



## Down on the Farm Notes: 1st Week of Summer, July 1, 3, & 5

### Hello everyone!

Welcome to our first "Summer" CSA. Some of you have been with us for the last few seasons, and it's nice to have you back. For those of you who are new to CSA's our program, welcome! Thank you for choosing to support your local small farms. You are joining a movement that is currently sweeping the nation. Yay! We hope this will be an incredibly "tasty" experience, along with being educational and informational. We, the farmers, continue to learn every day. You will get a glimpse of our lives and be able to experience first-hand some of our challenging moments as well as some of our rewarding moments.

### We'll begin with a few housekeeping rules.

1. For your convenience and to cut down on paper, we decided to make the newsletter available to you via email. We will include a hard copy in your first box each season, and then we will begin emailing them to you. For those of you who do not have email access, just let Pauline know and we will have copies available for you at the pick-up locations. We will have your name on them and you will be responsible for grabbing them when you pick up your box. Keep in mind that all of our newsletters are available on the website [www.greatbasinbasket.com](http://www.greatbasinbasket.com).

### 2. DO NOT THROW AWAY YOUR BOXES!!

We have our own Nevada Grown Boxes, and they cost \$3.00 each. To make sure that the cost of the boxes does not have to be added to the cost of the food, we're going to explain how to break them down without breaking them. Once the boxes are torn, they are of no use anymore.

1. On the top of your box, push down and out on one of the flaps on the short side and slide it back while you support the long side of the box pushing down gently.
2. Next, do the same with the other side.
3. After you have emptied your box, turn the box upside down, push down on the center as you slide the short flaps back and out, one at the time. If you need one of us to show you how to do this, please ask!

Thanks for taking the time to be sustainable. If you don't want to deal with boxes, though, please bring your own. Quite a few of you have done this in seasons past, and it seems to work well.

3. Our program is successful because of many wonderful people who volunteer their

time. They assemble the baskets and help deliver. We also have kind business owners who have volunteered their space to keep your boxes until you pick them up at your specific locations. It's important to remember that the pick-up locations are just that—places to pick up your boxes. The owners or employees cannot answer your questions or deal with any problems, concerns, or comments, so if you could please help us out by keeping all questions directed to our wonderful basket coordinator, we would sure appreciate it. If there are any problems please call Pauline at (775) 843-6402 or email her at [greatbasinbasket@yahoo.com](mailto:greatbasinbasket@yahoo.com)

Thank you for helping us out here. And thank you volunteers for all of your time.

**4.** If you can't pick up your box because you are on vacation, don't worry. Ask a friend or family member to pick up for you. They will appreciate the treat. If you just plain forget because you had a disastrous day, let Pauline know. Sometimes they are held overnight, but if we don't hear from you, they will be donated to a good cause.

**5.** Please sign off on the list of names that you will find on the clipboard when picking up your box. This is the only way we know that you have received your box if we have any problems.

**6.** You may find an item that you don't care for ...like radishes. (Hint...share with your neighbor!)

**7.** Mark your calendars now for the "Day on the Farm" on September 26<sup>th</sup> at Lattin Farms in Fallon.

**8.** Please be patient for the first couple of weeks. It takes awhile to get all the kinks worked out.

**9.** Be sure to wash your produce—sometimes you might find little hitch-hikers!

**10.** Just a reminder for everyone... YES we ARE offering fruit shares this year. We have found neat little farms tucked away in the Auburn/Newcastle area. Email Pauline if you are interested. Also remember that we have fresh eggs available and fresh flower bouquets!

**11.** The City of Reno has included the Basket in Reno's new year-round downtown West St. Market, located on West St. between 1st and 2<sup>nd</sup> Streets. If you would like to see our operation, help or just visit us, please do! Basket subscribers have validated parking during our hours of operation at the Parking Gallery located half a block away at Sierra St. and First St above the Silver Peak Restaurant. Remember to ask Pauline for your ticket before leave; otherwise, when you go to exit the Parking Gallery, you'll have to pay.

**12.** Help us advertise! Let others know about the Fall basket coming up. Thanks!

## **I hope you enjoy this summer season!**

We have a lot of good things coming your way and we hope you enjoy new cooking experiences as we harvest what is in season. I am going to begin this with "Lord willing"...but it is looking like we are going to have a bumper crop of melons this year. We are thinking it will be "The Year of the Melon." Farmer Rick keeps telling me the melons are doing "awesome" and he has many different varieties in all different stages and sizes. He experimented with some new specialty varieties this year. I love saying the names to some of these melons. They are so whimsical like "Tasty Bites", "Lil Loupes" and "Fastbreak". Maybe you can just taste the sweet flavor when you say "'Hearts of Gold", "Canary" or "Sun Jewels," or the plain fun with "Mickey Lee" or "Yellow Doll" watermelon.

Also, the tomatoes are looking great. Rick planted 800 Early Girl plants in his hoop house this year to try to get early tomatoes, and it looks like the name won't let him down. His heirloom tomatoes are looking great outside. I don't know about you, but I am drooling for sliced tomatoes with basil and oil and vinegar. Mmmm! I am sure you are feeling it too...I am ready for some good summer eating with friends and family, so have patience—good times are coming!

Please read our little page of housekeeping rules especially for our first time members. The rules are short and simple. They will help you out with the little "in's and out's" of how things work. Please call or email Pauline though if you have any questions. The first couple of weeks are always interesting, getting proper drop off locations and getting the correct numbers. We have increased to 3 drop off days this year, which adds to the logistics of the program. Pauline has taken the challenge but please understand that it is a lot of work to coordinate close to 300 people. What we are doing has really never been attempted before in this part of Nevada. We are blazing a trail and continually learning, so expect some confusion for the first couple of weeks. Thank you!

What is in the first box? Sod Buster Farms is gearing up full steam ahead and harvesting English Shelling Peas (these are the type you shell and eat just the pea inside). Eat these fresh or sauté in a little butter (without shelling) and then zip them through your teeth and eat them like popcorn. You have a small serving of lettuce, some new baby zucchini (some are the very first picking) fresh baby onions, fresh garlic, arugula (arugula is on the spicy side. You love it or hate it. Sometimes a little goes a long ways. Great added to a sandwich or mixed in with a salad), garlic chives, some of you have chard and some of you beet greens. PLEASE

don't throw the ragged chard away. We had penny size hail last Saturday and it shredded the chard. We went through and stripped the nice big leaves that were in pieces. The smaller ones we left behind...and this is what you are receiving today. It's a little rough, but just wash it well and slice up and cook. See recipes. So much for making everything pretty and making a good impression on the first box...

The best thing to do, when you get home, is take everything out of your box and see what you have. The greens are best washed right away and then stored in the fridge. That way they rehydrate and crisp up. Wash everything well. We do have bugs. See the June 19 newsletter. A hand full of you will receive strawberries. These come from Smith and Smith Farms in Dayton. The spring basket received these and the plants are still producing. Smiths planted more for this year, but they won't be ready until August. Meanwhile, we will take turns with these tasty little morsels.

We are excited about the nice little surprise of fresh nectarines. This CSA program has provided such a fabulous opportunity to locate and meet other small farms in our surrounding areas. The nectarines are from Heidi. She farms a small 7 acre piece of land above the Sacramento area, all certified organic. Only 4 people do all the work; Heidi, her husband and her mom and dad. Some of you may have met her at the Tuesday morning Methodist Farmers'

Market. It is wonderful to be able to send a treat to you once in awhile and it is even more wonderful to support a small working family farm. And to give you a little heads up about Sod Buster Farms, Cliff and Deborah are in their second year of selling free range chickens. If you want some dynamite chicken that is flavorful, safe, and local, you need to put them on your list of things to do for next year. They are sold out for this year, so you want to make sure you order early. Look for their information on the Nevada Grown Website.

Nevada gardens are in their "in-between" period right now. The heat is hard on the spring crops sending the lettuce and spinach bolting and the warm weather crops are not quite ready yet. A freak hail storm in early June hurt Rick's early transplants. He replanted but now that puts everything a couple of weeks later. Our weather has been interesting this spring. Not only for us, but even farmers in California suffered from the early cold spells we had. A lot of people had to replant. When we are working with nature, we need to go with the flow because we never know how things are going to go. It keeps us on our toes and always thankful for the harvest we do get. So I just want you to understand and please have patience especially if you are disappointed with the first couple of boxes. They will get bigger and better as time goes on.

For those of you that are just beginning, you can check out past recipes on our website. I encourage you to do so. You will find many recipes for greens and things that were in our spring basket. Enjoy! We also have information in past newsletters that may be of interest to you, for instance our cheese making information. I just received an email from Nicole at the Co-Op and she was able to find vegetable rennet. She will continue to look for other ingredients. We are hoping to try a day of cheese making. Stay tuned!

This letter is getting long, so happy eating and thank you again for your support. We are looking forward to the months ahead. See you next week.

## Recipes

### Arugula Salad

Mix some of arugula with some of the lettuce greens. Add a little chopped chives and some minced fresh garlic. Arrange on plates. Slice nectarines and arrange on top of greens. Choose one of our dressing recipes that you will find in the recipe section of our website. Drizzle and serve.

### Sarah's Beets and Pasta

Take your bunch of beets and wash well. (Do not peel beets if you were some of the lucky few to get beets.) Cut off tail. Chop leaves, stems and beets into small pieces. Sauté in butter or olive oil. Sarah uses both. Toss some garlic in with the beets. Cook until tender. Add cooked pasta or rice to the cooked beets in the pan. Add parmesan and salt and pepper to taste and whatever else sounds good. (Chives, basil, carrots, etc.) Serve warm.

Even if you don't like beets, I bet you will eat them this way!

### Roasted Garlic Dip

1 head garlic  
1/2 tbl. plus 1/4c. olive oil, divided  
1/4c. freshly grated Parmesan cheese  
baguette or other crusty bread

Cut 1/4-1/2 inch off top of garlic head to expose tips of cloves. Lay garlic head cut-side up in small baking dish. Drizzle 1/2 tbl. olive oil over top. Sprinkle with ground pepper. Roast until soft, fragrant, and lightly browned, about 45 min. Cool completely. Squeeze cloves from the base and use a fork to dislodge flesh from skin. Mash garlic with a fork on small plate. Stir in Parmesan, additional 1/4c. olive oil, and pepper to taste. Serve with baguette.