What’s in the box?
Lettuce, Redleaf *Vulcan* or *Red Butter, Red Cross*
Pac Choi, *Black Summer*
Basil, *Aroma 2*
Carrots, *Nelson*
Beets, *Red Ace*
Onions, *Bianca di Maggio*
Broccoli, *Gypsy*
Strawberries, *Seascape* or *Albion*
Blueberries, mixed varieties
Plums, *Santa Rosa*

Words from the Field
“Our Growing Community” by first-year apprentice Matt Finkelstein

The CSA model highlights an important concept for us during our 1st year apprenticeship: community. As a member of our CSA, it is likely that you care about our community, where your food comes from, and its greater impacts on the local and world community at large. In this issue, I’d like to stimulate some thought on the conceptual distinction between a food system and a food community and to invite you to join in on this discussion.

In attempting to describe the interconnected cycles involved in food production, distribution, and consumption, the system concept seems incomplete to me. It removes the personal relationships – visible, tangible, or not – that exist in the whole of nature. It lacks inspiration and connection. Is there a better way to describe what gives us life?

As aspiring farmers, we are learning more and more about the dynamic communities that exist in nature. However, we may only think of a community in human terms much of the time. Our family, neighbors, co-workers, and those with shared interests are undoubtedly a part of our immediate and tangible community. Communities can gather for social events, help each other in times of need, and join together sustain each other. Are these the only types of community out there?

(continued on back page)

Upcoming Workshop

Summer Pruning for Fruit Trees
Saturday, July 31, 10 am - 2 pm
Louise Cain Gatehouse, UCSC Farm

Summer pruning is one of the best ways to ensure the health and productivity of your fruit trees. Learn summer pruning techniques from pruning experts Orin Martin and Matthew Sutton in this demonstration workshop. Wear comfortable shoes and bring a snack.

$15 for Friends’ members; $20 general public, payable at the workshop. No pre-registration necessary. Questions? Call 831.459-3240 or email us at casfs@ucsc.edu.
“Our Growing Community” (continued)

From the many billions of microbes that make up our soil, the plants that feed us, the bees that pollinate our fruits and flowers, and the barn owls keeping small rodents at bay, our farm is literally teeming with communities. Plants grow by harnessing both sunlight and nutrients replenished by decomposing fungi. Their flowers supply hummingbirds with nectar, who also eat small insects for protein. A subtle and gentle balance is maintained through these many relationships working and living in tandem.

It seems the essential ingredient of these communities is something we know all too well – food! Each organism in this community is inevitably eating something else while also replenishing nutrients through excrement or physical form. All organisms play a role in maintaining balance. Through the conscious maintenance of this ecology, our farmers and gardeners are able to produce food to further support our diverse community.

What do you think? Are there impacts perpetuated by the conceptual distinction of food systems compared to food communities? What are they?

Can we join nature’s community to address the world’s many challenges? Let me know at matt.j.finkelstein@gmail.com.

Recipe: Beetroot Chips

Using a sharp vegetable peeler or knife, cut 1 lb of peeled beetroot into paper thin slices. Heat 3 cups of oil in a pan and cook the beetroot chips in hot oil, in batches, until they are crisp and browned. Drain on paper towels and keep warm in a preheated moderate (350 °F) oven while cooking the remainder. Serve beetroot chips with a blend of whole egg mayonnaise and chopped fresh herbs of your choice.

From: The Essential Vegetarian Cookbook

Recipe: Gingered Plum Sauce

From: Moosewood Restaurant Cooks at Home

6 to 7 large plums
1/4 cup maple syrup
1/4 teaspoon ground ginger
1 teaspoon cornstarch
juice of 1/2 lemon (about 2 tablespoons)

Cut as much flesh off of the pit as possible in slices. In a saucepan, heat the plums, maple syrup, and ginger, stirring frequently. In a small bowl or cup, stir the cornstarch into the lemon juice until dissolved. When the plums begin to release their juice but are still firm, add the lemon juice mixture and bring to a boil. Cook, stirring frequently, until the liquid thickens and clears.

Sauce will keep for 1 week, covered and refrigerated. Serve warm or cold on vanilla ice cream or lemon sherbert. Gingered Plum Sauce is also excellent at breakfast on oatmeal or pancakes.

Tasty Tip: Caramelizing Onions

Peel and slice onions into evenly sized pieces. Heat the pan over medium heat, then add the oil and continue to heat. Once the oil is nice and hot, add the onions. They should sizzle when they hit the oil, but the oil shouldn’t be so hot that they splatter. Stir so that each onion piece is coated with oil.

Continue to cook the onions for 10 to 20 minutes or until onions reach a deep brown color. Stir from time to time. The onions will lose as much as two-thirds of their volume as the water within them evaporates, and then they’ll begin to brown.

The sweet and savory flavors of caramelized onions combines with dozens of vegetable or meat dishes. Try them this week over lightly cooked Pac Choi or steamed broccoli florets.