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Peas

Jillian Cartwright

Amanda Spackman

Amanda Hawks

Alanna Nafziger

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USU Student Organic Farm

July 3, 2012
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Newsletter



Day Care students learning about "leaves"
At a day camp on the farm

Veggie Feature: Peas

Article by Jillian Cartwright

Things are really starting to take shape on the farm. Not that I'm an expert in gardening at all, but even I can tell that things are looking good when the peas start to come on. To me, peas are a gateway vegetable – when the peas are ripe, that means that the tomatoes, peppers, and plenty more are sure to follow soon. Nothing beats the shell peas from the farm. Cracking open the pods and popping those sweet little peas into your mouth is delicious and actually kind of fun. So get your shellin' fingers ready to go, because you're gonna go through a lot of peas for this risotto recipe. Just use however many you get in your share, or however many you have left after you enjoyed a few on the way home. This risotto is delicious – it's fresh and oh so savory. And even though it's a "cheater" version that doesn't require an hour of constant vigilance and stirring, it really turns out quite well.

Try Peas Dipped

Summer is well on its way, and those crunchy, good to eat raw veggies are coming in season. I'm talking about peas, broccoli, carrots, radishes, you know the deal. This dip will be a great healthy addition to any of these fresh veggies. Yes, I just said dip and healthy in the same sentence, it uses low fat or fat free yogurt instead of high calorie sour cream or mayo, and it still tastes zesty and creamy. Give it a try with some blanched peas from your CSA, you'll love the refreshing summer snack!

Zesty Yogurt Dip

Recipe courtesy of Casey Maher

- 2 1/2 cups plain low-fat or non-fat yogurt
- 1 cup parsley, finely chopped
- 1/2 cup green onion, finely chopped
- 1/2 tsp. garlic, minced
- 2 Tbsp. fresh lemon juice

Mix together and serve cold.

Article by Amanda Spackman

Baked Pea Risotto with Thyme and Lemon

Recipe adapted from Joy The Baker

- 1 small onion, chopped
- 1 T olive oil
- 1 T lemon zest
- 2 t fresh chopped thyme leaves
- 1/2 t ground black pepper
- 1 c freshly shelled peas
- 2 c Arborio rice
- 32 oz low-sodium chicken broth
- 1 1/4 c water
- 1 c grated Parmesan cheese
- Salt to taste

Preheat oven to 350°F. Grease a 9x13 baking pan and set aside. In a medium skillet, heat oil. Add onions and cook until translucent and browned. Add zest, thyme, and pepper. Toss to combine. Add uncooked rice, peas, and cheese. Place in baking pan and pour chicken stock and water over rice mixture. Stir gently to ensure even cooking. Place in oven and cook uncovered for 40-45 minutes, stirring every 20 minutes. Rice is done when liquid is absorbed and mixture is cooked through and creamy. If rice mixture is still crunchy, add more hot water or hot chicken stock about 1/3 c at a time. Add salt to taste.

On the Farm News

Announcements

There will be a food preservation class July 11. The class is 5 dollars and you can sign up at the farm, or by emailing Amanda Hawks. More details will come when you sign up, we'd love to see you there. Food samples provided!

We love volunteers and would love to have CSA members come out and help out! Our volunteer hours run from 8am to 12pm Monday through Friday. If you would like to help with harvest, come on Wednesday or Friday from 7am to 10am.

Pick strawberries for free anytime between 7 am and 1 pm. Tell your friends that they can pick too for \$3 a container

Article by: Amanda Hawks

Another week has swung by! Summer has reached pretty much constant temperatures, the shares are getting big, and the strawberries have been delicious. All good things must come to an end however, and it's looking like the strawberries are about done for the season.

However! Expect good size shares from here on out, assuming the bugs don't eat everything! We're trying to keep everything covered with row cloth, but the flea beetles and grasshoppers have been relentless. But, that's how it goes with organic farming; we'll keep up the battle and a good amount of the produce should pull through.

This last week on the farm, we finished filling the planter boxes and planted them with squash and cucumbers. I'm excited for these planter boxes; I'm hoping we'll be able to have some winter production, including carrots, but we'll see how it goes. Cover crops in the hoopouses have kept us from having winter production in the past, because soil fertility is so important in the organic method, so we'll just have to see.

Yesterday we got out to the pumpkin patch and were weeding like crazy. Pumpkin days is going to be amazing this year! We've got tons of pumpkins and winter squash growing- and they all look great. We're looking forward to all the good things coming up!

Meet your Farmers

Name: Alanna Nafziger

Major: Interdisciplinary Studies,
Emphasis: Sustainable Agriculture

Hometown: Logan, Utah

Role on the Farm: Production Manager



Why did you choose to spend your summer on the farm?

I guess I chose to work here because I noticed that people in our country are becoming very disconnected from food, as a country we aren't doing very well. This alarmed me, so I decided I wanted to learn to grow food so I could know where it came from before the market or the grocery store.

What is your favorite vegetable and why? That is really difficult. I really like carrots, because they taste good. You can also store them for a long time and keep them in the ground. They actually taste better after a few frosts. I appreciate things that don't die at the first sign of frost.

What form of transportation best describes your personality? A rickshaw, and I'm not going to say why!

If you could be a superhero, what would be your super power and how would you use it to better the farm? If I could have a superpower I would have to go with weather control, like Storm from the X-men, because I could make everything grow perfectly

For more information about the USU Student Organic Farm or CSA shares visit:

www.usu.edu/organicfarms

How is our Farm Organic? Soil and Plant Fertility

Article by: Amanda Hawks

The second aspect of Organic Farming which sets it apart from conventional agriculture is the use of natural fertilizers rather than artificial, chemical solutions created in a lab. There have been different discussions on the effect of these straight chemicals on plants. Ultimately, the plants don't care whether the chemical compounds come in a natural way or whether they come from artificial means; the compounds are elementally the same. The problem comes however when artificial solutions are misused and the wrong amounts are placed in a field at the wrong times, causing problems with leaching, (nutrients escaping soil and getting into groundwater or other escape routes) plants being burned, and other issues. The organic method seeks to avoid such issues and strives to use natural methods to

Crop rotations, in which different things are planted in different places from year to year, allow the nutrients from the soil to be used differently year to year; depending on the type of vegetable and nutrient needs of each. We use a cycle of cover crops; over winter, we allow Herring Vetch, which is a legume, to grow and sit under the snow and then grow some more in the spring. As a legume, the roots have symbiotic relationship with bacteria which result in the synthesis of nitrogen. After the cover crop is tilled under, that nitrogen that has been created is in the top layer of the soil. To keep it there, we plant buckwheat through the summer which holds the nutrients there until we till that under and finally plant the vegetables for the season. Included in OMRI approved things, we use fish emulsion, bone feather (chicken matter), and compost (consisting of plant matter and cow manure that has reached a high enough temperature that all harmful bacteria has been killed); each allowing for different inputs of Nitrogen, Potassium, and Phosphorous. Our potting mix, which we plant our seeds in in the