

**Riverdog Farm Veggie Box News**  
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**March 8, 2010**  
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**Box Contents:**

1 bu Spinach  
1 bu Collards  
1 bu Fennel  
1 bu Green Garlic  
1 hd Cauliflower or  
Broccoli  
¾ lbs Little Gem Lettuce  
1 bu Red Beets  
1 bu Spring Onions  
1 Butternut Squash

**Field Notes:** In between the wet spells of winter, we managed to transplant an array of winter-spring crops including lettuce, broccoli, bunching greens, and cabbage. The transplants are now well established having relied on the winter rains for moisture. In the greenhouse, the tomatoes and peppers are already about 2 inches tall with their true leaves extending laterally from their stems to capture the sunlight. The first leaves, the primary leaves, are smaller than the true leaves. The sprouts rely more on the energy of the seed than on sunlight. When the true leaves form, the primary leaves fade away having completed their job of getting the little plant started. With the winds this week, we are hopeful for some drier soil conditions to continue the transplanting of the chards and to allow the nut and fruit

blossoms and bees to do their thing: sprinkle/distribute pollen on the stigma of the pistil to transform the ovule into the fertilized fruits we love to eat. The pink nectarine blossoms are adding their color to the brilliant valley floor patchwork.

**Box notes:** Cubes of butternut squash tossed with Meyer lemon oil, chili pepper, and olive oil then roasted at 375 degrees until soft make a delicious, slightly spicy dish. Wilbur Hot Springs, an old stagecoach inn with mineral-y geyser water-filled tubs about 45 minutes north of our farm in Colusa County, recently had a guest chef weekend where this spicy butternut squash was served. This is the time of year when the spinach really shines. It is dark green, still sweet from the frosty nights, and growing fast during the sunny daytime. It's getting warm enough to start doing some outdoor cooking. The spring onions are very tasty cooked whole on a grill. Turn the onions with tongs until the outer leaves are partially blackened and steam comes out of the root end of the onion. Allow to cool slightly, then slide the inner cooked onion out of the shell and enjoy the flavor of springtime.

**Payment Reminder: The veggie box price is \$20 per week. April / Second Quarter Payment is due by March 26, 2010.**

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

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

**Quarterly payment for 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](mailto: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 Meats:** We can deliver frozen pastured pork or chicken to your pickup location.

**Pork Shares: 15 to 20 lb cases of assorted cuts at \$7 per pound**

**Pork Sausages: 10 lbs of assorted styles is \$65**

**Whole Broilers: 4 to 6 lb meat birds at \$4 per pound**

Email [csa@riverdogfarm.com](mailto:csa@riverdogfarm.com) for more information or to request a list of pork shares or whole chickens. Visit our *Hog Blog* ([riverdoghog.blogspot.com](http://riverdoghog.blogspot.com)) to view photos of our pigs.

## **Spinach Salad with Lentils and Tart Cherry Vinaigrette**

From: <http://eggsonSunday.wordpress.com/2008/01/23/spinach-salad-with-lentils-and-tart-cherry-vinaigrette/>

**¾ cup green lentils**

**¼ cup olive oil**

**¼ cup water**

**½ cup dried unsweetened tart cherries (about 3 ounces)**

**6 cups baby or regular spinach leaves**

**1/3 cup pecans (optional)**

**7 tablespoons red-wine vinegar**

**1/3 cup finely chopped shallot**

**2 tablespoons sugar**

**1/3 cup feta or blue cheese**

In a heavy saucepan cover lentils with water by 2 inches and simmer until just tender but not falling apart, about 15 minutes. Drain the lentils, and rinse them under cold running water to stop the cooking. Transfer them to a bowl and toss them with 2 tablespoons vinegar, and salt and pepper to taste. In another saucepan, heat 2 tablespoons oil over medium heat until hot and cook the shallot, stirring, until golden brown. Stir in water, cherries, sugar, and remaining 5 tablespoons vinegar and simmer, stirring occasionally, until liquid is reduced by about half, roughly 10 minutes. Turn the heat down to low and whisk in the remaining 2 tablespoons oil in a slow stream until emulsified. Season vinaigrette with salt and pepper.

Mix vinaigrette into the lentils. To serve, divide the baby spinach among the plates. Top each bed of baby spinach with a scoop of the lentil-cherry mixture. Top each salad with crumbled feta or blue cheese, and pecans (if using).

Note: you can make this ahead for lunches: just store the lentil-cherry-vinaigrette mixture separately, and top spinach with the lentils and cheese when ready to serve. Makes enough for 4 salads.

## **Blood Orange Sorbet with Candied Fennel and Kumquats**

From: <http://www.brooklynfarmhouse.com/2009/02/13/blood-orange-sorbet-with-candied-fennel-and-kumquats/>

**½ cup kumquats, seeds removed and sliced very thinly**

**½ cup fennel, quartered and sliced very thinly on a Japanese mandolin or by hand**

**1 cup sugar**

**1 cup water**

**1 cup fresh squeezed blood orange juice**

**1 teaspoon Grand Marnier, triple sec, anisette, ouzo, or dark rum**

### **Special Equipment: Ice cream maker**

Combine the kumquat slices, fennel slices, sugar, and water in a medium heavy saucepan. Bring the mixture to a gentle boil, swirling the pan occasionally to help distribute and dissolve the sugar. Reduce the heat and simmer the mixture for 30 minutes, or until both the kumquats and fennel are tender and translucent.

Using a slotted spoon, remove the kumquats and fennel and place in a bowl. Set aside. Cool the syrup to room temperature.

Measure out ½ cup of the resulting syrup (or alternately, use ½ cup plain simple syrup, cooled to room temperature). Combine the blood orange juice, syrup, and liquor of your choice. Taste the mixture and add more syrup, if necessary.

Refrigerate the mixture until cold. Taste the mixture again while cold, adding more syrup, if necessary. Freeze according to your ice cream maker's instructions.

Serve with the candied kumquats and fennel on top of the sorbet.