USU Student Organic Farm

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What’s New On The Farm

So much food! It’s so fun to see it! The cabbage, broccoli, early curcubits, tomato, pepper and tomatillo plants are loaded, and the melons, fall squash, beans and potatoes are looking super promising. We have a shed wall covered in garlic, and about 20 lb. of broccoli in the cooler, with more to harvest. We’ve got a good rhythm now with reseeding beets and radishes, and are expecting them and carrots in August and hopefully Sept. It’s also fall planting month, and over the next two weeks we’ll be transplanting more Asian greens, lettuce, mizuna, arugula, broccoli and kohlrabi as well as reseeding beets and radishes for the fall.

Seasonal Eating

Is catching on in the US these days, and this is the season! We’re all pretty into it. Two of us are vegan, and two of us are too cheap and stove-averse in the summertime to cook with meat. Here are our food hack ideas for riffing on gourmet seasonal entrees using a variety of ingredients using some sort of filling base with some sort of flavorful sauce and some sort of satisfying, substantial thing to chew on:

Filling base
Rice, quinoa, chopped greens, pasta, zucchini or summer squash shaved into pasta-like strings, mashed potato or fall squash

Flavorful Sauce · It’s actually pretty easy to improvise sauce or dressing without a recipe. Just throw a blend of sweet, salty, stringent and sour into the food processor and see what you like! (just remember, it’s easier to add than subtract)
- Nuts, seeds, nut and seed butters (for bulk + flavor + calories)
- Oil (best quality you can)- olive, sesame, grapeseed (add last, slowly, to emulsify)
- Stringent liquid- vinegar: apple cider, balsamic, red wine, rice, old kombucha
- Sour liquid- citrus, fermented veg juice, mustard - honey, dijon, yellow
- Salty liquid- Tamari, soy sauce, Bragg aminos, fermented veggie brine, olive juice
- Sweet liquid - Honey, agave, maple syrup
- Herbs: basil, parsley, cilantro, dill, thyme, oregano, etc.
- Extra liquid- tomatoes, cucumbers, coconut milk, kombucha, juice, water

Substantial Thing · Beans, lentils. Roasted, chopped or sauteed avocado, beets, mushrooms, squash rounds, sliced peppers, sliced tomatoes, sliced cucumbers. broccoli, cauliflower, cabbage, sweet potato, fall squash, eggplant, etc. Or meat!

Top filling base with flavorful sauce and substantial thing, garnish with seeds, nuts, hard or stinky or non-dairy cheese, chopped herbs, chopped sundried tomatoes, anchovies, artichokes, olives, etc. and serve! Summertime food adventures await!
It’s no doubt that farming and exercise are mutually inclusive. The USU Student Organic farm fam’s fitness is tested on the farm, rather than in the gym. We weed and harvest everything by hand or with a hand pushing rototiller, unlike commercial farms that use large combines and tractors instead of manpower. All this movement and occasional heavy lifting is keeping us all fit, strong, and active!

However, we do occasionally have long hot days that exhaust our endurance. On these days, the best thing we can do is just keep drinking water, make sure we’re protected from the sun, and keep in mind that pushing through will only make us stronger.

With the recent rise in temperatures, one thing that’s helped me get through the hot days is distance running. I ran cross country for all of high school and never stopped running. Let me tell you, in all my years of running, I’ve had some pretty long runs on some pretty hot days. This has definitely tested my physical endurance as well as my mental strength. Now when I’m working on the farm on a hot day I know what my body can handle, because this is not the first time it’s been tested in the heat.

Something interesting I’ve noticed is that physically, running seems to make farm work easier, but mentally, the farm work seems to make running easier. I think this is because I work on the farm for about 6 hours a day, and I can’t say I’ve ever been on a 6 hour run.

Every day that I work on the farm makes the next day’s work easier and more bearable as I slowly become acclimated to the heat. By the end of the season all of us are going to be heat resistant hulks!
For the past year or so I’ve been embracing a lifestyle of minimizing my waste, mostly by avoiding plastic.

I’ve taken my time making simple switches and learning to form habits that mostly involve planning ahead (and forgiving myself for the inevitable slip-ups).

While it’s been easy to incorporate this lifestyle into my daily routine at home, traveling to Glacier National Park this past week with my boyfriend made it harder to stick to those practices.

In preparation for the trip, I packed my usual ‘zero waste’ essentials: mason jars, cloth bags, bamboo cutlery, titanium straws, and reusable napkins. A recent addition to the list is wax paper from etee (embed link https://www.shopetee.com) which has many uses including replacing ziploc bags when carrying snacks on hikes.

I didn't bring enough jars to have a clean one ready each time I needed to transport my dinner leftovers to the car, which was probably the most common slip-up for me during the trip. Others included purchasing snacks wrapped in plastic and spontaneously buying smoothies or coffees when I didn’t have a jar on hand.

I have found that travel is where the simple switches become harder to maintain and the positive qualities of plastic become frustratingly apparent. While I am usually happy to carry around sometimes bulky or heavy containers for water and leftovers, my desires change when I am backpacking, for example, and aiming to carry as little weight as possible.

This is where I remind myself that my goal is not to focus on the negative outcomes of my actions but rather to focus on the positive outcomes of the ways that I am able to reduce my waste.
Here comes!

Garlic - Dried and ready to ward off vampires, viruses and monotonous flavors

Cucurbits - Choose your own bennings, zuxxhini, and crookneck squash as well as big juicy cucumbers. We harvest every day now- some got a bit away from us in size

Beets - we’re getting into a rhythm...get it??

Radishes - Spicy little accents!

Tomatoes - Sweet, ripe cherry, sunkissed to perfection in the hoop house

Bell pepper - We hope to have enough to give everyone one!

Chard and Kael - You know it!

Cabbage - The real deal. We’ve been looking forward to these beauties, hopefully they are all still doing well in the heat

Broccoli - Some pretty substantial heads for this weather

Tomatillos - Salsa season!

Leeks - Sautee with any of your other veggies for a sweeter, milder onion flavor

Coming up: Potatoes, melons