicing Natural Agriculture. I hope these activities will be expanded and developed and hopefully will eventually cause a typhoon on the other side of the world.



Arugula, Fennel And Orange Salad

By Rie



Nutritional Value:
Carotenids, fiber, A, C, K,
folate.

Ingredients (Serves 4)

- 2 bunches arugula, well rinsed and dried
- 1 cup slivered fresh fennel bulb
- 2 navel oranges, in segments
- 3 tablespoons fresh orange juice
- 2 teaspoons Dijon mustard
- 2 tablespoons extra-virgin olive oil
- Freshly ground black pepper

Preparation

1. Remove the heavy stems from the arugula and place the leaves in a salad bowl. Add the fennel and orange segments and toss together.
2. Beat the orange juice and mustard together. Beat in the oil and pour the dressing over the salad. Season with pepper and toss.

Spring Vegetable Minestrone

By Rie



Nutritional Value:
Carotenids,
A,K,C,Fiber,
Potassium

Ingredient (Serves 4)

- 2 Tbs. olive oil, plus more for drizzling
- 1 large shallots, finely diced
- 1/3cup dry white wine
- 2 large cloves garlic, minced (1/2Tbs.)
- 1 medium carrots, peeled and cut into 1/4-inch dice (1/2 cups)
- 1 medium Yukon gold potato, peeled and cut into 1/4-inch dice (1/2cups)
- 1 medium young turnips, peeled and cut into 1/4-inch dice (1/2cups)
- 2 cups low-sodium vegetable broth
- 6 Italian parsley sprigs
- 4 fresh thyme sprigs
- 1 bay leaves
- 5 oz. fresh or frozen shelled peas (1/2cups)
- 1cups lightly packed spinach leaves

Preparations

1. Heat oil in saucepan over medium-high heat. Add shallots, and sauté 2 minutes, or until shallots begin to soften. Add wine and garlic and simmer 4 minutes.
2. Add carrots, potato, and turnips, and sauté 1 minute. Add broth and 2cups water. Put parsley sprigs, thyme sprigs to soup. Season with salt and pepper, if desired. Cover, and bring to a boil. Reduce heat to medium-low, and simmer 20 minutes.
3. Stir in peas and spinach. Cover, and simmer 5 minutes more. Remove herb bundle, and discard. Season with salt and pepper, if desired. Ladle soup into bowls, drizzle with olive oil, and serve.

Vegan Meyer lemon and Almond Cake

By Rie



Nutritional Value:
Vitamin C,
flavonids, high in
Protein, low
cholesterol,
minerals, Vit. E.

Ingredients

(One 9x3-inch round cake pan)

<Wet>

- 3/4 cup Agave Nectar
- 1/2 cup Canola oil
- 1 cup Soy or Rice milk
- zest of 2 lemons
- juice of 2 lemons
- 1 tablespoon Vanilla extract
- 1 pinch of Salt

<Dry>

- 1 1/2 cups Bread Flour
- 1 cup Whole wheat pastry flour
- 1 tablespoon Baking powder
- 1/2 cup Toasted Almond minced

Preparations

1. Preheat oven to 325F. Lightly grease a 9x3 inch cake pan with oil.
2. Put all <Wet> ingredients to mixing ball, and mix well.
3. Put all <Dry> ingredients to another mixing ball and mix well.
4. Put <Dry> to <Wet> and stir until the batter is smooth, but not over mix.
5. Bake it for 40 minutes or until toothpick inserted in the center comes out clean.

Edible Weed: Mustard Green

By Masahide



How to identify:

There are many varieties of mustard greens, however; some are edible and others are not. To identify edible ones, you need to choose one with a yellow green color. When you touch the leaves and notice they are smooth, it is edible. The upper picture shows the difference between an edible one and inedible one. The left one which has big and deep green leaf is not edible.

How to cook:

Salad, cooked greens, seasoning. This means you can cook anything you want.... If the leaves mature, they

become too bitter to use; therefore, the tender young "basal leaves" are ideal for cooking. The clusters of unopened flower buds are good for the substitution of broccoli if they are boiled.

Nutrition Facts:

Rich in Vitamins A, B1, B2, and C. Flower buds are also a good source of protein.

Information from The Peterson Field Guide Series: Edible Wild Plants.

Establishing a Spiritual Connection with Your Food

By Rosann



As the days get longer and the weather begins to warm, our tastes may go towards lighter cuisine. The spring equinox brings us into the season of renewal, rebirth, and reawakening. It is a good time to reconnect spiritually with the food you eat everyday.

Many of you these days are frequent shoppers at local organic markets, farmer's markets, and are CSA Members at local farms. This in itself is a wonderful step in the right direction, towards better health. On the brighter side, some of you are consuming vegetables that are grown in the natural agriculture method. But, how



many of you food consumers really connect with the food that you are buying or eating?

As you know, your CSA box of fresh vegetables from the farm is not being provided to you until mid – April when we will begin to harvest our spring crop. During this period of time, probably many of you CSA members had to go out and buy lettuce for salad or some other greens that were being grown by other organic farmers. Many of our CSA Members during this time period have expressed that they can hardly wait to start receiving their CSA boxes again, filled with the freshest, best tasting vegetables ever. What a wise choice they have made with their food selection. They truly missed Shumei's vegetables. That makes us very, very, happy.

I think that many of our CSA Members have made a spiritual connection with their food. I say this because they have chosen vegetables for their meals that are grown naturally, without anything added (no pesticides, herbicides, or fertilizers of any kind). Did you know that vegetables that are grown with chemical additives (including fertilizers), have a lower nutritional value, and cancer causing agents. I am sure many of you have noticed a change in your health for the better with regular consumption of N/A produce. With that said, you have begun to make a mind/body connection with your food.

Now let's discuss the spiritual and emotional connection that you have or may want to achieve with your food of choice. Why do we want to establish a



spiritual connection with our food anyway? Good question! I may have some of the answers that will at least get you thinking about it, and who knows you may even want to spiritually connect with the food on your dinner plate.

In order to spiritually connect with your food, a relaxed state is best for both the body and the mind. We need to treat each meal and selection of food that we put on our plates as a celebration, giving gratitude before eating for our healthy whole food, (and the farmer that grew it for us). We need to slow down from our busy day, and let go of the stress and not bring it to the table (mind you that I said table, not standing up while eating). When you eat in a hurried manner, not giving any thought to the type of food you choose to eat, and eat just to get full, you are not making a spiritual connection with your food. Some of you when selecting your food in the supermarket, might go down the center aisles (where all of the processed food is stored), instead of sticking to the perimeters of the market (where all of the fresh wholesome food is available). Stop and think. Do I really want to put this into my body? The old saying from our grandmothers “You are what you eat”, and “What you put in you will receive”. It is time to find “the sacred” in our food. Going back to what I said earlier, before a meal, (when you are “sitting” down to eat !!!) express your gratitude, relax, experience the quality of the food before you, be aware of where it came from, establish a slow rhythm to eating, find pleasure while eating, (taste, smell, texture of food), be thoughtful while chewing and how it makes your

stomach feel, have pleasant conversation with someone while dining, and feel the Sacred energy within your food. Buon Appetito !!!

I truly hope that I may have started you on your journey to a more spiritual connection with the food you eat and why. Slow down, calm your mind, stay centered, and that will allow you to pay attention to what you are putting in your body. Your mind-food relationship can bring you to a higher spiritual plane and connect you with the sacred energy in your food. It has intriguing qualities (there is more on your dinner plate than you know) that promotes better health, and hopefully will cause you to make improved food choices, hence, establishing a spiritual connection with your food. And remember, wholesome food choices equal good health and pure spirit !

