

**Riverdog Farm Veggie Box News**  
PO Box 42 Guinda, CA 95637  
(530) 796-3802

**May 10, 2010**  
[www.riverdogfarm.com](http://www.riverdogfarm.com)  
[csa@riverdogfarm.com](mailto:csa@riverdogfarm.com)

**Box Contents:**

1 bskt Strawberries  
1 bu Fennel  
1 bu Green Chard  
1 bu Cilantro  
2 hds Lettuce  
1½ lbs Fava Beans  
1 bu White Spring Onions  
1 lb Shelling Peas

**Field Notes:** Between our house and the farm office there are two rows of plum trees full of dark green leaves. While walking between the rows of trees last week, I heard loud chirping sounds coming from a forked branch of one of the trees. I stepped closer to the noise and saw, at my eye level, a parent goldfinch placing food into the mouths of four opened-beak baby birds. The parent continued feeding them as I watched and when she flew away, I peered more closely at the very full nest. The baby birds had little tufts of downy feathers on their dime-sized heads but their wing feathers were fully developed. They looked like they were outgrowing the cup-shaped nest because two were laying horizontally, close to the nest's edge and two were more upright tucked deeper in the nest. I saw the male and female parents

flitting around the nest, communicating with the babies and each other. One parent, the female, is gray; the other, the male, has a bright yellow underside. After the first day that I noticed them, I checked them each day hoping to see one or more take flight. They continued to outgrow the nest until Saturday evening. I pulled into the farmyard after returning from the farmers market in one of our big, noisy box trucks. I stopped to unload some market goodies at our house but first wanted to check the nest. As I approached the nest, I listened for finch communication. There were a lot of birdsong exchanges happening from all directions. When I got to the nest, I saw one wide-eyed, quiet baby, listening to the calls outside the nest. I stepped away and whistled for my family to come out of the house to see the last baby bird. When Cassidy and Tim got there, the baby hopped onto the edge of the nest and off it flew for its first real world adventure. We saw it land on a branch of another plum tree nearby where it stayed for a while listening and looking around for its family. After I moved the truck to the loading dock at the packing shed, I came back to check. It had flown away. Amazingly, through all the wind, rain, predators, and farm commotion, the baby birds were able to safely grow and mature into independent finches. I'll keep my eyes open for more delicate yet protective bird nests this spring.

**Box Notes:** The strawberries are from Terra Firma Farm (certified organic by CCOF) in Winters. The English Shelling peas are delicious raw, eaten straight out of the pod. The fennel is also tasty raw. It can be sliced thinly and added to a green salad, like celery. The chard is delicate. It is harvested from the spring planted chard field. Since the daytime temperature has been so mild and the nighttime temperature so cool, the chard leaves are exceptionally tender.

**Payment Reminder: The veggie box price is \$20 per week. Payment for June deliveries is due May 28, 2010.**

Monthly payment for five **Wednesday** deliveries in June is \$100.

Monthly payment for four **Thursday / Friday** deliveries in June 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 printed date. Without timely receipt of payment, deliveries might be interrupted.

**Almond Butter:** We are now offering two 1-pound jars of Almond Butter. Each two-jar order is \$24. A full case of 12 jars is \$120.00. The almond butter is certified organic by CCOF and is available crunchy or creamy. Please place your order by Friday prior to your delivery day. Send payment when you place your order. The almond butter is made with the 2009 nut crop. The jars are beautiful and make great gifts.

**Riverdog Farm Meats:** We deliver frozen pastured pork or chicken to your pickup location.

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

**Smoked Ham: 2.5 to 5 lb steak-cut smoked ham at \$10 per pound**

**Smoked Bacon: 5 lbs of bacon is \$50**

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

**Whole Broilers: 4.5 to 6 lb meat birds at \$5 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.

### **Rhubarb and Strawberry Crumble**

Adapted from: <http://orangette.blogspot.com/2005/03/praise-for-pig.html>

**1¼ cup unbleached all-purpose flour**

**½ cup rolled oats**

**¾ cup muscovado (or light brown, if you prefer) sugar**

**6-7 tablespoons canola oil**

**¾ lb rhubarb, cut into ¾ inch pieces**

**1 basket strawberries**

**Scant ¾ cup granulated sugar**

**Zest of half an orange**

**½ tsp ground cinnamon**

In a medium bowl, combine 1 cup flour, muscovado sugar, oats, and oil, mixing well with a spoon or your hands until the mixture holds together in clumps and all the flour is incorporated. Refrigerate for 30 minutes.

Preheat the oven to 375 degrees Fahrenheit.

In another bowl, combine the rhubarb and strawberries with the granulated sugar, the remaining ¼ cup flour, orange zest, and cinnamon. Transfer the rhubarb mixture to an ovenproof baking dish, and distribute the oat topping evenly over the rhubarb. Bake for 35 minutes, or until golden and bubbly. Serve warm, with good-quality vanilla ice cream. Serves 4-6.

### **Fennel Risotto**

From: <http://allrecipes.com/Recipe/Fennel-Risotto/Detail.aspx>

**4 bulbs fennel**

**1 tablespoon butter**

**1 medium onion, chopped**

**2 cups uncooked Arborio rice**

**7 cups vegetable broth**

**1 cup heavy cream**

**6 tablespoons freshly grated Parmesan cheese**

**1 tablespoon dried parsley**

**Freshly ground black pepper to taste**

Cut the base off the fennel bulbs, and cut a cone shape into the base to remove the core. Slice the fennel vertically (lengthwise) into ¼ inch thick slices.

Melt butter in a heavy-bottomed stock pot over medium heat. Cook onions and fennel in butter for two minutes. Stir in the rice; cook for another two minutes, stirring until lightly toasted. Stir in 1 cup vegetable broth; continue stirring until liquid is almost completely absorbed. Repeat this process with remaining broth, stirring constantly. Incorporating the broth should take 15 to 20 minutes in all.

Stir in cream, 3 tablespoons Parmesan and parsley, and cook until rice is done and risotto is thick and creamy. Season to taste with black pepper. Divide risotto into bowls and sprinkle with remaining cheese. Serves six.