



one potato two

News from the Fields of Driftless Organics

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Week #5 and we are still trucking along. The week started off nicely with some much needed rain and now we can watch the crops grow. By the time the fields dry up a bit, we will be ready to go after those weeds once again. All in all, things are going splendid. We have high hopes for the coming weeks.

This week's newsletter is written by one of our employees, Jack Schwarte. I asked Jack, who is an aspiring writer, to give us all a glimpse into the world of a Driftless Organics employee. After reading his report you'll probably agree, that after spending a summer in the elements, Jack will be all the more motivated to do well in his upcoming college career! In the meantime, we hope he continues to endure for us all and be the great employee he has been thus far.

Hello. My name is Jack and I'm an employee at Driftless Organics.

I'll be writing this newsletter. I'm writing it because I want to. No one is behind me, Like one of my bosses for example, cracking a whip and making sure I write this. I hope you enjoy it. After mulling over many different options of topics to write about in this newsletter, I decided on option 27. Helping you appreciate the produce that we send you. I want to help you thoroughly enjoy that vegetable you're about to take an oh so delicious bite out of. How? Let me counter that question with another question. Have you ever picked strawberries? I know I have. Fun job right? You go through the strawberry patch, pick some, eat some, eat some more and then pick some. Sounds like the greatest job in the world, right? Who wouldn't want to eat strawberries on the job? I know I would. Let me ask you another question, have you ever picked strawberries for eight hours in one day? I know I have. Sounds fun right? You pick

and eat strawberries for eight hours. Well, think about picking strawberries for eight hours the next day too. And the day after that. And three days a week for about a month. Does that job picking strawberries still sound fun? Gives Strawberry Fields Forever a whole new and quite literal meaning, doesn't it? It did for me. But I picked those strawberries and I did it for you, because I want you to have good produce in your home.

I'm assuming that you know what gnats are. Those tiny little bugs that fly around and get in your eyes and nose and mouth and ears. Have you ever been bitten by one? I know I have. Right on my eyelid. That's right, my eyelid. I didn't even know that they bit until that moment, which was when I was picking strawberries. But I fought through those swarms of gnats, mosquitos and deer flies. Thistles were also obstructing my path to the strawberries that I was trying to pick for you. Have you ever been poked by a thistle? I know I have. It hurts. A lot. I sat on one. Leaves a stinging sensation wherever you got poked for quite a while. I'm hoping that you are also aware of a plant named poison parsnip. This isn't the parsnip that you eat, the word poison is in front of it for a reason. Should you come in contact with this plant you will break out in blisters in the area the plant touched. Guess where these plants are. If you said strawberry patch, you are correct. I touched one once, with my face. It was horrible. That last part is a lie actually, I never got poison parsnip on my face. But I could. And if I did I would keep harvesting whatever I was picking at the time. Yes, a lot of blood, sweat and tears went into those vegetables. Literally? Maybe, I'm not telling. So the next time you take a bite of something from Driftless Organics, think of me. Sunburned with gnat bites on my eyelid, coughing up mosquitos, trying to pull thistles out of my butt and possibly with blisters on my face as I harvest the vegetable that's in season. Throw in a broken leg too, for all you know I could have one by now.

the box!

Cauliflower or Broccoli
Fennel
Fresh Garlic
Green Savoy Cabbage
Lettuce - Romaine or
green/red leaf
Mint
Red or White Scallions
Snap or Snow Peas



Jack Schwarte

And think about how I went through all of that stuff just so you could enjoy that very tasty vegetable you're about to bite into. Doesn't that taste so much better now?

Now I don't want you to get the idea that I'm slaving away in a field here. That's not the case at all, working here really isn't that bad. My bosses are pretty laid back and haven't even yelled at me...yet. We'll see what happens when they find out that I've been sleeping in the peas. I work with some of my friends from high school and we usually do a good job of making the days seem shorter for each other. Sometimes we don't, but it's still nice to work with them and that's one of reasons I like this job. I get to work with people I like. That pretty much balances out negatives to any job, I think. Well, I hoped you enjoyed this letter filled with news. Although I'm looking back on it and I'm not really finding any news. The weather is partly cloudy with a high of seventy-eight. There. I hope you enjoyed your letter and news sentence.

YOUR BOX!

Cauliflower - toss it in a stir-fry or curry, or bread it and deep fry it like Mike & I did with the first head the other day (oh the decadence...every once in awhile won't kill us!) For a fantastic Japanese meal, try the Tempura Vegetables recipe with fennel, cauliflower or cabbage, scallions, & peas with some miso soup or sushi!

Fennel is high in vitamin A, calcium, iron, & potassium with a celery-like crunch & a mild anise flavor. It blends well with Mediterranean vegetables like tomatoes, peppers, artichokes, and summer squash. Since it's a bit early for all of these veggies now, though, try the bulbs/stems in stir-fries with peas and greens. Or try roasting or braising it on its own with some fresh garlic, scallions, olive oil, & stock as a side dish to fish or chicken. The greens

make a lovely garnish or addition to salads. The bulb/stems can be sliced very thin/grated and added to salads as well.

Fresh Garlic is fresh out of the ground and uncured, meaning it won't store like cured garlic will (fresh garlic will be layed out in the greenhouse with fans going for several weeks to cure and be ready to store). It's really easy to peel. Use it like cured garlic, just use a little extra since it has a higher moisture content.

Mint - EOWers check out the 2nd newsletter of this year on the website for Mojito & Moroccan sweet mint tea recipes. Or try the

tasty fresh green chutney recipe adapted from my favorite Indian cookbook as a cool, refreshing accompaniment to any Indian dish.

Romaine Lettuce - Romaine is the most nutrient dense of the lettuces & is the classic one to use in Caesar salad.

Purple or White Scallions, both are tasty but the reds are extra lovely featured as a garnish.

Sugar Snap or Snow Peas are almost done for the season, & there's lots of them in this box, so enjoy! Like I said before, snaps are better than snows for fresh eating, but both are great cooked. Don't over-cook them or you'll lose their refreshing crunch & vibrant color (not to mention nutrition).

TEMPURA VEGETABLES

Use this recipe for a wide variety of vegetables - it's stunning, impressive, delicious & really highlights each vegetable's uniqueness.

Batter:

1 egg + 1/2 c. ice water + 1 c. + 1/2 c. white all-purpose or cake flour

4-5 cups of mixed cut vegetables, such as fennel bulbs (1/2" wide slices), cauliflower (1" florets), cabbage (1/2" thick wedges), scallions (2" whole pieces) or onions (1/2" thick slices), peas (whole), mushrooms (shiitake or white button, whole), broccoli (1" florets), green beans (whole), zucchini (1/2" diagonal slices).
high heat oil for frying (sesame, peanut, vegetable, and/or safflower oil)

Prepare chosen vegetables.

In a medium bowl, beat egg lightly and beat in 1/2 cup ice water. Add 1 cup of the flour and stir just a few times to barely mix (don't over-mix or your batter won't be light & fluffy like you want it to be). Put remaining 1/2 c. flour in a shallow bowl.

In a large deep skillet or wok, heat 3 inches of oil to 340 degrees (or until water sprinkled on top sizzles vigorously). Dredge each vegetable piece in flour, shake off excess, & dip in batter. Immediately shake off excess batter & slide into the hot oil. Repeat. Cook small batches of each type of vegetable until the outsides are crisp and light gold. Pull out of oil with metal tongs or a slotted spoon & drain on a rack.

Serve immediately with grated daikon radish and this dipping sauce:

1 c. vegetable stock 2 Tbsp. mirin (Japanese sweet cooking wine)
1/4 c. soy sauce/tamari 1 Tbsp. fish sauce (optional)
1 Tbsp. sugar

Bring all ingredients to a boil, stir to dissolve sugar, and remove from heat. Cool to serve.

FRESH GREEN CHUTNEY

1 cup plain yogurt + 3 Tbsp. fresh mint, finely chopped + 1 Tbsp. fresh lemon juice
2 Tbsp. fresh cilantro or fennel leaves, finely chopped (optional) + 2 Tbsp. green onion tops, finely chopped
In a bowl, beat yogurt until smooth. Add remaining ingredients and serve. Keeps for several days in refrigerator.