



Down on the Farm Notes: The First Spring Basket

April 28th and 30th, 2009

Hi everyone!

Spring has sprung and is it beautiful! Welcome back to our past friends and a big friendly hello to our new friends. We are excited about this 2009 season.

What will you find in your box this week.

- *Spring green garlic
- *Mixed lettuce
- *"Beefy" "Pop-Eye" spinach
- *Fresh "spring" asparagus
- *Lemon Balm and chives
- *Some of you arugula and others tatsoi
- *Easter Egg Radishes
- *A real treat for the first time, fresh picked Nevada Oyster mushrooms!

Note this little reminder to everyone. Everything that comes in your boxes needs to be washed. Yes, you will find some sand (from our lovely spring winds) and once in awhile you may find some critters! ALSO, please have patience with us for the first couple of weeks. It takes awhile to get all the kinks worked out. We apologize ahead of time if we forget something in your box. Thanks for having patience with us!

Green garlic is used just like regular garlic. It is fresh young and full of flavor. And don't forget to use the tops. They impart a great garlic flavor too. "Beefy" "Pop-Eye" spinach is what I call this spinach. Most of you will be more familiar with the wimpy baby spinach that you buy from the store. But this is hearty, packed full of good vitamins type of spinach. Shred its leaves and add to a salad, or lightly steam and serve with fresh lemon juice and olive oil. You will find that it is full of flavor. We have new crops coming soon that will be baby and not as "beefy."

Lemon balm is a great herb to shred and add to fresh greens for a refreshing lemon flavor. It is also good with chicken, fish, and in a cream sauce with pasta. Arugula is a spicy green. It is great to add to a green salad. Tatsoi is good eaten raw, shredded in a salad or lightly steamed or added to a stir fry. And, for our grand finale—Oyster mushrooms! They come from Dan and Rachel McClure from Nevada's Own Perennials in Smith Valley. They just started growing them late this winter. They are so

beautiful. We hope to add pictures to our website so that you can see them growing. In fact, we hope to keep up with pictures this year so that you can watch your food grow throughout the season.

These mushrooms are packed with flavor. They are great fresh, sautéed, and even dried. When Dan has an abundance, he air dries them and stores them for later use. The caps are great sliced thin and added to anything you are cooking. My favorite is with eggs, along with a little fresh spinach, chives, and asparagus. The stems can be chewy, but they impart a great flavor when used in a soup stock. We enjoyed a new dish at Easter with roasted radishes, potatoes and asparagus. The radishes weren't bad that way. Radishes are also good when sautéed with other vegetables.

I need to cover just a few more things in the "housekeeping" department—just a few reminders. We need each of you to sign your name on the clipboard when you pick up your box. That way we know who has picked up and who hasn't. You are responsible for getting your box picked up in a timely manner but we also know that sometimes life happens and there are such things as emergencies that pop up. If this happens, contact Pauline (775-843-6402) to let her know. If she does not hear from you, your box will become a food donation to a local food closet. We've included a full

Housekeeping Rules insert with this letter, so please look it over. Future newsletters will be sent to you via email.

Thanks again for everyone who responded to our survey. We are going to work on some of your suggestions such as less zucchini and melons and more tomatoes. We are also trying to make it easier for you to order produce in bulk such as cucumbers for pickles and tomatoes for sauce.

We are excited to let you know we have added 6 new farmers to our family of growers and with them come about 8 new hoop houses. I will be introducing them to you in the upcoming weeks. To give you just a glimpse, we have a farmer that has planted strawberries in a hoop house and we hope to have berries early this season. Mmmm, can't wait. Rick was busy this winter adding new hoop houses to his farm too. Currently he has 1,600 tomatoes planted in the hoop houses, 1,400 tomato plants in the field right now and he will plant around 7,000 more tomatoes in the field in the next couple of weeks. I think we will see more hoop houses popping up in the future. We can have such cold springs that I think they are going to be a great addition for us to have so we can offer produce earlier in the season. Our earlier cold snaps were hard on the crops.

I have so much to share with you but I don't want to overload you this week. Don't forget to check out the recipe section of our website at www.greatbasinbasket.com. We have recipes available from past seasons too. Oh yes, don't forget to bring your Nevada Grown box back with you next week.

Looks like good weather, so enjoy working outside. Happy cooking!

Tina

Recipes

Oyster Mushroom Broth

3c. Chicken or vegetable broth
Oyster mushrooms thinly sliced
1 tbl. lemon juice
1/4c. chopped onions
1 tbl. cooking wine

Add all ingredients together and cook until tender. Add wine last minute. Use this broth to cook risotto or add as a base for soup or use in a stir fry.

*Use this liquid to wilt (cook) your "beefy" spinach.

Sautéed Mushrooms

Thinly slice mushrooms. Zest 1 lemon and set aside. Use same lemon and squeeze juice over mushrooms. Heat a little olive oil in a pan and add mushrooms along with a little butter. Cook until limp. Simmer down. Then add chives. Pour in wine and salt and pepper to taste. Last, sprinkle with lemon zest. Serve over eggs.

Asparagus and Apple or Pear Salad

1 bunch asparagus
1 large apple or pear
2 tsp. lemon juice
2 tbl. chopped chives
1/4c. favorite nuts, toasted
2 tbl. honey Dijon salad dressing
lettuce leaves

Steam asparagus until cooked, crisp but tender. Cool and cut into chunks. Meanwhile, combine fruit and lemon juice. Add the chives, nuts and asparagus; drizzle with dressing and toss to coat. Arrange lettuce on salad plates and top with asparagus mixture.

Note: To prepare asparagus, snap off the stalk ends as far down as they will easily break when gently bent. Asparagus is full of folic acid, vitamin C and potassium. It is also great sautéed in olive oil with a little bit of green garlic added.

Spring Salad

Fresh asparagus (lightly steamed)
Radishes
Chives
Baby potatoes (cooked and cubed)
Tuna
Hard boiled farm fresh eggs (local fresh
eggs can be found at the local Great Basin
Co-op. Check them out!)

Layer all ingredients on plates. Top with the
following dressing.

Dressing:
chopped chives
1/4c. favorite vinegar
1 minced green garlic
1 tsp. honey
1tsp. Dijon mustard
2/3c. olive oil

Salad Dressing Options.

Recipe #1

1/3c. Parmesan cheese
5tbl. olive oil
2 tbl. lemon juice
1 tsp. lemon peel

Great served over fresh arugula or mixed
greens.

Recipe #2

2tbl. horseradish (you can find Gary
Romano's famous horseradish at the
Great Basin Co-op. Gary has a farm in
Sierra Valley.)
2 tbl. vinegar
2 tsp. honey (find local honey at the Great
Basin Co-op)
1 tsp. Dijon mustard
1/2 tsp. salt
1/8 tsp. pepper
1/4c. olive oil