

F A I R V I E W G A R D E N S

COMMUNITY SUPPORTED AGRICULTURE

Where community and farm come together, bringing culture back into agriculture.

Last week, the day before the first rain, every farmer in the county was doing the same thing we were: weeding, raising beds and checking drainage ditches. There are preparations that need to occur because no one knows after a winter storm when the next time we will be able to get back into the field. When our fields are wet, we only enter to harvest and if there is other field work that needs to be done, it is too late now. With another storm right around the corner, it may be weeks until we are back in the field. Storms back to back are challenging for farmers, but no one can complain when we live in Southern California and have received such little rain so far this year.

Soil is comprised of 25% air, 25% water, 45% minerals and 5% organic matter. Imagine the earthworms, gophers and the billions of other critters that reside in the soil working hard to aerate the ground through the channels and tunnels they develop. The soil needs to have air moving through it for life of all kinds to survive and thrive. If we were to walk, or more so, if our heavy tractors were to drive on wet soil, we would compact all the work that our friends beneath have labored so hard to accomplish.

There is a planting of lettuce, kohlrabi and broccoli in the greenhouse that is ready and eager for their days in the field. However, it appears that we are not going to have a window dry enough to get these plants in the ground and the result is that in one month we may not have lettuce or kohlrabi for two weeks and the same may be true for the broccoli another month later. At Fairview Gardens we are blessed with really nice clay soils that retain a lot of soil moisture and can make the most of the small amounts of rain we get in this part of the country. There is really not much more we can do than to enjoy the season and splash in the puddles.

Enjoy the Bounty, — Toby McPartland, Farm Manager

Volunteers Needed!

We need volunteers for an upcoming cooking class on February 28th. with Janice Knight who will be doing a class on Indian Vegetarian from 10am to 2pm. Registration is through SBCC. We will be needing volunteers for 2 shifts that day; the first from 8am to 12pm and the second from 12pm to 4pm. Please let us know if you would be interested in volunteering for this event by indicating it on the volunteer sign-up sheet at the check-in table.

Many CSA members and farmers market shoppers are curious about produce's nutritional values. I will be happy to include nutritional information in future newsletters as often as possible. — Katia

Greens

Plant leaves and stems are the basic makers of nutrients. Many types of leafy plants – especially kale, collards, and others in the cabbage family – are rich in beta carotene, vitamin C, and other substances that may protect against cancer. They are also good sources of fiber and of various minerals, particularly iron and calcium; ounce for ounce, fresh collard greens, kale, and mustard greens have about as much calcium as whole milk, and dandelion and turnip greens have more. (In some countries whose populations eat primarily vegetarian diets, such as China, greens can supply their total calcium needs.) The level of beta carotene and other nutrients in leafy green vegetables appears to be linked to the presence of chlorophyll, the green pigment produced by photosynthesis. Hence, the dark outer leaves of greens, which are the richest in chlorophyll, may contain as much as 50 percent more beta carotene than the inner leaves, and several times as much vitamin C and calcium.

From the Wellness Encyclopedia of Food and Nutrition by Sheldon Marge

Comparing Greens 3-1/2 ounces raw (2 to 3 cups)

Type	Calories	Beta Carotene (mg)	Vitamin C (mg)	Calcium (mg)	Iron (mg)
Beet Greens	19	4	30	119	3
Collards	19	2	23	117	0.6
Dandelion Greens	45	8	35	187	3
Kale	50	5	120	135	2
Mustard Greens	26	3	70	103	1
Swiss Chard	19	2	30	51	2
Turnip Greens	27	5	60	190	1

On the Farm

i n f o & r e c i p e s



Mandarin Spice Cake

- 1-3/4 cups Spelt flour
- 1 tsp. baking soda
- 1/2 tsp. fine sea salt
- 1 tsp. cinnamon
- 1/8 tsp. each nutmeg, cloves, and allspice
- 2/3 cup maple syrup
- 4 Tbsp. canola oil or other natural oil
- 3 Tbsp Mandarin orange juice, freshly squeezed
- 1 Tbsp Mandarin orange rind, grated
- 1 tsp. fresh ginger root, grated
- 3/4 cup rice milk or soy milk

In a large bowl, combine the flour, baking soda, salt, cinnamon, nutmeg, cloves and allspice. In a smaller bowl, combine the maple syrup, oil, Mandarin juice, Mandarin rind, ginger and soy milk, whisking together to emulsify the wet ingredients. Make a well in the center of the flour mixture and pour in the wet ingredients. Mix with a fork gently; do not beat. Pour into a lightly oiled and floured 8 x 8-inch cake pan, a Bundt pan, or an 8-inch spring-form pan. Bake 35-40 minutes at 300°F. Check to see if cake is done by inserting a toothpick into the center of cake; it should come out clean. Let cool on a rack before removing from the pan.

from *ExtraVeganZa, Original Recipes from Phoenix Organic Farm* by Laura Matthias

Pasta With Nettles, Sorrel and Lemon

- 1/4 pound fresh stinging nettles
- 8 ounces pasta
- 1/2 cup extra virgin olive oil
- 1/4 pound fresh ricotta cheese
- 1 lemon for zest and juice
- 1 tablespoon fresh mint, chopped
- 1 tablespoon fresh parley, chopped
- 1 tablespoon fresh chives, chopped
- Salt and pepper, to taste
- 1 small handful of fresh sorrel leaves, washed and torn into bite-sized pieces
- 1/2 cup toasted walnuts

Bring two large pots of salted water to a boil. One will be for the pasta and the other for the nettles.

Creamy Mandarin Icing (coating for the Mandarin Spice Cake)

- 1/2 cup margarine
- 1/4 cup maple syrup
- 3/4 cup organic powdered sugar
- 1/4 cup cashew butter
- 1 Tbsp. Mandarin rind

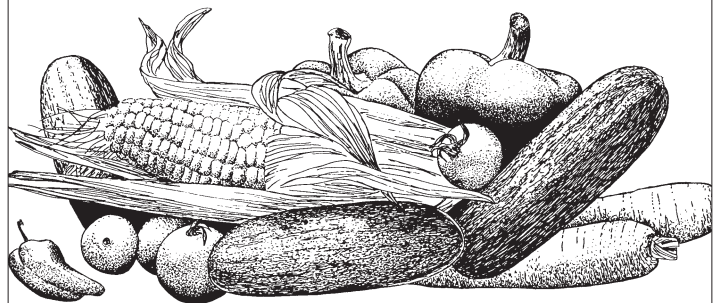
Blend all ingredients in a food processor on high for several minutes until very creamy and thoroughly combined. Chill icing for 1-2 hours. Spread onto thoroughly cooled cake and decorate with grated mandarin rind and calendula flowers. Keep cake chilled until serving.

Variation: Instead of icing your cake, glaze it. To do so, mix mandarin juice with powdered sugar. You should add the powdered sugar to the juice in small increment until you reach the desired consistency (lots of sugar if you want it thick, less sugar if you want it drippy).

Katia

A BIG thank you to last week's volunteers:

**Susan Gartrell, Katie Davis
and Garrett Johnson**



When the water comes to a boil in one of the pots, "carefully" add the nettles and give them a stir. Cook for 5 minutes and transfer them to a colander with a slotted spoon. You want to leave any dirt or grit in the cooking water. Let the nettle drain.

Add the pasta to the other pot of clean water and cook until al dente.

While the pasta is cooking, press most of the water out of the nettles, transfer them to a food processor and purée. Drizzle in the olive oil and process until completely smooth. Add the ricotta, lemon zest and juice, and herbs. Pulse the processor to blend all the ingredients. Season with salt and pepper.

Remove a cup of the water the pasta is cooking in and reserve. Drain the pasta and then return it to the pot. Toss in the nettle ricotta cheese mixture and stir to combine. Add the fresh sorrel and a little of the reserved pasta water to create the desired consistency of the sauce. Stir in the walnuts and serve.

From Rose Bochansky at the reluctantgourmet.com