



May 2009

# green string farm news

## Farm News

### In the Store

- artichokes
- cardoons
- fava beans
- green garlic
- leeks
- yellow spring onions
- carrots
- celery
- red beets
- green Swiss chard
- red Swiss chard
- lettuce
- red dandelion greens
- baby bok choy
- Asian greens
- lemons
- oranges
- fresh rosemary, oregano, and thyme
- eggs
- dried cayenne peppers
- cheddar cheese
- organic Monterey jack cheese
- grass-fed ground beef
- NEW! grass-fed beef cuts

The weather may be weird, but summer's just around the corner and excitement is setting in here at Green String. Tomatoes are in the ground, eggplant seeds have been started, the fruit trees are fruiting up, and we just harvested the very first of the strawberries.

A few hot days have set our artichokes into major production, and the glut of delicious flower buds has got the interns working at picking and preserving them as fast as they can. Meanwhile, we've lowered the price of artichokes to \$1.50 per pound so you can stock up too! We've got big ones for steaming and eating petal-by-petal, as well as medium and baby chokes for sautéing, braising, grilling, roasting, or marinating. Yum!

The farm is a wonderful place to spend a few hours (or a day, or your life!), and we're trying to create lots of opportunities for people to get more involved here. Every Thursday morning we host workdays, most Saturday mornings we lead Family Days, and on Saturday, May 16 there will be a whole day of workshops, food, and music at the Green String Farm Fair. Check out our blog for details at [greenstringfarm.blogspot.com](http://greenstringfarm.blogspot.com).

## Compost Tea

Finished compost is great for soil and plants because it contains not only nutrients, but an amazing amount of beneficial microbes (these are the little guys who turned the scraps into compost in the first place). But to really stretch the power of the microbes in compost, you can make compost tea.

Aerated compost tea is a highly concentrated liquid containing billions of soil microorganisms including a range of different bacteria and fungi. These microbes consume the organic matter in the soil that contains the nutrients the plant needs and excretes them in a form the roots can easily gather.

The process of making compost tea is very simple. A small amount of cured compost is placed in a basket suspended in a quantity of water. An air pump bubbles air through the water, and this mixture creates

an environment in which the fungi and bacteria living in the compost are able to proliferate and grow at an exponential rate until they have consumed all the available food in the compost. This usually takes 24 hours.

We are then able to take this concentrated microbe solution and apply it to our field through an irrigation system reducing time and money while still creating rich, healthy soil.

## Sautéed Baby Artichokes

Artichokes have got to be the most labor-intensive vegetable out there, but they're always worth it. Baby artichokes take a while to prepare, but at least eating them is easy—just shovel them into your mouth whole! It helps that they're delicious too. *Serves 6*

- \* 3 lbs small chokes
- acidulated water: 1 gallon water with 2 quartered lemons
- salted water to cover chokes
- 2 tablespoons cooking oil
- \* 2 shoots green garlic, chopped
- 1 teaspoon coarse salt
- \* 1 tablespoon dried oregano, crushed
- \* 1 tablespoon red wine vinegar

1. Bring a large pot of salted water to a boil.
2. Meanwhile, prepare the artichokes: remove outer leaves down to the tender yellow or white inner leaves. Using a stainless steel knife, trim the tops and stems and cut in half. Submerge immediately in acidulated water to prevent browning.
3. Once the water is boiling, blanch artichokes for 5 minutes.
4. Meanwhile, heat oil in a large sauté pan over moderate heat. Add garlic and salt, and cook until just tender, about 3 minutes.
5. Add artichokes and oregano and stir to coat.
6. In a few minutes the artichokes will begin to soften. Add vinegar and stir.
7. When the liquid has mostly evaporated, cover with a tight-fitting lid and continue to cook over very low heat for 20-30 minutes, stirring occasionally.

## Fava Bean Unrecipe

Sometimes using a recipe with exact measurements of volume and time is going overboard. Fresh fava beans are so simple, so easy, and so dang hard to mess up that an unrecipe seems more fitting. Special thanks to our customer who recommended this preparation!

- \* fresh fava beans
- salted water
- \* olive oil
- salt
- freshly ground pepper

1. Shell fava beans until you get tired of it.
2. Bring a pot of salted water to a boil. Add beans.
3. Cook beans until soft enough to squish with the back of a fork.
4. Drain, mash with the back of a fork until most beans are crushed, but don't overdo it. Dress with a healthy splash of good olive oil, salt, and pepper.

## Alice Waters's Strawberry Shortcakes

What better way to celebrate the beginning of strawberry season than a fancy dessert? Alice Waters's strawberry shortcake recipe is a favorite among the interns, and we think you'll like it too. Use this with your favorite biscuits, or use the recipe we've posted at [greenstringfarm.blogspot.com](http://greenstringfarm.blogspot.com). *Serves 6*

- \* 4 cups strawberries
- ¼ cup + 1 tablespoon sugar
- 1 cup heavy cream
- ½ t vanilla extract
- 6 2-inch biscuits

1. Hull and slice the strawberries, and stir in ¼ cup sugar.
2. Purée one quarter of the strawberry mixture, then stir back in with the remaining mixture and let sit for 15 minutes.
3. In another bowl, combine the heavy cream, vanilla, and 1 tablespoon sugar. Whip with a whisk until the cream just holds a soft shape.
4. Pile the berry mixture and whipped cream onto sliced biscuits and enjoy!