



A Place on Earth CSA Notes June 17-20, 2020

In your share this week:

Strawberries; Squash/Zucchini; Broccoli; Basil; Garlic Scapes; Rhubarb; Head Lettuce; Kale

Strawberry Spoon Cake! I just discovered this recipe, and it looks too good to pass up, who knows if we will have more strawberries. I tried it, and it's delicious eaten right away, warm. Very tasty. I think you could make it with any berries. It comes from Melissa Clark of the New York Times.

½ cup/115 grams unsalted butter (1 stick), melted, plus more for greasing
5 ounces/145 grams frozen and thawed or fresh, hulled strawberries (about 1 cup)
⅔ cup/150 grams packed light brown sugar
½ cup/120 milliliters whole milk, at room temperature
½ teaspoon kosher salt
1 cup/130 grams all-purpose flour
1 teaspoon baking powder
Vanilla ice cream or yogurt, for serving

1. Heat oven to 350 degrees and grease an 8-inch (square or round) baking dish with butter. Set aside.
2. Using your hands or the back of a fork, mash the berries to release all their juices, and stir in 1/3 cup of the brown sugar. Set aside.
3. In a medium bowl, whisk together the melted butter, remaining 1/3 cup brown sugar, milk, and salt, then add the flour and baking powder and continue whisking just until the batter is smooth. Transfer the batter (it's not much) to the greased baking dish; spread evenly into corners.
4. Spoon the strawberries and all their juices over the top of the cake batter. Place in the oven and bake for 20 to 25 minutes, or just when a toothpick comes out clean in the center. Remove from the oven and allow to cool for 3 to 5 minutes before spooning into bowls. Serve warm with ice cream or yogurt.

Peas: Unlike the frozen peas in the supermarket, there are two kinds of peas we tend to get from "A Place on Earth" shares: Sugar Snap Peas and Snow Peas, and they are generally not eaten the same way. When young, they are sometimes confused with the other, so look at them this way:

Sugar snap peas are best eaten raw—out of hand or cut up in a salad; not hulled. The pods are plump; not flat. You eat the pod and peas at the same time, and do not need anything to make them more delicious than they are in their crisp, raw stage. You may need to remove strings or enjoy them with a dip, but you are going to love them!

Snow Peas: I did not get snow peas in my box today, but some may get them, and they will probably be mixed. The difference is that—while they may look like a flat sugar snap pea, they are meant to be sautéed, and are wonderful in stir fry. Even though they may be tender, they are a tad fibrous, and sauteing is the order of the day. They may be frozen and added to the stir fry later but do blanch them for 1-2 minutes first. They make your stir fry special!

Sugar Snap Peas With Yogurt, Feta and Herbs Having just said to eat them raw, here is a recipe by Melissa Clark, adapted slightly, that actually does very slightly cook/blanch the sugar snap peas for a lovely and very interesting salad. Makes 4 servings.

- **¼ teaspoon kosher salt, or to taste**
 - **½ pound sugar snap peas, trimmed (about 3 cups)**
 - **1 garlic clove, finely grated or minced**
 - **1 ½ tablespoons fresh lemon juice, plus more to taste**
 - **Freshly ground black pepper**
 - **4 tablespoons extra-virgin olive oil, plus more for drizzling**
 - **1 cup thinly sliced fennel, or use radish or cucumber**
 - **½ packed cup roughly chopped fresh dill, or use a combination of dill and fennel fronds (optional)**
 - **2 scallions, thinly sliced**
 - **⅓ cup plain whole-milk yogurt (if using Greek, thin it down with milk or water until pourable)**
 - **½ cup crumbled feta or asiago cheese (about 2 ounces)**
 - **½ teaspoon finely grated lemon zest**
 - **Torn soft herbs, such as mint, basil, parsley, tarragon, chives, cilantro, or a combination, for serving**
 - **Crusty bread, for serving (optional)**
1. Remove strings from peas. MICROWAVE sugar snap peas for very brief increments of time, until preferred texture is achieved, which is determined by tasting after each brief cooking

interval. Use microwave increments of 30 seconds, depending on quantity of pea pods. Cook until bright green, and still crisp. Add a sprinkling of cold water, followed by a thorough sprinkling of salt, before starting to microwave. When cool enough to handle, put the peas on a cutting board and slice them in half, crosswise.

2. In a medium bowl, whisk together garlic and lemon juice. Stir in salt and pepper. Whisk in 3 tablespoons olive oil. Add the halved peas, fennel, dill (if using) and scallions, and toss well. Taste and add more lemon juice, olive oil or salt if needed.
3. In a small bowl, stir together the yogurt, 1/4 cup feta, lemon zest, and the remaining 1 tablespoon oil. Season with salt, pepper, and lemon juice, to taste.
4. Spread the yogurt on a serving platter and spoon the peas on top. Scatter remaining 1/4 cup feta on top, drizzle with more oil, and top with herbs. Serve as a side dish or scooped onto crusty bread as an appetizer.

Basil: Last week I provided my favorite recipe for a pesto, using cilantro. This week we get our first basil, so I will share one of my favorite basil pesto recipes. (You can make pesto from many different herbs and vegetables, but this one is a bit different from the usual basil pesto, in that it uses toasted pecans in place of pine nuts. Pine nuts are pricy right now, so almost any other nut is more economical, but toasted pecans are special. Note that you really do want to toast/roast them for it to be special. Even though this recipe asks for 3 different kinds of basil, it's fine to use what you have. Don't worry if you do not have the exact amount of basil; use your judgement, and it is OK to fill in with parsley leaves when you do not have enough of the specific herbs. And remove the leaves from the thick stems before making the pesto. If this makes more than you need this week, it freezes well in ice cube trays or tiny glass or plastic containers. Use to dress your favorite pasta, or on sandwiches, or in a mayo spread for sandwiches. Recipe from Mashama Bailey, chef at The Grey in Savannah, Ga.

Pecan Pesto

1 small clove garlic (or equivalent green garlic, white portion, minced)
1 cup fresh basil leaves
1 cup fresh Thai basil leaves
1 cup fresh opal basil leaves (or substitute more basil)
½ cup pecans, toasted
½ cup extra-virgin olive oil

2 tablespoons freshly grated pecorino Romano or Parmesan
Salt

- 1. Put garlic in the bowl of a food processor and pulse to break it into smaller pieces.
 2. Add basil and pecans to the processor. With the machine running, slowly add the olive oil and purée until mixture is mostly smooth.
 3. Transfer pesto to a bowl and stir in grated cheese. Season to taste with salt.

How Much Should You Wash Your Greens? Folks who grew up with supermarket greens are often aghast at garden/CSA greens that have not been “groomed” or sprayed with pesticides. In other words, are they sometimes dusty, and occasionally with creepy-crawlies on them? This is an important lesson to learn about organic greens: they have *not* been sprayed to keep the small garden bugs/worms off, and that is good. *And that’s why you are a CSA member, right?* But it means that you must do the washing, and that is good too, because it is in the washing or cooking that these critters make themselves known. I don’t know how many times I have cooked greens, only to have a little worm float to the top. Gross! The first time I saw this as a budding grade-school cook, I thought I had to throw them out. But no! You remove them and go right ahead with your cooking. But you can prevent most of cooking the beasties with the greens or other vegetables by sprinkling a little salt –1-2 tablespoons--into their water when you wash them. Allow them to soak for 2-3 minutes in the salted cold wash water, and the critters will float to the top where you can remove them before cooking. *Soap: never; just cold water!*

So how many times do you change the wash/rinse water when washing vegetables? My rule of thumb was always to wash them at least 3 times before cooking, but I have learned another point of view on that. Dr. Daphne Miller, M.D., in her book, **“Farmacology: What Innovative Family Farming Can Teach Us About Health and Healing”** states that farm families are typically much healthier because they are subjected to many insects and pathogens in the farm soil, and she recommends washing only until the dust and dirt are off, and the water is relatively clear, just a couple of rinsings. She has met and discussed this with Wendell Berry in her several visits to Kentucky. So, what should you do? It’s up to you, and your comfort level! *This is an impressive book, and if anyone wants to borrow my copy, I am happy to share it.* It is also available at the Louisville Free Public Library.

Baked Alfredo Pasta With Broccoli or Broccoli Rabe and Lemon by Ali Slagle

- YIELD 4 to 6 servings
- Kosher salt
- 6 tablespoons unsalted butter, cut into 1-inch pieces
- ½ cup panko breadcrumbs
- 1 1/2 cups finely grated Parmesan
- 1 teaspoon fresh lemon zest (from 1 lemon)

- Black pepper
 - 12 ounces small tubed or curly pasta
 - 1 small bunch broccoli or broccoli rabe, trimmed, cut into 1/2-inch pieces
 - 3/4 cup heavy cream
 - 1 small garlic clove, grated
 - 4-5 ounces fresh mozzarella, cut into 1/2-inch pieces
1. Heat the oven to 500 degrees. Bring a large pot of generously salted water to a boil. Place the butter in a 9-or 10-inch pan or baking dish and transfer it to the oven to melt while the oven heats; remove it from the oven once it is melted.
 2. In a small bowl, stir together the panko, 1/4 cup Parmesan and the lemon zest. Add 1 tablespoon of the melted butter from the baking pan, stir until the panko is moistened with butter, then season with salt and pepper.
 3. When the water's boiling, add the pasta and cook until al dente, about 2 minutes less than the package instructions suggest. During the last minute of cooking, add the broccoli or broccoli rabe. Reserve 1/3 cup pasta water, then drain the pasta and broccoli.
 4. Whisk the cream, garlic, and part of the pasta water into the melted butter in the baking dish until smooth. Add the remaining Parmesan in large handfuls, vigorously whisking until smooth and combined. Add the pasta, broccoli and half the mozzarella. Taste, and season well with salt and pepper. Stir until very combined. Add remaining pasta water if needed to thin the dish.
 5. Top with the remaining mozzarella, then sprinkle evenly with the panko mixture. Bake until the mozzarella has melted, and the panko is golden brown, 10 to 15 minutes.

Please send your favorite recipes, questions, and techniques, and we can share with everyone.

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