The Full Belly Beet
A Newsletter of Full Belly Farm’s Community Supported Agriculture Project
Week of May 16, 2016

Veggies Notes

Strawberries: We pick our strawberries ripe! Please eat them soon after they arrive, or put them in your refrigerator. If some of them get soft, add them to a smoothie, or smush them onto your toast for instant strawberry jam!

Collards: One of the heavier greens, so when you get ready to cook them, think of southern recipes and add bacon, garlic and onion. Maybe cook them in chicken broth, or with some smoked meat. These greens are best when cooked for longer than the light chards and kales.

Potatoes: Roasted in the oven, then flavored with a bit of cheese, salt and olive oil, these are guaranteed to satisfy. They are uncured new potatoes, creamy and tender. Note that unlike mature potatoes, these need to be refrigerated. You will not need to peel them because the skins are thin, which explains why they sometimes get scuffed

Tokyo Turnips: Eat both the greens and the roots. This turnip is very mild – so much so that you can eat it raw, or chopped up with a little vinaigrette splashed on top. Also great roasted or lightly steamed.

News from the Farm

We recently had a visit from researchers from Washington State University on a project to understand the effect that farm landscapes have on bird diversity. While we love all the birds that live around Full Belly Farm, we often have to work hard to protect our fruit from them. So we have a bit of a dual relationship with the birds and we are always interested in learning more about them.

We have excerpted below from notes provided by the researchers after a few hours of studying the Full Belly birds:

“The bird surveys were very interesting. We detected 47 unique species after sampling 15 points throughout the farm and stratifying the points by habitat type (orchard, livestock, vegetables, creek, etc.) This is the highest number of unique species on the farms we’ve sampled so far. Your farm had far more landscape heterogeneity than other farms. Landscape heterogeneity is known to be important in attracting some species of birds. You’ve also got great habitat for the birds throughout, with thick vegetation located at different heights (ground level for ground foragers, shrubs for edge associated species, thick groups of tall trees for forest species, the creek for marsh birds).

“The hedgerow near the office/broccoli patch had 8 active Brewer’s blackbird nests in it. And there were multiple starlings and a Bullock’s oriole nesting in the palms. We got some poop samples from in and around these nests, which will hopefully give us an idea of their diet on the farm.

“We’re also taking a look at insect communities in relation to bird biodiversity. We found moderate aphid abundances on the broccoli (7-169 cabbage aphids and 0-18 peach green aphids per plant). There were a few parasitoid wasps keeping the aphids in check (0-2 per plant). Interestingly, Full Belly had some of the highest spider densities we’ve seen, both in the visual surveys and the pitfall traps, with 1-3 per plant. Spiders are generally helpful herbivore predators, so that’s a good sign!

“We are super excited to analyze the data and investigate how important the surrounding landscape and on-farm management practices are for bird diversity. We are hoping to observe general patterns emerging across farms, states, species and seasons. We’re hoping to do a couple of surveys each year for another two years.”

In Your Box This Week:
For ideas on the produce in your box, see the recipe page on the Full Belly website. You are also welcome to call us!

• Carrots - see recipe
• Queen Crest Peaches
• Strawberries
• Collards
• Lettuce
• Spring Onions
• New Potatoes
• Tokyo Turnips

Flower Notes
If you got flowers with your CSA box this week, you are getting a bouquet of Nigella, also known as ‘Love in a Mist.’

Memorial Holiday
Memorial Day weekend is coming soon! Please let us know 5 days in advance if you do not need your box that week.

Help Wanted
We are looking for helpers at our farmers markets in Berkeley (every Tuesday afternoon) and San Rafael (Thursday morning). Call us at 530-796-2214 for details.
Recipe of the Week – Easy Pickled Carrots

Even though I am so ready for melons and peppers and eggplant and basil and TOMATOES, I am still loving these spring carrots! They are sweet and satisfying. If you have made one too many salads with carrots and need something new to do with them, try making these refrigerator pickles. They make a great snack!

--Jenna Muller

Ingredients
1 lb. carrots, peeled
1 1/4 cup water
1 cup cider vinegar (or white wine vinegar)
1/4 cup sugar
2 garlic cloves, lightly crushed
1 1/2 teaspoons fennel, dill or anise
1 1/2 tablespoons coarse salt
2 bay leaves

Instructions
1. Cut the carrots into sticks approximately the size of your finger. Bring a medium sized pot of lightly salted water to a boil.
2. When the water boils, drop in the carrots for about a minute. Pour into a colander and rinse with cold water. Drain thoroughly.
3. In the same pot, heat the remaining ingredients. After it comes to a boil, reduce the heat and simmer for two minutes.
4. Remove from the heat and add the carrot sticks. Cool to room temperature, then put into jars and chill.

Let them sit in the fridge for a full day before eating. They should keep in the fridge for a month.

Letters to the Editor

The day after I saw the pix of the ladybugs on the weekly missive I found a ladybug on the parsley we’d just gotten in Rockridge. I was sad because I didn't see it until the bunch had been in the fridge overnight. I gently nudged the little guy into my hand and then outside onto a plant in the sun. Once on the leaf in the sun he warmed up and then scooted away. I hope it was just like a chilly night to him during his time in the fridge... BTW, LOVING the strawberries. They are truly like candy!

Cheers,
Ellen - Ostrander Rd, Oakland site

Special Orders

Strawberry Jam – $9 for a delicious 12-oz jar!

Almond Butter – Creamy or Crunchy – $17/jar – ask about bulk orders

Almonds - Raw $15/pound, Roasted $8/half pound & Tamari – $8/half pound

Iraqi Durum Wheat Flour – $3/1.5 pounds

Iraqi Durum Wheat Berries – $3/2 pounds

Cotton Bags (11.5 x 12.5 inches) – $8 for 5 bags (includes sales tax).

Send us an email to place your order for any of these items. Sorry no deliveries to the Virginia St, Berkeley site. Sorry, no home delivery of juices.

Contact Us!

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