

FIELD *notes*

UCSC Farm

Community Supported Agriculture

Eleventh Harvest: 8/14/12 & 8/17/12

What's in the box?

Arugula, <i>Sylvetta</i>	Zucchini / Summer
Beets, <i>Cylindra</i> and <i>Touchstone Gold</i>	Squash, <i>mixed</i>
Leeks, <i>Tadorna</i>	Broccoli, <i>Gypsy</i>
Tomatoes, <i>mixed</i>	Strawberries, <i>Albion</i>
Green Beans, <i>Bronco</i>	Plums, <i>Satsuma</i>

Harvest Forecast* for August 21 and 24

Basil	Carrots	Potatoes, Fingerling
Beets	Cip Onions	Romaine Lettuce
Broccoli	Green Beans	Tomatoes
Cabbage		Zukes

*Harvest may vary for 1 or 2 crops, determined on day of harvest

Upcoming Event

Fall Plant Sale

Friday, September 14 | 12-6pm &
Saturday, September 15 | 10am-2pm
Barn Theater, UCSC, @ Bay & High

Fall is a wonderful time to plant vegetable crops to extend your gardening season and give perennials a good head start for spring. The region's best-suited varieties of organically grown winter vegetables and landscape plants available. Friends of the Farm & Garden receive 10% off (memberships available at the plant sale).

For more info call 831.459-3240
or email casfs@ucsc.edu



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Notes from the Field by Emily Cronk, First-Year Apprentice

"The birthright of all living things is health. This law is true for soil, plant, animal, and man: the health of these four is one connected chain. Any weakness or defect in the health of any earlier link in the chain is carried on to the next and succeeding links, until it reaches the last, namely, man." – Sir Albert Howard

Here at CASFS we talk a lot about soil – soil composition, soil structure, soil building, soil health, and soil management. We learn the importance of knowing the soils in which we are growing our food, your food. We learn to appreciate the living, dynamic, complex qualities of soil. We learn to manage and take care of the soil because it affects the traits and quality of the plants that are grown in it. As one neighbor farmer said, "We farm soil, and soil grows the crop."

The baseline of farming organically is to build healthy soil. There are numerous things that we do here on the farm and in the gardens to care for and restore the soil and the "world beneath our feet."

- We plant cover crops when a cash crop is not in the ground. Cover crops prevent erosion, add organic matter to the soil when they are tilled in, improve the structure of the soil, suppress weeds and break pest cycles.
- We rotate crops so as not to plant the same crops in the same place year after year. When you rotate crops, residues or actions from one crop are beneficial to a different crop following it. Planting a legume, that scavenges nitrogen, such as beans or peas one year, provides nitrogen for a demanding crop such as corn the next year.
- We add compost to the soil; the "magical soil conditioner." Compost provides a well-balanced source of nutrients that plants need, helps create an ideal soil structure, supplies conditions for microorganisms to thrive, improves plant disease-resistance, and moderates soil conditions by regulating the pH and detoxifying and breaking down harmful compounds. Here at CASFS we build our own compost, for the most part, with old plant material, food scraps and manure, that we add to the fields and the gardens at the beginning of the season.
- We are contentious about our tillage practices. Over-tilling breaks up soil aggregates, kills organisms that work to build the soil, causes erosion, and creates compaction and plow pans.
- Observation, soil testing, irrigation practices, balancing what goes into the soil, and crop diversity are other important factors that we incorporate at CASFS to create and sustain soil health.

These are only a few of the things that we do as organic farmers to maintain healthy soils and be stewards of the land to grow healthy, chemical-free, quality food, which in turn affects the wellbeing of those who eat the food and work the land.

Speaking of soil, did you know that each state has a designated "state soil?" California's state soil is the San Joaquin soil. California's central valley has more than a half million acres of this soil that is a reddish color sandy loam surface soil with a red sandstone hardpan. This soil has produced many millions of dollars of agricultural wealth for the state's economy.



Pickled Beets

- 2-1/2 lb. beets, trimmed
- 4 cups distilled white or malt vinegar, plus extra if needed
- 2-3 shavings of mace from the outside of a nutmeg
- 1 cinnamon stick
- 1 bay leaf
- 1 tablespoon black peppercorns
- 12 allspice berries
- 1-2 dried red chiles, or as needed (optional)

Put the beets in a large nonreactive* saucepan and cover with cold water. Bring to a boil, then simmer for 15 minutes for baby beets and up to 1 hour for larger ones, or until they are tender. Drain and set aside.

Meanwhile, in another nonreactive saucepan, combine the vinegar and all the spices except for the chiles, and bring to a boil. Turn off the heat and set aside.

As soon as the beets are cool enough to handle, slip off the skins. (I always wear gloves to do this, as the beets will stain your hands quite dramatically.) Quarter or slice the beets, and pack them into hot sterilized jars, slipping a chile or two down the sides, if desired.

Strain the vinegar and pour over the beets. For a spicier pickle, don't strain the vinegar (ensure that the spices are evenly divided among the jars). The beets should be covered with vinegar, so add extra if necessary.

Seal with vinegar-proof lids[†], label, and store in a cool, dark place for one week before serving. *Makes 4 pounds*

*A nonreactive saucepan is one made from stainless steel, glass, or ceramic materials, as well as those coated with Teflon. They're called nonreactive because these materials are highly resistant to chemical attack and don't react with acidic ingredients the way copper and aluminum do.

[†]Vinegar-proof lids are lids that don't have metal that will come in contact with the vinegar. Most canning jars (Ball, Kilner) work well, as long as the lids have a plastic covering on the inside.

Source: Jellies, Jams & Chutneys by Thane Prince

Crop varieties this week

Today we're offering **Cylindra red beets** as well as **Touchstone Gold beets**. It's our first time growing the Cylindra, which are grown for an easy slicing beet for quick pickles. They are loved by chefs for ease in slicing and preparing. Golden beets are sweet, cook to a bright yellow color, and don't bleed their color.

Satsuma plums are a Japanese plum with brilliant red flesh that comes neatly off the pit. Eat fresh, or use in a plum tart where it's really neat to have clean, easy slices – or make a sauce with a little sugar and lemon juice for over ice cream or yogurt.

Oven Roasted Broccoli

- 1 pound broccoli, rinsed and trimmed
- 2 tablespoons olive oil
- 2 cloves garlic, minced
- 1/2 teaspoon kosher salt
- 1/4 teaspoon freshly ground black pepper
- 1/3 cup panko bread crumbs
- 1/4 cup finely grated Parmesan or sharp Cheddar

Preheat oven to 425° F. Cut the broccoli florets into bite size pieces. Cut the stalk into 1/8-inch thick, round slices. Place the broccoli into a mixing bowl and toss with the olive oil, garlic, kosher salt and pepper and set aside.

Spread the panko into a 13 by 9-inch metal cake pan and place into the oven for 2 minutes or until lightly toasted. Remove the panko from the oven and add to the bowl with the broccoli mixture. Toss to combine. Return the mixture to the cake pan, place in the oven and roast just until the broccoli is tender, 8 to 10 more minutes. Remove from the oven, toss in the cheese and serve immediately. *Serves 4*

*Recipe courtesy Alton Brown
(Good Eats – Food Network), 2007*

*This recipe was submitted by CSA member Lori Bush.
Thank you, Lori!*

Strawberry Parfaits

- 2 cups strawberries (fresh, quartered)
- 1/4 cup brown sugar (firmly packed)
- 4 tsps white sugar
- 1 cup yogurt
- 1/4 cup sour cream
- 1/4 tsp orange rind (grated)
- 1 whole strawberry (optional)
- 1 sprig fresh mint (optional)

In a medium bowl combine strawberries, brown and white sugar. Mix well. Let stand until the sugars dissolve and strawberries release their juices [about 20 minutes].

In a small bowl, combine yogurt, sour cream and orange rind.

Spoon one third of the berry mixture into 4 parfait glasses, dividing equally. Top each with 2 tablespoons of yogurt mixture. Repeat another layer, berries and yogurt.

Spoon remaining berry mixture over yogurt, dividing it evenly. Top each with 1 tablespoon of yogurt mixture. Decorate with whole berries and mint springs. Serve immediately.