



one potato two

News from the Fields of Driftless Organics

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Know Your Farmer, Know Your Food

Week #2 is upon us. A somewhat rocky start for sure, but we are feeling better and more confident of the season that lies ahead. Fields are drying out and letting us back in and we are replanting as fast as we can. If nothing else, it is strawberry season and who can complain during strawberry season, anyway? I thought this week, I'd write an abbreviated blurb about us, the three farmers that grow your food and why we do what we do.



JOSH: There are many things that go into life. For me, I have coupled the idea of a career path with a life style, or vice versa, if you will. One thing that tops the list for me is living out in the beautiful hill country of northern Crawford County. Growing up on a dairy farm, then going to college and working various odd jobs, I always felt the draw to return to farming. What appeals to me the most is being able to work outside everyday. It is simple as that. I am surrounded by natural beauty that not only enriches my work, but also allows me to be able to go canoeing and biking. This life, a balance of work and play, is nothing short of fulfilling.



NOAH: One reason I like farming is that it is one of those occupations that is largely hands-on learning, which works really well for me. Tasks like writing a paragraph for the CSA newsletter I find very laborious, yet working out in the hot sun all day doesn't phase me in the least bit. Another reason is the freedom: the freedom to make my own schedule and the freedom to be able to stop and chat with the neighbor if I like. Simple gestures like this help reinforce the rural way of life and sense of community.

Many farmers are fiercely independent and don't fit into the 9-5 lifestyle. I know there are many jobs that avoid this schedule just as farming does; but none as enjoyable as farming is to me.

With all this freedom comes great responsibility. I have heard other farmers say: "Oh I don't gamble...", which, of course, is not true. All farming is a huge gamble and your odds at success depend on a multitude of factors like weather, markets, etc. Perhaps the greatest responsibility is taking care of mother nature. We all do this in our own little ways (hopefully), but for me it is being an excellent steward of the land, making sure I do things in such a way that the soil, water and air will be in good shape for the next generations.

the BOX!

- Asparagus
- Broccoli
- Green Garlic
- Green Leaf Lettuce
- Kohlrabi
- Mint
- Red Potatoes
- Strawberries
- Radishes

To sum it up, I farm because I love the combination of responsibility, gambling, freedom, the relaxed learning and, of course, just a little bit of the old fashioned "this is just what I do!"



MIKE: In nearly all of my past ventures in life, the idea or expectations of that venture have always proven to be more exciting and rewarding than the actual reality. This was true for college, jobs, and even traveling. Farming vegetables (and raising beef) was the first venture where the reality of what I was doing superseded all of my expectations and romantic visions and "ideas" that lived in my head. To sum it up: I simply love it. I love the challenge, the excitement, the stress, the multifaceted-ness of a vegetable operation; all of it. Plus, I honestly feel like I am part of a movement of positive social and environmental change. This helps me sleep at night (in more ways than one, as I am so darn exhausted...).

YOUR BOX!

what should I
do with this
mint???

...

Mojitos!

Before mixing up mojitos, you need to make simple syrup. In a small sauce pan, mix equal parts sugar and water (1 cup of each lasts awhile). Stir & bring to a boil. Cool & store in a jar in the refrigerator for up to a month.

For each mojito:

1 shot light rum
1 lime
1 Tbsp. simple syrup
about a dozen mint leaves
ice
club soda

Mix up mint leaves & simple syrup in a tall glass with a spoon until mint is bruised & fragrant. Squeeze in the lime, add the rum & ice & top off with club soda. Also delicious without the rum!

Asparagus - oooh - my favorite veggie. Best eaten a couple of days after its picked or trimmed with ends in water in fridge for up to 5 days. The tastiest & easiest way to enjoy super fresh asparagus is to trim the bottoms (they can be woody) and steam very briefly - 3-5 minutes, only until bright green - put on a platter & drizzle with olive oil, fresh lemon juice, salt, & pepper. Eat it with your fingers. Or you can toss it in olive oil & grill or roast at 500 degrees for about 8-10 minutes. Also delicious in omelets, stir-fries, & pizza. High in vitamins A, B-complex, C, potassium, & zinc.

Broccoli - The most popular member of the brassica family, broccoli is a nutritional superstar. Actually flower buds, broccoli is high in vitamins A, C, K, B-complex, calcium, & fiber. Don't toss the stem! Peel it & eat it raw with dip, grated in coleslaw, or cooked in stir-fry or broccoli soup. Steaming is the quickest & most nutritious way to cook broccoli florets - don't overcook them! Simply top with olive oil & lemon juice, tamari & sesame oil, or butter & Parmesan cheese.

Green Garlic - Basically a young garlic plant, the stem of green garlic can be chopped up and used like minced garlic & the leaves chopped up like chives. Less pungent & more fresh tasting than cloves of garlic.

Kohlrabi - a more obscure member of the brassica family than broccoli, it is nonetheless very healthy. It should be thought of as 2 vegetables: The bulb (high in vitamin C, potassium, & iron) should

be peeled & eaten raw with dip, in salads, or grated in coleslaw or cooked like a potato in au gratins, mashes, curries, or stir-fries; & the greens (high in vitamins A, C, & K) which should be cooked like kale - steamed, sauteed, braised, or added to soups or stir-fries. Removed from the stems, the bulb will store in plastic in fridge for a couple of weeks. The greens should be eaten within a few days.

Lettuce - Make sure to wash lettuce well, in a salad spinner if you have one. Store in a plastic bag with a paper towel in the bottom.

Mint - Fresh mint is such a treat. Delicious with lamb, yogurt, fruit salads, lemonade, & as tea. Mike & I became addicted to sweet mint tea in Morocco during our honeymoon - for tea for two put a handful of fresh mint & sugar/honey to taste in a tea pot & bruise with a spoon. Add green tea leaves & hot water to steep. Pour into small cups & enjoy! Or check out the mojito recipe for a delicious cocktail!

Red Potatoes - 1.4 lbs of potatoes stored over the winter just for you! Use right away or store in a very dark, cool place. Fresh New potatoes should be coming in a few weeks!

Radishes - Beautiful bunched spring radishes to grace your salads or dip trays with. Check out the Southwest radish salad recipe if you're not so keen on them by themselves.

Strawberries - I don't think i have to tell you what to do with these, as you probably already ate them on the way home!

SOUTHWEST RADISH & KOHLRABI SALAD

(adapted from a Featherstone Farm recipe)

- 1/2 head of lettuce, washed, dried, & chopped
- 1 bunch radishes, sliced
- 1 medium kohlrabi bulb, peeled & sliced into thin half-moons
- 3 hardboiled eggs, cut into wedges
- 1 16 oz can kidney, black, or red beans, drained & rinsed
- 1 cup corn, blanched fresh, frozen & thawed, or canned
- 1 cup Monterey Jack, Pepper Jack, or cheddar cheese, cubed
- 1/4 c. thinly sliced green garlic or green onions

Dressing:

- 1 c. salsa
- 1/2 c. orange juice
- 2 Tbsp. cider vinegar
- 2 Tbsp. cilantro, chopped (optional)

Combine dressing ingredients in a jar & shake to mix. Toss over combined salad ingredients & serve with quesadillas, corn chips, etc.

