



one potato two

News from the Fields of Driftless Organics

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\$ 4.25 & RISING!

Week #3! It has not rained since that fateful flood that was already more than 3 weeks ago. Isn't strange how this all works?! We are now hoping that it'll rain - just a bit mind you, so that all that re-planting we have done will actually germinate. Otherwise, things are spectacular around the farm - this past week we planted our second round of tomatoes, our fall cabbage, cucumbers, zucchini, our second round of kale and next year's strawberries as well. This, combined with weeding, harvest, CSA box packing and hay making made for a busy week indeed. Par for the course, I guess you would say.

We are putting this flood behind us and moving on. Every now and again, we do have strong feelings of lament: "oh, we'd have spinach by now...", or "darn it, those early cucumbers would be just about ready by now...", but alas this thinking is somewhat futile, I suppose.

In any event, I thought I'd join the ranks of the disgruntled and whine about rising fuel costs and explain how it affects your farmers and the business as a whole.

As if you haven't all been inundated to the point of nausea already with all the jabber about rising fuel costs, now your CSA is going on about it. Well, our food is certainly one aspect of our lives that is affected by the rising prices. It takes fuel to grow the food, it takes fuel to transport the food and it takes fuel to store a lot of this food. Especially the fresh stuff like fruits and vegetables.

We, at Driftless Organics, are at a

large enough scale and use enough fuel guzzling equipment to really feel the pressure of the rising fuel costs. We have 8 hungry tractors and 3 farm vehicles to feed and a delivery truck to boot. As much as we try to conserve and be smart about our equipment usage choices, we still seem to burn those dinosaur bones.

At about \$4.25/gallon, it cost roughly \$1,700 this spring to fill our two bulk tanks of diesel fuel. This amount of fuel lasted us about a month. Granted, the spring time is when we use tractors the most; to till and prepare the fields for planting. But still, this is before we had even started deliveries. And when spring tillage is finished, summer cultivation begins.

Mechanical cultivation is a large part of organic agriculture that people are generally unaware of. Because we don't use herbicides, we rely on killing weeds with a tractor, or with our hands. The more tractor work done, the more fuel used. I guess you would say we forgo the nasty chemical for the fuel-burning engine (the lesser of two evils?)

Fuel usage really is an unavoidable evil, at this point. We have done some research into alternative fuels, but presently solutions like biodiesel are simply too cost prohibitive. And I emphasize presently because we are very interested in the idea of incorporating biodiesel into our fuel usage regime.

As Noah says:

the BOX!

- Asparagus
- Garlic Scapes
- Red Scallions
- Kohlrabi
- Lacinato Kale
- Lettuce
- Oregano
- Snap or Snow Peas
- Strawberries

"Our solution to rising fuel prices is going to consist of a variety of methods: number one: conservation. Then, exploration of alternative fuels and unfortunately, a rise in the price of the produce we grow."

What concerns me about oil is not just the rising price but the *availability* as well. As the outcry over price continues to heat up, let us all remember that oil is a limited resource. With this in mind, I can see nothing but increasing prices.... FOREVER. Wooph! Big words, but make no bones (dinosaur or otherwise), we could be teetering on a crisis here.

Just the more reason to continue to conserve and explore alternatives. And what better way to conserve than to eat locally with a CSA share! (Good job to all of you!)



Noah, cultivating the kale.

hey!

Don't forget to return your empty box! ReUse and ReCycle! THANKS!

YOUR BOX!

Asparagus, as I proclaimed last week, is my ultimate favorite vegetable when lightly steamed & tossed with fresh lemon juice, olive oil, & salt/pepper. Whatever you do, don't overcook asparagus! Just a few minutes of steaming or stir-frying is perfect. Store in plastic in fridge to use in a day or two, or trim the ends & store in water in the fridge for almost a week. For a tasty & easy pasta dish, throw 1" pieces of asparagus into your pasta cooking pot during the last minute of boiling. Drain the pasta & asparagus & toss with garlic scape pesto & extra olive oil. Asparagus is also great on pizzas, in omelettes or stir-fries. Or tossed with oil & salt & grilled!

Garlic Scapes are the gorgeously swirled flowering stem of hard-neck garlic. They are harvested about a month before their better known bulbs are ready to be dug. Scapes can be used as a substitute for garlic cloves, fresh or cooked, or cooked as a vegetable in their own right. Their flavor is slightly milder than garlic; their texture & shape are similar to asparagus when cooked. Store them in plastic in fridge for a week or two or trim the ends & put them in a vase (they

are a flower, after all) to grace your kitchen table with for up to a week. You can fry, sauté, steam, boil, or roast them. The whole stem & flower bud is edible (discard the tough tip above the bud). Scapes are especially good in stir-fries, eggs, soups, mashed potatoes, pasta... Or try the pesto recipe on pasta, pizzas, in dressings, or as a dip.

Kohlrabi is back yet again, but this is the last we will be seeing of this for the year. Slice it up and put a bit of salt on it and there you go.

Lacinato Kale is the tastiest kale, an heirloom variety from Italy. Its dark green leaves are chocked full of vitamins K, A, & C & are a good source of iron & highly digestible calcium. To preserve these bountiful nutrients, don't overcook the kale! Strip or cut the stems from the leaves, wash, & chop. You can steam - or braise the wet leaves without oil in a hot pan for just a minute

or two - until wilted & bright green. Top with olive oil & lemon juice, soy sauce & toasted sesame oil, or parmesan cheese. Or you can add chopped leaves to just about any dish - pasta, stir-fries, soups - right at the end of its cooking time. Young kale like this is tender enough to chop up & add raw to lettuce salads.

Lettuce, of the red or green leaf variety. Store in plastic for a few days. Rinse well before using, preferably soaking & then drying in a salad spinner to get rid of any grit hiding in their depths.

Oregano fresh from the garden. Use in the garlic scape pesto recipe or add to pasta sauce or pizza.

Purple Scallions are tasty little mini onions from our friends at Harmony Valley Farm. Try them chopped up on top of a baked potato or in that asparagus stir-fry.

Strawberries oh lovely strawberries speak for themselves.

Sugar Snap or Snow Peas are both a delicious spring treat. The amount in the box is just a teaser as they are just coming on but hopefully we'll have more for ya in the coming weeks.

Garlic Scape Pesto

- 1 c. garlic scapes, cut into 1" pieces
- 1/2 c. oregano leaves (or any other fresh herb or mix)
- 1/2 c. walnuts, toasted
- 1/4 c. Parmesan cheese, grated
- 1/2 tsp. salt
- freshly ground pepper
- 1/3 cup olive oil

Combine everything but the olive oil in a food processor & pulse until evenly ground up. Add olive oil in a thin stream while the processor is going. Store in an air-tight container in fridge (top with a bit of olive oil to prevent the top darkening) for up to a week or freeze.

Garlic scape pesto, like normal pesto, can be used in all sorts of different dishes, including pasta, pizza, even as a dip for crackers. Some like it on fish, or on toasted french bread for a bruschetta alternative. For a really tasty treat, try a scallion, asparagus, lacinato kale, garlic pesto omelette (trust me it's out-of-this-world-good).

