

# Local Roots Community Supported Agriculture

## Box Contents for June 24<sup>th</sup>

1 bunch green onions  
1 bunch green Italian chard  
1 bunch curly kale  
1 bunch 'Joi Choi' bok choy  
1 head 'Flashy Trout Back' lettuce  
1 bunch dill  
1 bunch red radishes  
½# spicy salad greens

Next week's produce (we think): carrots – cabbage – lettuce – snap peas (we hope) – kale – kohlrabi – green onions – parsley

## Large box additions

½# Sugarsnap peas  
1# broccoli

## Local Roots Farm News

It's Jason writing the newsletter this week. Writers block/newsletter fatigue has set in for Siri, so I'm filling in. I usually end up writing a few newsletters later in the summer, but this is the earliest I've had to pinch-hit.

The theme for this week's box, if there is one, seems to be green. Green chard, green curly kale, green onions, salad greens, joi choi, dill... I'd like to think that the different shades of green make their own sort of rainbow. But in reality, spring and early Summer are the time of the year for green. For the most part, leaves are green because chlorophyll is green and in the long days around the solstice plants are growing leaves most of all. Fruit don't form until after the plant has grown full size, set flowers, had the flowers pollinated, and then we wait for the fruit to ripen. Many of our tomato plants have green tomatoes on their vines. Our peppers, zucchini, and cucumbers are just starting to flower. Beans are beginning to show incipient little pods poking out of where their flowers were. Peas have started to size up in enough quantity to make it into the box next week (fingers crossed).

The roots we eat are just beginning to size up as well. Carrots I seeded way back in early-March grew lush green tops before water and solar energy helped their roots grow to an edible size. They should be in the box next week. Beets are starting to size up. Our potatoes have never looked better. 3-foot tall plants are just beginning to form new potatoes beneath the soil. But this week it's all about the greens. Springtime is when leaves are at their verdant best. And this week's box, harvested, in part, on the Solstice, in many ways marks the end of the time of leaves. Next week should see the beginning of more plant-part diversity. We think we'll see our first fruit (peas) and our first non-fast-growing-brassica root (carrots). Yes, as the days get warmer, the box will start to fill with more parts of the plant. But this week, enjoy your greens!

Jason, and the Local Roots Farm Crew

## Ideas and info for this week's produce

**Italian Chard** – Confession: this is a repeat of the info I wrote about Italian chard last year.

This week's chard is something quite different. Jason and I traveled to Rome two winters ago with our parents and 1-year old Felix. We ate out at casual Roman trattorias most evenings, enjoying big plates of pasta, fried artichokes, and simple sautéed greens. Usually there are two or three vegetable side dishes on a dinner menu in Italy, and one of them is always "bietole", or beet greens. We enjoyed this "new" vegetable dish so much that we sought out a Roman seed supply store and brought home the seeds for this variety of chard. It has a narrow stalk and a thinner leaf than the big bright Rainbow chard, and cooks up faster and becomes more tender. In Rome, cooks will parboil the greens, chop them up into fairly small pieces (stems and all), and then finish them in a pan with plenty of olive oil. The result is silky smooth and spinach-like.

**Curly Kale** – I am very excited that we are putting curly kale in the box this week. As Siri has mentioned in an earlier newsletter, this has been a challenging spring for our brassicas. That wonderful warm and dry weather we had in May and June resulted in a lot of bug pressure on all our brassicas. You might scoff, but the arrival of the June gloom last week was quite the blessing for us and our kale. The rain helped the plants outgrow their bug-damaged leaves, and the cool weather slowed the bugs. A few weeks later, voila! Lovely curly kale. Our most favorite use for curly kale is to make kale chips out of it. Its volume and loft make for the crunchiest chips!

*Recipe – Oven Kale Chips*

- roughly tear leaves from stems
- tear big pieces in half
- place on a cookie sheet and coat with a generous amount of oil and salt
- roast in the oven, turning frequently until done
- frequent turning results in crispier chips
- you cannot undercook kale, but you can overcook it. So watch it carefully

**Spicy Salad Mix** – Spicy salad mix is a staple on our farm. We grow heaps of it, and sell the ingredients mixed, individually, and bunched when the mustardy things get big enough. "What makes it spicy?" is one of the most common questions we get at the market. The answer? Two types of spicy mustard (the serrated purple leaf and the frilly green leaf) and curly cress (the ruffled parsley-looking leaf). These mustard-family leaves make a compound that can be very spicy. Usually, the hotter the weather, the spicier the mustard (and radish). As a part of the mix, these hot leaves make up 10-15% and add a bit of spicy complexity to the salad. Enjoy!