

Riverdog Farm Veggie Box News
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March 2, 2009
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Box Contents:

2-3 hds Lettuce
1 bu Purple Carrots
1 bu Red, Chioggia, or
Gold Beets
1 bu Red Russian Kale
½ lb Spinach
1-2 hds Fennel
2-3 Leeks
1½ lbs German Butterball
Potatoes

Field Notes: The current storm is warm with steady rain and occasional rainbows in front of deep gray cloudbanks. While it makes for challenging harvest conditions, the farm needs the moisture. We are hoping for steady rain throughout March so that Clear Lake, the lake that supplies Cache Creek in the summer with its water flow, reaches the mark that determines the water's release. The water level is now at 2.75 feet at the Clear Lake gauge. The level needs to reach 3.22 feet in order for water to be released into Cache Creek. Historically, farms with riparian rights downstream from Clear Lake rely on Cache Creek for crop irrigation water. In good water years, there is ample water for pumping out of the creek and rafting. This year, because of the drought conditions, regional farms will need to use ground water for irrigation

unless we get a surprising amount of March rain - enough to replenish Clear Lake.

Box Notes: You will find two to three heads of lettuce for your salad needs. The navel orange season from Blue Heron Farm came to an end last week. We really enjoyed the big, sweet oranges this winter, especially as fresh-squeezed orange juice. Our soccer-playing daughter consumed orange after orange during the soccer season. Hope you enjoyed them too. The purple carrots display nicely when sliced diagonally. They are orange inside, purple outside. Red Russian kale is a mild cooking green that can be steamed. Fennel is delicious raw, shaved or thinly sliced in salads. It is a sweet, crunchy palette cleanser. Beet tops are too often overlooked. Whether red, gold, or Chioggia, they are wonderful tender greens with mild sweetness and can be prepared much like spinach. The German Butterball potatoes, with its golden creamy texture, are fantastic in soups – with leeks.

Our new Blogs!: Check out *Riverdog Farm Hog Blog* (riverdoghog.blogspot.com) and *Riverdog Farm Coop Scoop* (riverdogfarm.blogspot.com) and take a look at our pastured livestock operations! The blogs have information and photos about our pastured hogs and laying hens.

Payment Reminder: The veggie box price is \$20 per week. The Second Quarter / April payment is due by March 27, 2009.

Monthly payment for five **Wednesday / Thursday** deliveries in April is \$100.

Monthly payment for four **Friday** deliveries in April is \$80.

Quarterly payment for the **second quarter** of 2009, 13 weeks of deliveries from April through the end of June, is \$260.

If you have any questions about your account status, please email us at csa@riverdogfarm.com or call (530) 796-3802.

Please check the "Ordered-Through" column on the sign-out sheet. If the printed date in the column is earlier than the end of the month, your payment for the remainder of the current month is due by the printed date. Without timely receipt of payment, deliveries might be interrupted.

Riverdog Farm Pastured-Pork: Currently, each pork share includes two complementary packs of Riverdog Hog sausages. Each pork share is \$6 per pound. Shares range from 35 to 40 pounds and include an assortment of cut-and-wrapped ribs, loin chops, Boston Butt steaks, ham roasts, sirloin chops, tenderloin, ham hocks, and picnic shoulder. Each share is packed into a cardboard box (the same sized box as the ones in which the veggies are packed) and delivered frozen to your pick-up location. To request a detailed list of availability or to place an order, email us at csa@riverdogfarm.com or call (530) 796-3802. Riverdog Farm pork is not certified organic. *Shares are available to Mountain Bounty customers for farm pick-up in Guinda.*

Kale with Garlic and Cranberries from Gourmet | November 2007 recipe by Ruth Cousineau
www.epicurious.com/recipes/food/views/Kale-with-Garlic-and-Cranberries-240604

Garlicky kale, a robust winter green, gains an unexpected twist with dried cranberries' saucy hits of tartness. Yield: Makes 8 servings

2 pounds kale (preferably Russian Red), stems and center ribs discarded and leaves coarsely torn

1 tablespoon minced garlic

5 tablespoons olive oil

½ cup dried cranberries (2 ounces)

Cook kale in a 6-quart pot of boiling salted water (1½ tablespoons salt for 4 quarts water), uncovered, until almost tender, 5 to 7 minutes. Drain in a colander, then immediately transfer kale to an ice bath to stop cooking. When kale is cool, drain but do not squeeze.

Cook garlic in oil in same pot over medium heat, stirring, until fragrant, about 30 seconds. Add kale, dried cranberries, ¾ teaspoon salt, and 1/8 teaspoon pepper and cook, tossing frequently with tongs, until kale is heated through and tender, 4 to 6 minutes.

Potato and Leek Gratin

By Deborah Madison from Vegetarian Cooking for Everyone

1 garlic clove and butter for the dish

1 quart milk

2 thyme sprigs or 2 pinches dried

2 large leeks, white parts only, thinly sliced

Grated nutmeg

2 Tablespoons Butter, cut into small pieces

3 pounds potatoes

1 bay leaf

3 garlic cloves, thinly sliced

Salt and freshly milled white pepper

1-2 cups grated Gruyere cheese

Preheat the oven to 375 degrees.

Rub a 9 x 12 inch gratin dish thoroughly with the garlic, then with butter to coat well.

Put the potatoes in a pot with the milk, herbs, sliced garlic, leeks and 2 tsp salt. Slowly bring to a boil, then simmer until the potatoes are barely tender but not to the point of falling apart.

Discard the bay leaf and thyme. Drain.

Make a single layer of potatoes, leeks, and garlic in the dish. Season with pepper, a little nutmeg, and cover lightly with cheese. Repeat until all the potatoes and cheese are used up, ending with a layer of cheese.

Add enough of the milk to come up to the last layer of potatoes - about 1½ cups - dot with the butter, then bake until a golden crust has formed on top, about an hour.

For variations of this recipe, you may add sliced, partially cooked celery root or fennel, mushrooms, or quartered & trimmed artichokes that are parboiled and thinly sliced.