



Community Cultivator

Newsletter of the Foggy River Farm CSA, Week 2



Encounters with the Wild Kind

As many of you know, last year we had quite a few encounters with wild beasts that were -- how shall we put it? -- slightly negative. That was when wild pigs demolished our corn crop, ate our juicy heirloom tomatoes, massacred our spinach and uprooted our onions.

But in the past week, we've had a couple of chance encounters that reminded us that "farming with the wild" isn't always a bad thing. It started last week at CSA pickup, when Lisa, one of our CSA members, noticed the unmistakable sounds of baby birds cheeping. Since our first year hosting CSA pickup in the barn, we've taken care not to let wild birds set up shop inside the barn. (Bird poop in barn next to food = no bueno.) However, as Lisa's children Forrest and Ingrid discovered, a mama bird had set up her nest in the eaves outside of the barn -- the perfect place for us to observe without having to worry about bird poop!

Then, on Friday, Emmett happened upon another nest -- this one perched precariously on a tall fava bean plant he was harvesting. Miraculously, there was a tiny, featherless, barely-born pink baby bird cheeping and hoping desperately that Emmett would feed it. Two blue eggs were in the nest next to the baby bird, suggesting that he had really truly just hatched (and his siblings were about to). We quickly moved on from the spot to harvest fava beans elsewhere, hoping that once we were gone the mother bird would return.

And just tonight, as we were driving over to the orchard to close the mobile chicken house for the night, a young opossum happened to cross the road in front of us. He was heading right into the fenced field, suggesting that he was the nocturnal critter who had been eating all of our strawberries just as they ripened. (We confronted him about it, and of course he "played possum," or pretended to be dead.) He was a rather sad looking little fellow, and we managed to herd him into a have-a-heart trap, so we can find him a new home far away from our strawberries. Depending on how busy we are tomorrow you might get a chance to see the little criminal at CSA pickup before we release him elsewhere!

Your Foggy Farmers,
Emmett and Lynda

(PS -- Lynda was on newsletter duty this week, and as she was writing this letter above, we heard a crunching of grass outside our window. It was a raccoon, probably hoping to steal some animal feed off our porch or find some wayward chicken eggs in the grass!)

What's In Your Box:

- **Head Lettuce (New Red Fire AND Bergam's Green or Sylvesta)** *Everyone gets two or three heads of red and/or green lettuce again this week for some big, refreshing salads. These lettuces are great with a light dressing and some crumbled goat cheese on top.*
- **Arugula (Astro)** *This peppery green is packed with vitamins and nutrients. Can be eaten fresh, wilted (which results in a milder flavor), or processed into a pesto with nuts/oil/cheese. Arugula makes a nice "bed" for other dishes, such as chicken. If you are not a fan of the spicy flavor, you can either mix it with lettuce in a fresh salad, or use the arugula in a cooked dish which takes the spice out entirely. **(Recipes included.)***
- **Fava Beans** *This week you'll get about 1.5 pounds of favas—these may be the last fava beans of the spring. You might find these beans a bit more mature—and therefore starchier—than last weeks, meaning they'll be best cooked a little longer. Now a reminder about the preparation... To prepare the beans, you can go with the blanching method: First, peel the beans from the pod (you can pull the stem and "unzip" it like a zipper); next, cook them for one minute in salted boiling water; then shock them in cold water and slip the outer skins off. Add them to succotash, pasta or salads, or cook them with garlic and mash on top of bread for crostini. OR—if you'd like to try an alternate method, you can roast the entire pods with oil and salt for about 25 minutes in a 400 degree oven.*
- **Green Garlic** *Green garlic can be chopped from the base (just cut the roots off) to the tip of the leaves. A mild garlic flavor for any dish. **(Recipe included.)***
- **Salad Radishes (French Breakfast)** *A small bunch of petite radish for garnishing a salad. Our first round of radishes had some challenging grey tip rot, which reduced our harvest and quality a little bit. If you see a bit of grey on the tip of your radish, you can just chop it off and the rest of the radish will be fine. Allegedly the French like eating these with butter on baguettes. They're a crisp, relatively mild radish shaped just right to fit a ring around their mid-section.*
- **Spaghetti Squash** *Spaghetti squash is one of our favorite winter squash, and it can offer a healthful alternative to white-flour pasta. The texture is a bit different, of course, but the squash's sweetness is delicious when contrasted with a tangy, basil-y marinara sauce. These squash have been cured over the winter, which can give them an even richer flavor. **(Recipes included.)***

Foggy River Recipes

Spaghetti Squash with Marinara

No fuss pasta, without the pasta. This recipe explains the basic baking technique for preparing spaghetti squash for any other recipe.

1 Spaghetti Squash
Marinara sauce of choice
Light Olive oil

Pre-heat oven to 350 F. On an oiled baking sheet, bake squash whole for 30 minutes. Remove carefully (it's hot!) and slice in half lengthwise. Remove seeds and "guts" and place both halves face down on the baking sheet. Return it to the oven for another 30-60 minutes, or until squash is soft and comes out easy with a scraping fork. [If you prefer, you can cut the squash in half before baking at all; I prefer to soften it a bit in the oven first, because it can be very hard to cut otherwise.] Once the squash is finished baking and your sauce is ready, take a fork and scrape the squash "noodles" out into a bowl. By scraping against the grain, you will separate the squash into individual tendrils that look remarkably like spaghetti! Enjoy this delicious, hearty meal.

Arugula Pesto over Spaghetti Squash

This is a tasty recipe adapted from the Vegan Yack Attack! Website. Arugula makes delicious pesto! The author says: "I love this pesto recipe because you get healthy fats, omegas, protein and creamy texture from the avocados and walnuts, without the use of oil. This dish is extremely filling while still being on the healthy side of things; the spaghetti squash is high in fiber and lots of potassium! It's a quick and easy dinner that is great for making during the week, when you may not have time on your side."

- * 9 Cups Baked Spaghetti Squash, You will need a fairly large squash for this
- * 2 1/2 Cups Chopped Arugula
- * 1 Cup Avocado
- * 1 Cup Walnuts
- * 2 Cloves Garlic
- * 3 Tbsp. Lemon Juice
- * 1/4 Cup Nutritional Yeast
- * 1/2 tsp. Dried Basil
- * 3/4 tsp. Salt
- * 1/2 tsp. Ground Black Pepper
- * Optional: Additional water to help the blender puree the pesto

1. To prepare your spaghetti squash for the meal, cut it in half, scrape out the seeds, and bake (skin up) in a dish with a little water in the bottom at 375°F for 30-40 minutes.

2. While the spaghetti squash is baking, prep the rest of the ingredients and throw them into a high-speed blender or food processor. Add in 1/4-1/2 cup of water if your blender needs help to puree the pesto.

3. Once the pesto is smooth and of consistent texture taste and add more salt & pepper if you'd like.

4. After the squash is done baking, wait 10-15 minutes to scrape out the pulp with a fork into a large bowl. I left the squash and pesto separate so that you could use whatever ratio of pesto to squash that you'd like. Serve warm with a sprinkle of salt & pepper.

Arugula and Spaghetti Squash Salad

The spiciness of the arugula combines nicely with the sweet cooked squash—accented by the cheese and nuts. This recipe is adapted from ParkCitiesMoms.com.

10 oz arugula

2 pounds cooked spaghetti squash

1/4 cup chopped pecans

1/2 cup crumbled feta cheese (or use ricotta salata which is what the recipe originally called for)

2 Tbsp olive oil

1/4 cup fresh lemon juice, or juice from 2 lemons

Cook spaghetti squash in oven until it is fork tender (see recipes above for more detailed squash cooking instructions.) Let squash cool to the touch, cut in half and remove pulp with fork. It will come out in strings, resembling spaghetti. Pour olive oil and lemon juice over still-warm squash so it will absorb flavor. To assemble salad, place arugula in salad bowl. Top with dressed squash, pecans and feta. Serve.

Green Garlic-Fava Bean Sauce

Thank you to High Ground Organics farm in Watsonville for sharing this recipe on their website.

8 cup chicken or vegetable stock

2 stalks green garlic chopped and sautéed

2 Tbs. butter

1 Tbs. freshly-squeezed lemon juice

Salt to taste

Freshly-ground black pepper to taste

½ to 1 cup cooked fava beans

Place stock and sautéed garlic in a medium saucepan and reduce to 3 cups. Strain into a clean saucepan and bring to a simmer.

Whisk in the butter and lemon juice and season with salt and pepper to taste. Add the fava beans (from 1/2 to 1 cup, depending on desired consistency) and cook for 1 minute.

Serve with roasted chicken or other meat, or over rice or polenta.