

Box Contents:

1 bu Carrots
1 bu Asparagus
1 lb Snow Peas or
Snap Peas
1 hd Romaine Lettuce
1 hd Iceberg Lettuce
1 lb Broccoli
1 bu Red Spring Onions

Field Notes: The rain did not really materialize here, with less than 0.20" on Saturday followed by a howling North Wind, which is still blowing today. Whatever moisture the rain brought us the wind has sucked out of our soil. At least the wind has kept the frost at bay, though we did get some frost after last Wednesday's storm. We have halted all transplanting operations pending predictions of potential frost for this week, especially later in the week. We have plenty of other field tasks to keep the whole crew busy, so don't worry about folks milling around with out direction around here. We have sad news on the Fava Bean front, as they never fully recovered from a near death experience in the cold of January and then a tenacious

case of aphids. If you are really hankering for your yearly round of Favas, I'm afraid that you'll have to find us at a Berkeley Farmers' Market or seek out Favas elsewhere. Our five-acre patch will probably never put out enough in one week to fill everyone's box this year. They'll be back next year, to some folks delight and other's chagrin.

Box Notes: The asparagus in this week's box are extra large and jumbo spears. Contrary to common misperception, these spears are not older or more mature than their pencil-thin counterparts. I find the jumbo spears to be sweeter than our standard- sized asparagus because of its larger core – the crisp, juicy center of the stalk. The jumbo spears are the preferred size of most of the restaurants and caterers that place orders with us. This week's iceberg lettuce is fantastic – great size, good color, the best of the season. The Broccoli florets are tender and sweet, as are the edible leaves of the broccoli. Prepare them in similar fashion as kales and other brassica greens or right along with the broccoli. Snow Peas and Snap Peas are meant to be eaten pod and all!! The Snow is flatter and has thinner pods than the Snap. Both are great cooked or raw. Good eats!

Event Announcements:

Riverdog Farm is a proud sponsor of the **Bring Back the Natives Garden Tour**, held Sunday May 6, 2007 from 10am to 5pm in Contra Costa and Alameda County gardens. The event is a free, self-guided tour of gardens featuring native California plants. Registration is required. For more information, go to www.Bringingbackthenatives.net.

The Capay Valley Country Garden Tour, another garden theme event, will be held on Sunday May 13, 2007 from 11am to 4pm. This is also a self-guided tour. The admission fee is \$10.00. All proceeds benefit the Will Baker Native Plant Garden, an educational and enjoyable display of plants native to the Capay Valley region in the Nichols Park in Guinda. For more information about this tour, please call 530-796-3464.

Snow Peas with Red Spring Onions and Dill adapted from *Vegetarian Cooking for Everyone* by Deborah Madison

1 lb Snow Peas	1 tablespoon butter or olive oil
6 scallions (2-3 Red Spring Onions)	Salt and freshly milled pepper
2 tablespoons chopped dill or another favored herb	

Put the peas in a skillet with the scallions, a few pinches of salt, the butter, and enough water just to cover the bottom. Cook until bright green and tender, after a minute or two-taste one to be sure. If using olive oil, add a little to the pan now. Taste for salt, season with a little pepper and add the dill.

Shredded Carrot Salad from *Essentials of Classic Italian Cooking* by Marcella Hazan
Shredded carrots with lemon juice is one of the most refreshing of salads, and may well be the simplest to prepare.

5-6 medium carrots, washed, trimmed, peeled, and shredded
1 tablespoon freshly squeezed lemon juice
Extra Virgin Olive Oil
Salt

Combine all ingredients, using enough olive oil to coat the carrots well. Toss thoroughly, taste and correct for salt and lemon juice, and serve at once.

Grilled Asparagus with Pistachio Aillade from *The Zuni Café Cookbook* by Judy Rogers
For 4 servings:

for the aillade: makes about ½ cup

2 ounces raw shelled pistachios (about 1/3 cup)
1 small orange, mandarin, or tangerine for zesting
1 small garlic clove
About ¼ cup extra-virgin olive oil
Salt

for the asparagus: jumbo-sized works well

1 to ¼ pound trimmed asparagus
1-2 tablespoons mild-tasting olive oil
Salt

Preparing the aillade: Preheat oven to 350*

Go through the pistachios and discard any that are shrunken or brown. Spread on a baking sheet and heat the pistachios until warm to the touch, about 2-3 minutes, long enough to heighten their flavor without burning their fragile oil. Coarsely chop.

Coarsely chop the garlic, then pound in a mortar. Scoop out with a rubber spatula and set aside. Transfer the chopped pistachio to the mortar and pound to a dry paste, or grind finely in a processor. Blend in the pounded garlic to taste. Pound or grind in half the oil to bind with the nuts, then stir in the remainder.

With a few strokes of a zester, carve a teaspoonful of fragrant orange filaments. Chop then stir them into the paste. Add salt to taste. The finished aillade will be a dense, heavy paste. Set aside to mellow for an hour or so.

For standard or jumbo asparagus:

Prepare a grill fire and let it burn to glowing coals. Spread the coals, position the grill about 4 inches above them, and preheat it.

Break off the woody ends, then peel away the toughest skin. Bring about 6 cups of water to a rapid boil. Salt lightly. Blanche the asparagus for about one minute. They should remain crunchy and bright green. Drain. Cool in lightly salted ice water (so you do not unseason the asparagus you just seasoned), drain, and pat dry. Oil and arrange in a single layer on the grill. Grill until hot through and emblazoned with pretty char marks, 1-2 minutes per side, depending on the thickness of the asparagus.

Serve a smear of the aillade in the center of each warm plate and let the grilled asparagus fall like “pick-up sticks” on top of it.