

Riverdog Farm Veggie Box News
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March 22, 2010
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Box Contents:

1 bu Asparagus
2-3 hds Lettuce
1 bu Gold Beets
1 bu Green Garlic
1 bu Fennel
1 bu Red Chard
1 bu Red Bor Kale
1 Butternut Squash

Field Notes: This week's featured blossom is from the California native Redbud bush. Its deep purple blossoms dot the public roadsides and field roads. The peak of the flowering Redbud annually marks the Spring Equinox, one of two days of the year when the daylight hours and darkness hours are equal length. The daylight hours will continue to increase until the Summer Solstice on June 21 when we'll experience the longest daylight hours of the year. Of course, there's plenty of blossoms this time of the year in the valley: pink nectarine and peach blossoms, white speckles of pea and fava blossoms, and the ubiquitous yellow flowers of various mustards – spring has arrived.

We enjoyed the spring weather the past week and managed to get some work done as well, completing our transplanting of brassicas. This week's forecast also looks very nice, and we'll be prepping ground for transplanting our summer crops.

Box notes: Another definitive sign of spring is the arrival of asparagus! The asparagus is one of the farm's favorite crops for its flavor, popularity, and unusual plant family features (what other vegetable is in the shape of a spear?). This will be the last round of butternut squash in the boxes until next fall. Last fall was a very good squash season. Raw, thinly sliced spring fennel with cheese and crackers is one of our favorite snacks. The short season for asparagus is typically late March to late April. Hope you enjoy the flavorful asparagus while it's here!

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 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 deliver frozen pastured pork or chicken to your pickup location.

Easter Ham: 2 to 4 lb steak-cut smoked ham at \$10 per pound

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 5 lb meat birds at \$5 per pound

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

Butternut Squash and Caramelized Onion Galette

From: <http://smittenkitchen.com/2007/10/butternut-squash-and-caramelized-onion-galette/>

For the pastry:

1¼ cup all-purpose flour

¼ teaspoon salt

8 tablespoons unsalted butter, cut into pieces

¼ cup sour cream

2 teaspoons fresh lemon juice

¼ cup ice water

For the filling:**1 small butternut squash (about one pound)****1 to 2 tablespoons butter****1 teaspoon salt****¼ teaspoon cayenne, or to taste****¾ cup fontina cheese, grated or cut into small bits****2 tablespoons olive oil****1 large onion, halved and thinly sliced****Pinch of sugar****1½ teaspoons chopped fresh sage leaves**

In a bowl, combine the flour and salt. Place the butter in another bowl. Place both bowls in the freezer for 1 hour. Remove the bowls from the freezer and make a well in the center of the flour. Add the butter to the well and, using a pastry blender, cut it in until the mixture resembles coarse meal. Make another well in the center. In a small bowl, whisk together the sour cream, lemon juice and water and add half of this mixture to the well. With your fingertips, mix in the liquid until large lumps form. Remove the large lumps and repeat with the remaining liquid and flour-butter mixture. Pat the lumps into a ball; do not overwork the dough. Cover with plastic wrap and refrigerate for 1 hour.

Preheat oven to 375 degrees F. Peel squash, then halve and scoop out seeds. Cut into a ½ inch dice. Toss pieces with olive oil and a half-teaspoon of the salt and roast on foil lined (for neatness sake) sheet for 30 minutes or until pieces are tender, turning it midway if your oven bakes unevenly. Set aside to cool slightly. While squash is roasting, melt butter in a heavy skillet and cook onion over low heat with the remaining half-teaspoon of salt and pinch of sugar, stirring occasionally, until soft and lightly golden brown, about 20 minutes. Stir in cayenne. Raise the oven temperature to 400 degrees. Mix squash, caramelized onions, cheese and herbs together in a bowl.

On a floured work surface, roll the dough out into a 12-inch round. Transfer to an ungreased baking sheet. Spread squash, onions, cheese and herb mixture over the dough, leaving a 1½ inch border. Fold the border over the squash, onion and cheese mixture, pleating the edge to make it fit. The center will be open.

Bake until golden brown, 30 to 40 minutes. Remove from the oven, let stand for 5 minutes, then slide the galette onto a serving plate. Cut into wedges and serve hot, warm or at room temperature. Serves 6.

Asparagus Risotto from Alameda cooking teacher, Weezie Mott;

<http://www.sfgate.com/food/recipes/detail.html?p=detail&rid=11599&orig=qs>

2 pounds slender fresh asparagus**1 onion, preferably sweet, chopped****2 cups Cal Riso rice, or Italian Arborio, carnaroli or vialone nano****¼ cup heavy cream****Few drops truffle oil (optional)****4 tablespoons butter****6 cups chicken broth****1/3 cup freshly grated Parmesan cheese****Salt and freshly ground pepper to taste**

Holding an asparagus spear in both hands, bend it until it breaks naturally at the point at which it becomes tough. Discard the tough end. Repeat with remaining spears. Line up the trimmed spears and cut off the top 2½ inches. Set those tips aside. Coarsely chop the remainder of the spears. Boil the tips in a large quantity of salted water for 3 minutes. Drain and transfer to ice water to chill quickly. When cold, drain again.

Melt the butter in a saucepan over moderate heat. Add the onion and chopped asparagus ends and sauté until the onion is golden and the asparagus is soft, about 10 minutes. While the onion cooks, bring the broth to a simmer in a saucepan and adjust heat to keep it barely simmering.

Add the rice to the onion and stir to coat with butter. When the rice is hot, add 1 cup of the hot chicken broth and cook until absorbed, stirring frequently. Add more broth, ½ cup at a time, stirring constantly and adding broth only when the previous addition has been absorbed. Cook until the rice is tender and creamy but al dente, about 25 minutes. Remove rice from heat and stir in the cream, cheese, asparagus tips and optional truffle oil. Season with salt and pepper. Serve immediately.