What’s in the box?

Spinach, mixed varieties
Escarole, Natacha
Kale, Dino
Collards, Champion
Cilantro, Santo
Sweet Peppers, mixed varieties
Apples, Fuji (dry farmed)
Potatoes, Yellow Finn
Winter Squash, Butternut AND Delicata
Onions, Candy

Upcoming Event
Fruit Tree Classes 2012
Jan. 7, 14 & 25 and Feb. 18 & 25
Saturday workshops on growing and caring for fruit trees, taught by Orin Martin, Alan Chadwick Garden Manager and Matthew Sutton, founder/owner of Orchard Keepers. A partial list of classes are:

Jan. 7 10am-1pm: Fruit Trees “101” – Basic Fruit Tree Care
Learn the basics of fruit tree planting, irrigation, fertility, pest management and winter pruning. $30 general admission; $20 FF&G

Jan. 14 10am-12pm: Fruit Tree Q&A – ProBuild Garden Ctr.
FREE! Bring your fruit tree questions to this Q&A session with local fruit tree experts. Learn about varieties that perform well on the Central Coast, along with fruit tree care tips.

Jan. 28 10am-1pm: In-Depth Winter Pruning – Pome Fruit
Learn how to prune your apple and pear trees. $30 general; $20 FF&G

Feb. 18 10am-1pm: In-Depth Winter Pruning – Stone Fruit
Learn how to prune your plum, apricot, cherry and other stone fruit trees.

Feb. 25 4-6pm: Fruit Tree Q&A – The Garden Ctr. (Mission St.)
FREE! Bring your fruit tree questions to this Q&A session at The Garden Center with local fruit tree experts.

All classes held at the UCSC Farm Gatehouse unless noted otherwise. For more information, See: http://casfs.ucsc.edu or email casfs@ucsc.edu

Notes from the Field by Liz Milazzo, Field Production Manager

A week ago we graduated 39 trainees who are going back to Georgia, North Carolina, Utah, Arkansas, Mexico, and our local counties to grow food with methods that protect the environment and contribute to social justice. Thanks, in particular, to the field crew who so enthusiastically harvested and packed the boxes each week: Katie, Tom, Lia, Kyle, Matthew, Joanna, Dan, Amy, Emily, Maria, Britt, and Patrick; to Second Year’s Danielle and Anna, who graciously led the team; Amy Bolton who handled the CSA admin; and Ned Conwell whose skillful tractor work brought us broccoli and not mallow, sweet corn and not wild mustard.

We are discing the fields for cover crop, to be planted soon. The first early rain we got 3 weeks ago softened the soil and left us enough moisture for the cover to germinate quickly, and establish before the rains really begin. The species we work with here – bell beans and vetches, oats and rye – will sink down a root and ride out some long gaps between the first fall rains, if necessary. So, we can drill the cover crop and take the risk of not setting out sprinkler pipe right away – as a matter of fact, we hadn’t had to irrigate the cover crop at all in the last 20 years. We carefully block the crops in July and August so that the fields empty together, allowing large swaths for the disc to clear. All that’s standing now is the little field of peppers, a patch of fall greens, and the Brussels sprouts trial.

Other than the tomatoes lost to late blight and pears which suffered scab, 2011 was a great harvest. We’ll repeat the onions done from transplant in April, and add some red varieties; experiment with dry-farmed zucchini and cucumbers next year; grow lettuce and bean and cilantro seed to save; plant the tomatoes on wide spacing to help counter blight; experiment with a biodynamic “tree paste” to keep ants from climbing the apple trees. We’ll keep “hiding” crops from the squirrels between field borders of basil, and “hiding” the small pumpkins in rows beyond the large pumpkins, ever grateful for the gifts of the Earth.

Heartfelt thanks as we end the CSA season: Thanks to you, our members, for supporting the training of new farmers; thanks to the Late Season CSA members for joining in August; thanks to Sheldon Kamieniecki, the Dean of Social Sciences, for bridge funding that helped CASFS operate in a year of devastating budget cuts; thanks to the True North Foundation for years and years of steadfast support for the CSA training; thanks to Claudia and Alec Webster for a generous grant that is helping CASFS and Environmental Studies strengthen education in sustainable agriculture; thanks to the Friends of the Farm and Garden for their steadfast advocacy on the part of farmer education and community education, and thanks to the many anonymous donors who help keep the Apprenticeship in Ecological Horticulture going each year.
**Wilted Spinach Salad with Roasted Peppers**

2 red peppers, roasted, peeled and sliced into long strips  
6 tablespoons extra virgin olive oil  
Salt and pepper  
1/4 medium-sized red onion, thinly sliced  
8 to 12 thin baguette slices for croutons  
About 12 cups of spinach  
2 handfuls of escarole leaves  
3 tablespoons balsamic vinegar  
1 garlic clove, finely chopped  
10 Nicoise olives, pitted  
1 ounce Parmesan cheese, grated (about 1/3 cup)

Toss the roasted pepper strips with a little olive oil and a few pinches of salt and pepper to marinate. Cover the onion slices with cold water to leach out the strong flavor.

Place baguette slices on baking sheet, and brush lightly with 1-1/2 tablespoons olive oil, toast at 375°F till lightly browned, about 8 minutes.

Wash and spin dry the greens.

Drain the onions. In a large bowl, combine the vinegar, garlic, ¼ teasp. salt, and a few pinches of pepper. Toss the greens, onions, peppers, and olives. Include the roasting juice from the peppers (it is sweet). Heat the remaining ¼ cup olive oil in a small skillet until it is very hot, just below the point of smoking. Immediately pour it over the salad, and toss with tongs to coat the leaves, sprinkling in the Parmesan as you toss. Add the croutons and serve immediately.

*Adapted from “Fields of Greens” by Annie Sommerville*