



## A Place on Earth CSA Notes

June 3-6

### In your share this week:

Garlic Scapes; Beets (from our friends at Valley Spirit Farm); Cilantro; Head Lettuce; Collards; Bok Choy; Mixed Greens; Turnips or Radishes

**Attention Family Members and CSA Newbies:** I received an offer from my sister Doey Kirk this week, saying “You can have all my rhubarb and turnips.” My reply: “O ye of little faith! You obviously have not tasted my rhubarb cream pie or my beef stew or vegetable soup with diced turnips.” Remember when you said “I hated beets.... until I tasted them?” You also have probably not tasted salad turnips: the tiny, sweet turnips—and their greens—that are sweet, crunchy, and delicious in salads, or even eaten out of hand—quite different from large regular turnips. Let us take this apart:

**Rhubarb** is very tart and must be diced and (barely) cooked with a small amount of water and some sugar (1/4 cup sugar per cup diced rhubarb, or to taste), and bring to a boil. Simmer for 5 minutes until it dissolves, and it is done. I chill it and freeze or use in place of jam on toast. Other fruit, such as strawberries may also be cooked with the rhubarb. As for the pie, this is to die for. (I have printed the recipe in recent years, but need to reprint, since the season is short. I did not receive rhubarb in my box today but save the recipe for another time.) Sometimes I freeze the diced rhubarb to bake the pie later. The recipe came from my friend Ron Day and it is a winner!)

### Rhubarb Cream Pie

3 cups rhubarb, cut into 1/2" lengths  
1 cup sugar (use 3/4 cup if you only have 2 cups rhubarb)  
2 tablespoons flour  
1/2 cup light cream or half/half  
2 eggs, beaten  
1/4 teaspoon salt  
1 teaspoon vanilla

Mix cut rhubarb with 1/2 cup sugar and the flour. Put into an unbaked pie crust. Mix beaten eggs, 1/2 cup sugar (or 1/4 cup if you only have 2 cups rhubarb), salt, cream, and vanilla, mixing well. Pour over rhubarb and bake 15 minutes @450 degrees, & 30 minutes @350 degrees. Delicious!

**Turnips:** Tiny salad turnips are often grown in spring, and when harvested at 1” or 1.5” are food for the goddesses! I do not peel—larger turnips are best peeled—and slice them in salads as you would use radishes, or as a snack. Larger turnip peels can get bitter, so I do peel them before cooking. I often add 1 small diced turnip to potatoes when I am making mashed potatoes, and they add a flavor that makes mashed potatoes delicious. I also add them to beef stew and vegetable soup, in addition to potatoes, and they make the stock very distinctive and delicious. If I have a couple of turnips I cannot use right away, I peel, dice, and parboil for 3 minutes. Cool, and freeze for later use in mashed potatoes, soups, or stews.

*Doey, please trust your big sister! :-)*

**Zero Waste Pan-Roasted Turnips:** My friend Eleanor Newnan sent me this recipe by Texas Chef Matt Taylor. These turnips are very tiny, so I do not think peeling is practical.

1 bunch of turnips with greens  
Your favorite sauce such as pesto or stir-fry  
Extra-virgin olive oil  
Salt and pepper to taste

Wash and dry turnips. Remove turnip greens, remove center stem, and roughly chop. Set aside. Quarter the turnips, heat a cast-iron or sauté pan over medium-high heat. Add a tablespoon of oil and then the turnips. Allow to sit undisturbed for 2-3 minutes or until caramelized. Shake pan and allow to roast another 2-3 minutes. Turn off heat and add chopped turnip greens, season with salt and pepper, and toss all together, allowing the greens to silt from heat in the pan. Dress the turnips & greens with a bit of basil pesto or stir-fry sauce. With the tiny turnips we received, this would serve 2 people.

**Kale and Green Garlic:** Last week I suggested that you cut up the white part of the green garlic to use like regular garlic and freeze the rest to add to stock. But when I cooked my kale this past week, I sliced and sautéed about a 3” piece of green garlic before adding the kale and had forgotten how sweet the green garlic is when used with greens. I barely cooked the kale and added a teaspoon of bouillon\* to the small amount of cooking water. Somehow, onions are not really needed when using green garlic or even garlic scapes. Even the cooking water—2-3 tablespoons—was delicious!

**Garlic Scapes:** This week the green garlic is history, and we have instead “garlic scapes.” So, you understand the difference, when garlic is planted in the fall, next spring it comes up—sometimes too thickly, and must be thinned. These are green garlic stalks, and they may be used much like garlic, but I cut into 3” lengths and freeze the white part to slice and use to season anything you would use to season garlic with. The green part I dump into the pot when I am making soup stock—maybe 2-3 pieces, instead of onions.

The **scapes**, on the other hand, are the tops of the new garlic plant that must be removed so that a garlic bulb (with cloves) can form underground; otherwise, it would go to seed, and there would be no bulb. The garlic scapes are also useful and delicious. Some folks make pesto out of them, but trust me, if you eat garlic scape pesto (raw), you will keep all vampires away—and maybe

your sweetheart, as well! (My late husband, Bill King never minded when I ate raw garlic when we were courting, but after 10 years, he would say, “God! You smell like garlic, even your skin smells like garlic! *Maybe the honeymoon was over!*) But garlic scapes are still like money in the bank. Cut them into 1/3” lengths and put in a freezer bag in your freezer. When you need onions and/or garlic for sauteing, a handful will do the job of both. Sauté a couple of tablespoons with every pot of greens—or most anything else! Alert: in most cases, only raw garlic gives you “garlic breath;” cooked garlic is unlikely to be offensive.

**\*All bouillon is not created equal:** I like Minor’s soup base, sold in Louisville at Lotsa Pasta in the refrigerated cooler. I use the ham base for greens, but the vegetarian base is also good, as are the chicken, beef, and others.

**Kale/Greens Pesto:** Sound ridiculous? I tried this recipe from Tejal Rao and was not only impressed with it as a pasta sauce but is also delicious as a spread on crusty Blue Dog bread. While it calls for Lacinato kale, it works with other young tender kale or for beet greens.

### **Kale/Greens Sauce Pasta**

- Kosher salt, to taste
  - ¼ cup extra-virgin olive oil, plus more for serving
  - 2 cloves garlic, smashed flat and peeled (or 4” green garlic, white end)
  - 1-pound Lacinato kale, thick ribs removed (or other tender greens)
  - Freshly ground black pepper, to taste
  - ½ pound pasta, like pappardelle or rigatoni
  - ¾ cup coarsely grated Parmigiano- Reggiano
1. Put a large pot of generously salted water over high heat and bring to a boil. In a small skillet over medium heat, add olive oil and garlic, and cook until the garlic begins to sizzle. Reduce heat to low and cook very gently until garlic is soft and begins to turn light gold, about 5 minutes. Remove from heat.
  2. When water is boiling, add kale leaves, and cook until tender, but not mushy, about 5 minutes. Pull out the hot, dripping kale leaves with tongs, and put directly into a blender. (Do not drain the pot; you will use that same boiling water to cook the pasta.) Add garlic and its oil to the blender, along with a splash of hot water from the pot if you need some more liquid to get the blender going. Blend into a fine, thick green purée. Taste, and adjust seasoning with salt and pepper, then blend again.

3. Add the pasta to the still-boiling water and cook according to directions on the package. Ladle out about a cup of the water to save for finishing the dish, then drain the pasta and return it to the dry pot. Add the kale purée, about 3/4 of the grated cheese and a splash of the reserved pasta water. Toss until all the pasta is well coated and bright green, adding another splash of pasta water if needed so that the sauce is loose and almost creamy in texture. Serve in bowls right away, and top with an extra drizzle of olive oil and the rest of the grated cheese.

**Other Greens!** This week we have bok choy, beet greens, turnip greens, collards, and some baby greens mixed with lettuce in the “mixed greens” bag. While they can potentially be used interchangeably, some are more tender; some less so. In most, remove the center stem before slicing onto ribbons to cook: Season with salt, pepper, garlic scapes/onions/butter, and optional bouillon to taste. For those who like to cook with meat, consider lean ham or cured turkey.

**Beet Greens:** Very tender; just barely cook until wilted.

**Turnip Greens:** Not quite as tender as beet greens, but tender; season as above.

**Collards:** Least tender of most greens, but the young collards might only need to be simmered 5 minutes; older, tougher leaves might need longer cooking

**Bok Choy:** Slice through stems and leaves, and stir fry with onions, garlic scapes, and whatever vegetables and meats you like with stir fry. Often served over rice or other grain.

**Mixed Greens:** OK to mix these greens, including kale, and other greens, but you will need to cook a little longer if you include tougher greens. My suggestion is to cook beet greens (and spinach) separately, enjoying the very tender texture.)

**Smoothies:** Keep in mind that you can add lettuce and greens to smoothies, along with yogurt, fruit, etc. You can't taste them, but you charge up your smoothies, so you'll be just like Popeye!

**Beets:** They are much, much better if roasted instead of boiled. Just cut off the greens, wash, and place the beets in a covered casserole dish. Roast at 400 degrees for 30-40 minutes until a fork will easily penetrate the beets, and cool. They peel easily after roasting, put sliced beets in salads, or serve warm with butter. More recipes in another notes page. You can also cook the beets in a slow cooker with a few tablespoons of water, 3-4 hours on high, or 5-7 hours on low.

**Cookbooks! Do you love them?** After 50+ years as a Home Economist & food writer, I am giving away all but 50 of my favorite cookbooks. I have already given more than 50, but have a bunch more, and if anyone wants to come by and take a look, let me know.

**Questions:** send an e-mail & I will answer if I can. Or send your favorite recipes and I will share with other CSA members.

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