

## Riverdog Farm Veggie Box News

PO Box 42 Guinda, CA 95637

(530) 796-3802

April 25, 2011

www.riverdogfarm.com

csa@riverdogfarm.com

### Box Contents:

1 bu Asparagus  
½ lb Braising Mix  
1¼ lb Potatoes  
1 bu Radish  
1 bu Chard  
1-2 hds Cauliflower  
1 bu Spinach  
1 hd Lettuce  
1 bu Fennel

### Payment for May due by April 29, 2011:

Monthly payment for four deliveries in May is \$80.

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 date. Without timely receipt of payment, deliveries may be interrupted.

### Special Bulk Offers:

Please email or call us to place your order by the Friday before your delivery day. Please mail your payment to our address when you place the order.

**Riverdog Farm Almonds:**  
5-lb bag of almonds is \$40.

**Riverdog Farm Almond Butter:** 2-jar order is \$24 or a 12-jar case for \$120.

**Field Notes:** Steady cloud cover continues to blanket the sky creating mild night and daytime temperatures, averaging in the mid-fifties. North of Riverdog Farm about 45 minutes is a remote region known as Bear Valley, just off of Hwy 20 near the junction of SR 16 and Hwy 20. In the spring, swathes of brilliantly colored wildflowers cover the flat valley floor. Unlike Capay Valley with its rolling patchwork of heritage oak trees, orchards and row crops, Bear Valley is a wide open, circular valley with some beef cattle interspersed throughout. Despite the grazing, the wildflowers persist: light pink cat's ears, (*Calochortus uniflorus*) line the dusty road near the main bridge; Purple Owl's Clover, Foothill Penstemon, CA Poppies, Larkspur, Blue Dicks, and the occasional rare pink Adobe Lilies, which start blooming in late March are scattered throughout Bear Valley. Last weekend, the deep purple Larkspur was at its flowering peak. From a distance, the Larkspur looked like a very large pond of dark water and at a closer view, the 5-petal, starflower shapes become distinct in the dense stand of Larkspur

During my visit to see the wildflowers over Easter weekend, I had the fortune of seeing a rare avian form of life in Bear Valley – 5 burrowing owls perched on the edge of an eroded arroyo. This cluster of owls in one proximate space indicated that they might have been immature owls from one nest. According to <http://www.saskschools.ca/~gregory/animals/burowl1.html>, the female owl lays 6-12 eggs during the breeding months of February and March. The burrowing owls are active during the day, unlike other owl species that are nocturnal. They inhabit squirrel holes in the ground but don't do much digging themselves.

Farms love the presence of all types of owls because they are a form of natural pest control. By eating rodents in the fields, owls help reduce the populations of our most common predators: gophers, mice, moles and ground squirrels.

**Box Notes:** Spring lettuce is here. I concede salads are more sophisticated, but I've been waiting for our large leaf lettuce so I can enjoy them in my favorite food - sandwiches. While we don't have full-sized kale, we are harvesting an assortment of baby kales, mustards, and Asian greens for braising or stir-frying. Our spring chard and spinach are thriving in the weather. On Sunday, my neighbors and I got together for a brunch and enjoyed roasted cauliflower, tender chard & spinach salad, and chalupas filled with seasoned mashed potatoes. Enjoy the bounty!

**Oven Potatoes with Fennel** from <http://www.mariquita.com/recipes/fennel.html>

**20 ounces yellow potatoes, cut in ½ inch cubes**

**1 medium sweet onion, diced**

**2 teaspoons vegetable oil**

**Freshly ground black pepper -- to taste**

**1 fennel bulb, trimmed and cut in 1 inch slices**

**1 tablespoon fresh parsley, minced finely**

**½ teaspoon salt**

Preheat oven to 400 degrees.

Spray baking sheet with nonstick cooking spray. In large bowl, combine potatoes, fennel, onion, parsley, oil, salt and pepper; toss gently until well coated. Arrange mixture in a single layer on a prepared baking sheet.

Bake, turning occasionally, until potatoes are crisp on all sides, 30-35 minutes. Serve immediately.

### **Riverdog Farm Meats:**

Riverdog Farm chickens and hogs are CCOF certified organically raised animals. Meat is processed in non-organic USDA inspected facilities, and therefore meat is not certified organic.

**White Cornish:** 3.50 to 6-lb whole (head & feet-on) chickens at \$4.50 per pound.

**Poulet Rouge:** 3.50 to 6-lb whole (head & feet-on) chickens at \$5 per pound.

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

**Pork Sausages:** 10-lb order of assorted styles is \$65.

*Bacon and smoked hams currently unavailable for delivery. Please check here for availability late spring.*

To request a list of pork shares or to place an order, please email [csa@riverdogfarm.com](mailto:csa@riverdogfarm.com). Meat is delivered frozen.

### **Have a friend who'd enjoy our CSA program?**

Endorsement from members who enjoy our service is the best advertisement we could ever hope for! If you like what we do and know folks who would enjoy receiving our weekly veggie box deliveries, please have them give us a call, send us an email, or visit [www.riverdogfarm.com](http://www.riverdogfarm.com).

### **Whole Roasted Cauliflower with Mustard Vinaigrette**

From <http://orangette.blogspot.com/2006/10/smaller-sweeter.html>;  
Adapted from *Parisian Home Cooking*, by Michael Roberts

**2 small cauliflower, about 1 pound each**

**3 tablespoons good-quality olive oil**

**2 tablespoons fresh lemon juice**

**1 teaspoon fine sea salt**

**A few grounds of black pepper**

**A pinch of freshly grated nutmeg**

**Red Wine-Mustard Vinaigrette (Recipe Below)**

Preheat the oven to 375 degrees Fahrenheit.

Set a steamer basket inside a large, deep pot, and add water to a depth of ½ to 1 inch – just below the bottom of the steamer. Rinse and trim the cauliflower. Place them in the steamer, cover, and steam for 15-20 minutes. By this point, they should be tender and should have changed in color from a raw, opaque white to a slightly more translucent, yellowy off-white.

Meanwhile, combine the oil, lemon juice, salt, pepper, and nutmeg in a small bowl, whisking to mix well.

When the cauliflower is ready, gently transfer them from the steamer to a medium baking dish or small roasting pan, something just large enough to hold the two heads side by side. Using a pastry brush, paint the cauliflower with the oil mixture. Cover the pan with aluminum foil, and place it in the oven. Roast the cauliflower for 30 minutes, basting every ten minutes. [You should have just enough of the oil mixture for three light basting in total, including the first one.] Remove the foil, and continue to bake for another 10-20 minutes, until the cauliflower is pale golden and a knife can be easily inserted into its core.

### **Red Wine-Mustard Vinaigrette**

From <http://orangette.blogspot.com>; Adapted from Michael Roberts's *Parisian Home Cooking*

This very simple dressing is a standard for all sorts of salads, from simple greens to shaved fennel, arugula, and Niçoise olives.

**1 tablespoon Dijon mustard**

**3 tablespoons good-quality red wine vinegar**

**½ teaspoon fine sea salt**

**5 tablespoons good-quality olive oil**

Combine mustard, vinegar, and salt in a small bowl, and whisk to combine. Add the oil one or two tablespoons at a time, whisking continuously to emulsify. Taste to correct vinegar-oil balance, if necessary, and toss with your favorite salad ingredients.

The dressing will keep for up to two weeks in an airtight

container in the refrigerator.