



# Community Cultivator

Newsletter of the Foggy River Farm CSA, Week 1



## **Wet Weather and Gratitude for Greens**

To start off, we want to give everyone a big hearty welcome to the 2011 season! We're excited to meet new farm members and see the familiar faces we've missed during the long, cold winter.

Which brings us to our next point. That long, cold winter seems to have returned to our vegetable fields this week! Unfortunately, the chilly temperatures and sopping wet fields have set our farm back a little time-wise, slowing the growth of many of our crops.

The good news is, we already have 900 tomato plants in the ground, and we're lucky to have gotten them in before the torrential rains began. Our fields are also full of broccoli, cauliflower, cabbage, snap pea, beet, squash and bean plants that are ready and raring to grow as soon as the weather warms up again.

And of course, one of the wonderful things about a diversified farm is that what's bad for one crop is good for another. The chard, kale, lettuces and arugula absolutely love this weather, and will be as delicious as they'll ever be *right now*. (As Emmett put it at dinner the other night, somewhat tragically, "It [the lettuce] will never be this good again!")

Unusual weather reminds us that being a farmer—or being a farm member—and eating seasonally means dealing with the vagaries in weather, which sometimes means December weather in May. We hope you'll bear this in mind for the first couple of weeks: we promise more variety in produce is coming, as the weather allows!

With this week's share, you will receive a copy of our 2011 member handbook which we hope will answer any questions you might have about your CSA membership. It also provides a calendar of farm events for the year, and some tips for keeping your produce fresh. As always, we love to hear your feedback – if you feel anything is missing from the guide, or have any remaining questions (or suggestions), let us know!

Your Foggy Farmers,  
Emmett & Lynda

Craig & Emma (Craig is Lynda's brother, and a musician too—you might hear him playing guitar at CSA pickups. We are excited to be working with Craig and Emma this summer and will give you a longer introduction in next week's newsletter!)

## What's In Your Box:

- **Head Lettuce (New Red Fire AND Bergam's Green or Sylvesta)** *Everyone gets one head of red lettuce and one of green this week for some big, refreshing salads. These lettuces are great with a light dressing and some crumbled goat cheese on top.*
- **Arugula (Astro)** *Can be eaten fresh, wilted (which results in a milder flavor), or chopped up into a pesto (see the recipe below.) Arugula makes a nice "bed" for other dishes, like pasta or chicken. (Recipe included.)*
- **Swiss Chard (Bright Lights)** *This colorful mix of swiss chard varieties can be fixed in a variety of ways. The simplest way is to shred it finely (perpendicular to the stalk), sauté some garlic in oil, and then quickly sauté the chard with some lemon juice and salt and pepper until it is just soft. This week we've included two chard soup recipes from Italy's best-selling cookbook. If you're not crazy about chard, try using it in a soup—you get all the nutrients in the broth and the leaves just melt away into the soup. (Recipes included)*
- **Radish (French Breakfast)** *There's a Foggy River Farm story behind this particular radish variety, but we'll save that for a future newsletter and tell you about eating them. Believe it or not, we're told that the traditional way to enjoy these is with butter! Farmers market shoppers have reported preparing it in two ways: simply dipping the radish in some butter and chomping down—or—slicing the radish lengthwise, placing it on a slice of baguette, then adding butter on top and digging in.*
- **Winter Squash (Delicata)** *Note: Members who pick up at the farm can choose between Delicata and Butternut this week. We love slicing these small sweet squash lengthwise, scooping the seeds out, and baking them face-down on an oiled pan until soft. Try just eating it straight from the squash with a spoon, or scoop chunks out to add to a pasta dish with wilted arugula and a little cheese.*
- **Fresh Herbs (Oregano, Rosemary)** *Fresh Italian seasonings. Chop finely and add to pasta or pizza. Store them with stems in a jar of cold water on your counter.*

### To put you in the spirit of Spring, here are a few reasons to get excited about greens:

- Greens are one of the most effective **sources of calcium** for your body. Even our hens know where to go for calcium to keep their egg shells strong: wild mustard greens, grasses, and farm produce scraps are some of their favorite treats.
- Brassica greens, and kale in particular, have proven **cancer-fighting power**. While scientists aren't quite sure how they work their magic, it's suspected that certain chemical compounds present in kale (glucinolates and cysteine sulfoxides) **activate detoxifying enzymes** in the liver, allowing the liver to better purify the body and neutralize carcinogenic substances.
- You don't have to throw greens in a soup, casserole, or even a saucepan. Greens can be downright **decadent and sinful**. Below, check out our recipes for "kale chips" and "arugula pesto."
- **Fresher is better:** not only do just-picked greens taste better, but they also contain more of those phytonutrients (which start to denature with age). Your greens were only hours ago, so cook some up soon for a healthy, delicious side dish.

# Foggy River Recipes

## Arugula Pesto

*You can make fresh pesto from local ingredients all year round. You just have to think outside the (basil) box.*

### Ingredients

- 2 cups of packed arugula leaves, stems removed
- 1/2 cup of walnuts
- 1/2 cup fresh Parmesan cheese
- 1/2 cup extra virgin olive oil
- 6 garlic cloves, unpeeled
- 1/2 garlic clove peeled and minced

Brown 6 garlic cloves with their peels on in a skillet over medium high heat until the garlic is lightly browned in places, about 10 minutes. Remove the garlic from the pan, cool, and remove the skins. Toast the nuts in a pan over medium heat until lightly brown, or heat in a microwave on high heat for a minute or two until you get that roasted flavor. In our microwave it takes 2 minutes. (Note: you can skip the toasting if you're short on time, and raw peeled garlic can work too for a spicier flavor.)

Option A: Food processor method (the fast way): Combine the arugula, walnuts, roasted and raw garlic into a food processor. Pulse while drizzling the olive oil into the processor. Remove the mixture from the processor and put it into a bowl. Stir in the Parmesan cheese.

Option B: Mortar and pestle method (the slow foodie way): Combine the nuts and garlic in a mortar. With the pestle, grind until smooth. Add the cheese and olive oil, grind again until smooth. Finely chop the arugula and add it to the mortar. Grind up with the other ingredients until smooth.

Note: Because the pesto is so dependent on the individual ingredients, and the strength of the ingredients depends on the season or variety, test it and add more of the ingredients to taste.

Mix with freshly prepared pasta of your choice. You may need to add a little bit of water or more olive oil to mix the pesto more evenly with the pasta. Makes enough pesto sauce for an ample serving of pasta for four people.

## **Green Soup**

*This recipe comes from “The Silver Spoon”—Italy’s best-selling cookbook for over fifty years (i.e. the “Joy of Cooking” of Italy). We recently acquired this book and have barely skimmed the surface of the over 2,000 recipes within.*

### Ingredients

1 bunch Swiss Chard  
½ cup Parmesan cheese, freshly grated, plus extra for serving  
3 eggs, lightly beaten  
6 ¼ cups vegetable or meat stock  
Salt

## **Swiss Chard and Lentil Soup**

*Another chard-oriented soup from “The Silver Spoon.” This is sort of a minestrone-style soup.*

### Ingredients

6 ¼ cups vegetable or meat stock  
3 tablespoons olive oil, plus extra for drizzling  
1 onion, finely chopped (green onion okay)  
1 garlic clove, finely chopped (green garlic okay)  
1 celery stalk, finely chopped (optional)  
1 carrot finely chopped (optional)  
1 bunch Swiss Chard, coarsely chopped  
2/3 cup lentils, soaked in cold water for 3 hours and then drained  
2 T tomato paste  
½ cup long grain rice  
salt and pepper  
Parmesan cheese, freshly grated, to serve

Bring the stock to a boil. Heat the oil in another pan, add the onion, garlic, celery (optional) and carrot (optional) and cook over low heat, stirring occasionally, for 10 minutes until lightly browned. Stir in the Swiss chard and cook for 2-3 minutes, then add the lentils and tomato paste and stir well. Pour in the stock, bring back to a boil and add the rice. Cook until the rice is tender. Season with salt and pepper, ladle into a soup tureen, drizzle with olive oil and serve with parmesan.