

**Box Contents:**

1½ lbs Tomatoes  
1-2 Sweet Peppers  
1 bu Chard  
½ lb Green Beans  
½ lb Assorted Summer Squash  
2 Green Slicing Cucumbers  
2 Melons

**Field Notes:** The light rain Friday night cooled things down and moistened the top ¼ inch of the soil. It wasn't quite enough rain to pull out the rain boots for the wet winter months. We enjoyed meeting some of you at the Hoes Down Harvest Festival on Saturday and at the Laying Hen Workshop we held at Riverdog Farm on Sunday. Thank you for making the trek up to beautiful Guinda. Unlike other years, the weather was cool and we had high, patchy clouds. It rained just enough Friday night to settle the dust but stayed dry for both days' events. We had the pleasure of seeing a swarm of hundreds of gleeful children's faces scrambling up and down and through the dark tunnels

of a 25 foot high hay fort all day, observing a 3 year old have her first, blissful experience holding a chicken, and hearing big chuckles from Kai, a 3 year old whose family receives the Riverdog veggie boxes in Berkeley, when he launched a pumpkin down a 20 foot long roller table slide into a 2 feet deep water trough. Both the festival and the Sunday workshops generate resources for local and statewide organizations working on projects that benefit sustainable agriculture and rural communities. Thank you for supporting and participating in these events! We're looking forward to more fun farm experiences at the Pumpkin Party on October 26, 2008.

**Pumpkin Patch Party at Riverdog Farm! Sunday October 26, from 1 to 5 pm.**

Come visit the farm and harvest jack-o-lanterns! Pumpkin pies, ice cream, drinks, and a hayride will be provided by the farm. Bring a potluck dish to share. Come see the pumpkin plants that many of you planted in the spring. Please RSVP by email and provide how many will be joining us! Directions will be provided in future newsletters.

**Box Price Increase for 2009:** The weekly veggie box price will increase to \$20.00 starting January 5, 2009. We encourage subscribers to make an annual payment of \$950.00 for 50 deliveries in 2009. The \$950 total reflects a \$50 discount. The decision to increase the box price is based on several factors. It's been three years since we adjusted our box price; the last veggie box price increase happened in 2005. Additionally, the rise in cost of production, such as wages and the price of fuel, over the past year and a half are pushing food prices up. Our commitment is to provide a veggie box that is mutually beneficial to you and to the farm. How do we determine the box contents? We peg the value of a box item to its price at the farmers market. For example, the leafy greens bunches at the farmer's market are \$1.50 per bunch so that is the price we use to determine what will go into your box. The price adjustment will allow the farm to create a more full veggie box.

**Payment Reminder: The November payment is due by October 31, 2008.**

The monthly payment for four **Wednesday / Thursday / Friday** deliveries in November is \$64.

We will deliver the week of Thanksgiving. Your delivery day may change for the holiday week. Stay tuned for schedule changes. They will be announced in early November.

***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 may be interrupted.***

**Box Notes:** This week's box contains the first of the leafy greens - Chard! Chard is in the spinach family called Chenopods; the common name for this family is "Goosefoot." The name origin may be

attributed to the leaf shape being similar to that of a webbed goose's foot. It is delicious steamed, sautéed, or in soups. Sautéed chard goes well in egg dishes. Chard's flavor compliments omelets, frittatas, and quiche. As our melon season nears its end, we wanted to provide double the pleasure in this week's box. If the melons are firmer than you prefer, just let it sit on the counter at most a couple of days. The taste samples of our slicing cucumbers didn't turn up any bitter skin, but if you want to be sure, just peel a strip and give it a taste. Enjoy the summer veggies while they're here!

### **Tuscan Bean and Swiss Chard Soup** from *Gourmet*, January 2004

Online recipe source: <http://www.epicurious.com/recipes/food/printerfriendly/TUSCAN-BEAN-AND-SWISS-CHARD-SOUP-109022>

The pancetta and cheese rind give this soup a rich, almost creamy flavor. We removed the stems from the Swiss chard, but if you don't want to waste them, feel free to put them in the soup as well: Once the leaves are sliced, chop the stems and add them to the soup along with the leaves.

Active time: 1 hr Start to finish: 14 hr (includes making stock and soaking beans). Makes 4 to 6 main-course servings.

#### **Ingredients:**

<b>1 lb dried white beans such as Great Northern or cannellini, picked over and rinsed</b>	
<b>¼ lb sliced pancetta, chopped</b>	<b>2 tablespoons olive oil</b>
<b>1 large onion, chopped</b>	<b>1 fennel bulb, stalks discarded and bulb chopped</b>
<b>4 garlic cloves, finely chopped</b>	<b>4 cups chicken stock</b>
<b>4 cups water</b>	<b>1 (3- by 2-inch) piece Parmigiano-Reggiano rind</b>
<b>1 Turkish or ½ California bay leaf</b>	<b>¼ teaspoon black pepper</b>
<b>½ lb Swiss chard (preferably red or rainbow), stems discarded and leaves halved lengthwise, then thinly sliced crosswise</b>	<b>1 teaspoon salt</b>

#### **Preparation:**

Soak beans in cold water to cover by 2 inches in a bowl at room temperature at least 8 hours, or quick-soak (see cooks' note, below). Drain in a colander.

Cook pancetta in oil in a wide 6- to 8-quart heavy pot over moderate heat, stirring occasionally, until browned, about 5 minutes. Transfer pancetta with a slotted spoon to paper towels to drain.

Cook onion and fennel in oil remaining in pot over moderate heat, stirring occasionally, until softened, 6 to 8 minutes. Add garlic and cook, stirring, 1 minute. Add beans, stock, water, cheese rind, bay leaf, and pepper and simmer, uncovered, until beans are tender, 45 minutes to 1 hour. Discard cheese rind and bay leaf.

Stir in Swiss chard and salt and simmer, uncovered, stirring occasionally, until chard is tender, 8 to 10 minutes. Season soup with salt and pepper.

#### **Cooks' notes:**

- Beans can be soaked up to 12 hours.
  - To quick-soak beans: Cover beans with cold water by 2 inches in a 5- to 6-quart pot and bring to a boil, uncovered. Boil beans, uncovered, 2 minutes, then remove from heat and let stand, uncovered, 1 hour.
  - Soup is best when made 1 day ahead (to give flavors time to develop). Cool completely, uncovered, then chill, covered. Reheat and, if necessary, thin with water.
- Stir in Swiss chard and salt and simmer, uncovered, stirring occasionally, until chard is tender, 8 to 10 minutes. Season soup with salt and pepper.

Recipe source: Epicurious.com © CondéNet, Inc. All rights reserved.