

Fair Fields News

Volume 2, Issue 1. June 15, 2013

On the Farm

Hello everyone and welcome to the 2013 Fair Fields CSA. We would like to welcome both new and returning CSA members. This is the first of 10 bi-weekly newsletters you will receive this year.

First some housekeeping notes...

This year pickups will be a bit different as we are just running a CSA and not trying to sell from a market stand. For those picking up at the farm we will have u-pick perennial herbs and cut flowers. We will bring a selection of the same to Guelph.

We encourage people to bring their own bags and containers for vegetables, herbs and flowers. If you have some to spare then we would be happy to have them, as

they are helpful for members who don't have any or forget to bring them.

If anyone is unable to make it to a pick-up this season, please let us know ahead of time so we can set your share aside in a cooler for later pick-up. If you are going away for a longer time, we encourage you to invite friends or family to pick-up your share that week.

Also, we have a wish list on the back page. If you are getting rid of or not using any of those items, we would love them for immediate or future use.

Now some news from the fields...

This year is off to a fairly good start, with good growing conditions for

most of our crops. Last year this time we were in mid-drought and were struggling to keep up with irrigating, seeding and transplanting. This spring has been quite the opposite, with cooler temperatures and fairly regular precipitation.

The only crops that have struggled have been our very early brassicas, a family that includes radishes, turnip, broccoli, cabbage and many other common vegetables. The flea beetle is a major pest for brassicas and they love a cool damp spring and early summer. Our first seedings were decimated as they were germinating and starting to grow. As a result we are a bit short on arugula and radishes, at least for the first pick-up.

However, we are very excited about our strawberries, which have a ton of blossoms and so should be plentiful in the coming weeks.

This Week's Harvest

- ◆ **Green onions**
- ◆ **Rhubarb**
- ◆ **Salad mix (mesclun)**
- ◆ **Spinach**
- ◆ **Arugula**
- ◆ **Fresh herbs**

Feature Produce – Rhubarb

Rhubarb is a cool season plant native to Siberia. This vegetable/fruit is very high in fibre and low in saturated fat, sodium and cholesterol.

Rhubarb is a good source of Vitamins C, K, and B-6, as well as calcium, potassium and manganese.

Rhubarb stalks vary in colour, depending on the variety. The kind of rhubarb we are growing, which was already growing on our farm when we purchased it, has more green in the stalks than some types of rhubarb, but it is mature and ready to eat.



Some Notes on Preparing and Cooking Rhubarb

Before using, discard any leaves and trim the ends. Peel off strings but completely peeling rhubarb is unnecessary.

You may stand the stalks in cold water for an hour or so to refresh before cooking.

Rhubarb is very tart and is usually sweetened in some way. It can be served as a sauce with yogurt or ice cream, or made into pies, tarts, puddings, breads, jam, jellies, and beverages.

Fresh rhubarb stalks should be placed in a plastic bag and stored in refrigerator. The stalks stay fresh for about 2-3 weeks.

You can also store rhubarb in the freezer. Wash, trim and cut the stalks into pieces. You can freeze as is, or cook it in boiling water for 1 minute, and then cool it promptly in cold water before storing. This helps retain colour and flavour.

Fair Fields Wish List

- ◆ Green plastic berry boxes
- ◆ Clean grocery bags
- ◆ Buckets
- ◆ Milk crates

Easy Stewed Rhubarb

6 cups chopped rhubarb
1 cup granulated sugar
2 tbsp water

In large saucepan, combine all ingredients. Cook over medium heat, stirring, until sugar is dissolved. Reduce heat to medium low. Simmer, uncovered and stirring occasionally for about 15 minutes or until slightly thickened and rhubarb is in threads. Let cool. Can be refrigerated up to 5 days.

**From: *The Rhubarb Compendium*
Makes 3 cups**

Grilled Chicken with Rhubarb Relish

Relish

3 C diced rhubarb
3/4 cup sugar
1 tbsp grated orange zest
1 C orange juice
1 jalapeño pepper, seeded & chopped
2 shallots minced

Place all relish ingredients in a medium saucepan. Bring to a boil, then reduce heat and simmer, stirring occasionally, for about 10 minutes or until mixture thickens. Cool.

Preheat the grill. Sprinkle chicken with salt and pepper. Brush with lemon juice and olive oil. Grill about 6 minutes per side.

Serve with rhubarb relish.

**From: *The Rhubarb Compendium*
Makes 6 servings**

Chicken

6 boneless, skinless chicken breast halves
salt and pepper
1 tbsp lemon juice
Olive oil

For many more good rhubarb recipes, check out:

The Rhubarb Compendium

www.rhubarbinfo.com/recipes