

# Fair Fields News

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## On the Farm

Well the hot dry weather is continuing and is having both positive and negative impacts on the garden. On the bright side, all of the heat loving crops, such as squash, tomatoes, peppers, eggplants and beans, are growing fast. If the weather continues and we can keep up with the irrigation we should have an early start and bumper crop of all of these fruits.

On the dark side there are crops that don't love heat. When some plants get stressed from heat and lack of water they flower quickly to guarantee reproducing before they die. This is called bolting and is a

problem for greens like lettuce and spinach, and for the whole brassica family, which includes radishes, broccoli, cabbage, cauliflower, arugula, etc. So, you will notice the broccoli this week is on the small side. And this will likely be our last week for spinach until the fall.

Many of you who may have noticed small holes in your pak choy, arugula and radish leaves. These are from the crucifer flea beetle. Introduced into North America in the 1920's, this beetle has become a major pest for many crops. Flea beetle prefers warm dry weather and it has been having

the time of its life this spring...

The only good way to protect against it is with a physical barrier between the plants and the beetle. For this we use row cover, a thin breathable mesh sheet that lets through most light and water, but stops most insect pests.

Row cover also keeps in some moisture and heat, which is an added benefit during cool springs but has made it extra hard this year when we are already experiencing problems due to heat. When we lifted the row cover to reduce heat, we let in some flea beetles. That's life on the farm!

## This Week's Harvest

- ◆ **Summer squash**
- ◆ **Broccoli**
- ◆ **Lettuce**
- ◆ **Salad mix**
- ◆ **Radishes**
- ◆ **Peas**
- ◆ **Chard**
- ◆ **Kale**
- ◆ **Spinach**
- ◆ **Kohlrabi**
- ◆ **Pak Choy**
- ◆ **Green onions**
- ◆ **Turnip**
- ◆ **Herbs**

## Feature Produce – Rainbow Chard

Swiss chard is highly nutritious. This delicious green is part of the chenopod family, which includes beets and spinach.

Chard is packed with antioxidants, vitamins and minerals including vitamins A, C, E, iron, potassium and zinc. Swiss chard also contains the bone building

nutrients vitamin K, manganese, magnesium and calcium.

Both the leaves and the stems are edible. Chard tastes best when cooked and is good in any dish in which you would use spinach.

Add chard to stir fries, soups, lasagna or have it on its own with a little butter, salt and pepper.



## Sauteed Rainbow Chard

1 tbsp butter  
1 tbsp olive oil  
2 garlic cloves finely minced  
Red pepper flakes to taste  
Large bunch chard

Heat butter and oil in large pan over medium-low heat.

Add garlic and red pepper flakes and sauté about 1 minute. Add chard and stir. Cook until tender, stirring occasionally, 5 to 8 minutes. Season with salt if desired.

**From Bon Appetit**  
**Makes 2-3 servings**

### *Fair Fields Wish List*

- ◆ **Green plastic berry boxes**
- ◆ **Elastic bands**
- ◆ **Milk crates**
- ◆ **Wooden boxes**

## Chard and Saffron Tart

Pie shell  
1 large bunch chard  
1 tbsp butter  
1 tbsp olive oil  
1 onion, chopped  
2 garlic cloves minced  
3/4 tsp salt  
3 eggs  
1/2 C milk or cream  
Large pinch saffron, soaked  
In 1 tablespoon hot water  
1/2 tsp grated lemon peel  
3 tbsp grated Parmesan  
Nutmeg  
1 tbsp. minced parsley  
Pepper  
3 tbsp pine nuts

Prepare pie shell. Set aside.

Cut off chard stems, and chop leaves into 1-inch pieces.

Heat butter and oil in large skillet. Add onion and cook over medium heat until soft. Add garlic, chard leaves and salt. Turn chard repeatedly and cook until tender, about 5 minutes.

Make the custard. Beat the eggs, then stir in milk or cream, infused saffron, lemon peel, Parmesan, nutmeg and parsley. Stir in the chard and onion mixture and season with pepper.

Preheat oven to 375°F. Toast the pine nuts in a small pan until they are lightly coloured. Pour the filling in the pie shell and scatter the pine nuts over the surface. Bake until the top is firm, about 40 minutes.

**From The Greens Cookbook.**  
**Makes 4-6 servings.**

## Sausage, Potato and Chard Soup

1 pound Italian sausages  
1 tablespoon olive oil  
1 onion, chopped  
2 garlic cloves minced  
3 cups cubed potatoes  
1/2 teaspoon dried Italian herbs (2-3 tablespoons fresh)  
1/2 teaspoon pepper  
1/4 teaspoon red pepper flakes  
3 cups water  
1 cup chicken stock  
2 cups chopped chard  
1/2 cup Parmesan cheese

Cut sausage into 1-inch pieces. Heat oil in large saucepan over medium-high heat and then brown sausage. Remove to bowl and drain fat from pan.

Add onion, garlic, potatoes, herbs, pepper and hot pepper flakes to pan. Cook over medium heat, stirring occasionally, until onion is softened.

Add water and stock and bring to a boil. Return sausage to pan, cover and reduce heat. Simmer until potatoes are tender, about 7 minutes.

Add chard and simmer until tender, about 5 minutes. Serve topped with parmesan cheese.

**From Canadian Living**  
**Makes 8 servings**