



FARM NEWS

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Around The Farm

Our melons are peaking right now and we can barely pick them fast enough. Most of the melons we grow (besides the watermelons) are easy to determine their ripeness because the fruit slips off the vine when it's ready. Watermelons are not slippers, so we are resigned to the more vague clues of ripeness like the dry tendril nearest the melon, the yellow spot on the bottom, and the thump.

We prefer the yellow varieties of watermelons like yellow-doll and peace. The standard pink watermelons are usually much too large to fit in our boxes, but they are good too. The muskmelons, the cantaloupe-type melons, are John's most preferred melon and thus we grow lots and lots of them. None of us are complaining about that! Some of the varieties you may be seeing in your boxes today are San Juan, reminiscent of a honeydew but white inside and yellow out, and Ambrosia, a great standard cantaloupe which gets super sweet.

Amazingly we're also harvesting celery this week. Normally we don't harvest it until October, but it's looking so good that we had to pick it. Celery likes lots of water so it's planted in one of the greens sections of our fields, which get overhead watered 2-3 times a week. It's a finicky plant and doesn't always work out for us, so it's really nice to have a good stand this year. We left lots of greens on the harvested celery, so make sure to use them for something like juice or stock.

Beets are also making another showing in your boxes today. Enjoy them roasted and cut up in a salad or juiced with your celery greens. Yum!

Cooking the Harvest

Honeyed Beet Quinoa Summer Salad
from *Fresh from the Farm and Garden* by The Friends of
the UCSC Farm and Garden.

Cook's Note: I make many variations of this salad, with whatever vegetables/alliums/dressings I have on

hand. I love using quinoa, but brown rice and couscous also work nicely. Likely other grains too. For this much salad I usually use half the amount of cheese they recommend and half the amount of nuts. Any mixture of the below herbs work well: just parsley, just cilantro, just basil, or any combination... chives, tarragon for a different flavor. The possibilities are endless and having a salad like this on hand makes healthy lunches/dinners much easier.

6 beets, roasted
¼ cup honey
1 ½ cups orange juice
Juice of 1 lemon
½ cup fruity olive oil
3 cups cooked quinoa (or other grain)
1 cup crumbled feta, shredded parmesan or ???
1 cup toasted walnuts or almonds, roughly chopped
½ cup chopped basil OR cilantro
½ cup chopped parsley
6 minced green onions or 3 shallots/other mild allium
Lettuce greens, ready for eating as salad.

Dice roasted beets and marinate in orange and lemon juice and honey at least one hour. (Julia's note: I warm up my honey a bit before mixing it in, but don't make it too hot or it will 'cook' the juice and fruity oil!) Combine with other ingredients except salad greens. Chill at least one hour to allow flavors to blend. Serve on a bed of salad greens.

Celery Salad with Lemon Vinaigrette
adapted from *Bon Appetit* | June 2006

4 large celery stalks, very thinly sliced on diagonal
1 small head of lettuce or bunch of arugula leaves (the celery should be about half of the salad)
¼ cup extra-virgin olive oil
3 tablespoons fresh lemon juice
Asiago or Parmesan cheese sliced into thin ribbons

Combine celery and lettuce in a large bowl. Drizzle olive oil and lemon juice over. Sprinkle generously with salt and pepper and toss to coat. Divide among 6 plates. Top each with ribbons of cheese.