

Community Supported Garden at La Vista

NEWSLETTER

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THE BEAUTY OF UGLY VEGETABLES

A small farm like ours can produce some beautiful looking vegetables, from the glossy smooth eggplant, to lush full green lettuce, to perfectly ripened sweet peppers. Having access to the freshest, most beautiful produce is a major benefit of CSA membership, especially considering that you often receive your vegetables within hours of harvest. Plus, your vegetables are handled minimally, only enough to get them out of the field and rinsed.

But, what about ugly vegetables? Ugly vegetables are just as important in our food supply, right?

We certainly get our fair share of ugly vegetables from the farm. I debate with myself all the time over what to do with ugly vegetables. Sometimes it's hard to put ugly vegetables in your share, because they don't look very good. But it's more difficult to withhold vegetables from your share just because they aren't visually pleasing. Take the carrots you've been getting.



We have a lot of carrots in the field, something we've never had so consistently in the past. Summer carrots are great, but they're ugly. They split. They attract root bugs.

They tend to suffer in the worst of the summer heat. But, they're still pretty darn good. They still taste like a fresh, naturally nutritious upgrade over the bland supermarket fare. I ask myself, is it better to give you carrots that look worn, gnawed, and broken, or to not offer carrots at all?

Flavor is the deciding factor. Tomatoes are another example. Our priorities with tomatoes are flavor, flavor, and flavor, not how they look. You must remember that we're not trying to mimic the uniform blandness of the perfect supermarket tomato, with its perfect round shape and smooth red color. Far from it. Our tomatoes are ugly. They're all over the place when it comes to aesthetic qualities. We grow tomato varieties that scar and bruise if you breath on them, which are normal superficial qualities hiding flavors that are out of this world. We pick through every tomato and cull out the very worst ones, but we'll put tomatoes in the share that would NEVER cut it visually at a market. We'll put out tomatoes that look like they might fall apart in a minute (which they often do), but wow, that's the point. They're often so ripe and tasty that they will fall apart as they melt right in your mouth. I recommend taking plenty of ugly tomatoes when in season. The ugliest tomatoes are often the best ones by far. You've got all winter to choose perfectly round imported tomatoes. Take advantage of the season while it's here, and try the wild, flavorful world of the ugly ones.

That said, we have plenty of beautiful vegetables coming. Fall carrots should be outstanding in both beauty and flavor. Salad mix is looking gorgeous. Fall greens are lush and rich. Yes, beauty and flavor go hand in hand, too. Just don't forget that ugly can be awesome.

UPCOMING EVENTS

- Next Farm Work Day Saturday, Sept 6 at 8:00 AM
- Shareholder Gathering, Sunday, Sept 7

WHAT'S IN YOUR SHARE?



- Eggplant
- Sweet Peppers
- Tomatoes
- Leeks
- Scallions
- Onions
- Beets
- Summer Squash
- Carrots
- Basil
- Cucumbers

and U-Pick:

Cherry Tomatoes, Green Beans, Cut Flowers and Herbs

WHAT'S FOR DINNER?

Cold Cucumber-Tomato Topping for Pasta (Marian Morash, *The Victory Garden Cookbook*)

- 1 lb. cucumbers
- salt and freshly ground pepper
- white wine vinegar
- 1 ½ lb. very ripe tomatoes
- ½ cup chopped red onions
- 1 tsp minced garlic
- 2 Tbsp chopped parsley
- 1 Tbsp chopped fresh basil
- ¼ cup olive oil
- 1 lb. spaghetti
- Grated Parmesan cheese

Peel and seed the cucumbers. Dice the fresh into ¼ inch pieces, and toss with ½ tsp salt and 2 Tbsp wine vinegar. Let sit for 30 minutes, and drain. Peel, seed, and dice the tomatoes, and combine with the cucumbers, onions, garlic, herbs, and olive oil. Taste and add more vinegar, salt, and pepper if necessary. Boil the spaghetti in several quarts of salt water until cooked through but still chewy (al dente). Toss the hot pasta with the cucumber-tomato mixture. Serve with grated Parmesan cheese.

NEW HARVEST TRAILER

with thanks to Tom Bechtold



BABY FALL CROPS



POTATO HARVEST

LOOKING AHEAD

Salad mix is coming next week! I can't wait! Celery will be ready next week, too. Peppers, tomatoes, and eggplant should continue, as well as onions, scallions, and leeks.



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www.lavistaCSA.org

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