

SunSmilin' Times

SunSmile Farms CSA Newsletter

June 2009, Week 1

Welcome to SunSmile Farms' 2009 CSA! We'll be providing you with the freshest produce all summer long, along with the occasional recipe to spark ideas on what to do with all those fruits and veggies. I'll be keeping you up to date with what is going on at the farm and what to look forward to in the coming weeks. This first week, I'd like to introduce you to this year's SunSmile team. We all look forward to getting to know you this summer.

Barrett:

I'm the rookie on the farm this year. Other than some light gardening in my early adolescence and a keen liking for fresh fruit, I have no experience with farming whatsoever. I studied English at UC Berkeley, but the publishing jobs I looked into left me no more fresh air than a lunchtime break in an enclosed courtyard. So I've moved back to my hometown of Penn Valley, and will be working at SunSmile throughout the summer, perfectly satisfied with a heavy dosage of sunshine and dirt.

Molly:

Molly, a childhood friend of mine, grew up on fourteen-acres in Chicago Park cared for entirely by her brilliant father and his children. Although we can't have her everyday as her other two jobs keep her pretty busy, Molly comes in for long days of heavy planting and tomato caging. She'll be around all summer, which is great as her specialties are hard work and keeping me laughing all day long.

Patty:

Most certainly the right-hand woman of the farm, Patty is a horticultural expert and has shown me that farming truly is a science. She is Molly's older sister and shared the same childhood of homegrown fresh fruit. She then went on to receive her Masters degree in Mechanical Engineering from Stanford and worked designing iPods before switching gears and getting her MS in Horticulture from UC Davis last winter. After making the decision to pursue her passion instead of a high profile position, she came to SunSmile in January and has been working with George every day (quite literally) since, planting thousands and thousands of seeds. She turned the greenhouse into somewhat of a jungle over the spring and is the reason why we will have so, so many tomatoes for you this summer. As her sidekick, I get the pleasure of spending my days working with her and bombarding her with plant questions, to which she knows all of the answers.

Boni:

His third summer on the farm, Boni, like Molly, squeezes in days between his other two jobs. Boni is the one battling the weeds in the blueberries and the rocks out of the flowerbeds. He loves being on the farm, and is always declaring his elation of our bounty. On his first day harvesting a couple summers ago, Boni looked up at George with arms in the air and shouted, "Mucho mucho tomates!"

Sam:

Sam is the designated tractor driver and mower. He is also the man who broke this very land in the forties with a horse and plough. As an octogenarian, he pleasantly cruises along sporting one of his many hats.

George:

The man in charge, George makes all of this happen. I am consistently baffled by his knowledge of every square inch of SunSmile, and his ability to rattle off what's happening, what has happened and what probably will happen to each one of those inches. George worked on this farm (then his Uncle Joel's) as a kid, and now cares for it with a passion that is evident through his perpetual energy and long workdays. If you don't already know him, you can pick him out by listening for his frequent end-of-task proclamations: "It's a beautiful thing."

That is the field team so far as I know it. We also get help from volunteers (Karen and Gina are the only ones I've met so far) who come in to work on anything from planting to vacuuming. Behind the scenes, we have Joyce (who many of you may know through email correspondence by the alias of "the farmer's wife") who uses her technical savvy to keep our CSA organized, is responsible for all of our beautiful labels, and played a big role in getting our CCOF certification. She has also been deemed "the chicken lady," as she has been caring for the coop of our feathery friends.

Some administrative details before we finish: We are recyclers, so each week, please bring back any re-usable packaging and containers (like the berry boxes) along with your box. Your pick up is every Tuesday, between 3pm and 6pm. If you cannot make it to the farm within that time frame, please call in advance and we will do our best to accommodate you. With that, I look forward to sharing my summer with you. Enjoy your first box!

What's in your box:

- Kale—the leafy greens, packed with Vitamins A, C, K and B6
- Chard—greens with colored stalks, keeps best unwashed in a plastic bag in the fridge
- Broccoli—as much calcium per ounce as milk!
- Yellow and Green Zucchini—great for barbequing
- Raspberries—don't eat them all on your way home
- Blueberries—packed with antioxidants
- Spanish Roja Garlic—great for heart health, terrible for vampires
- Basil—pesto...yum!
- Summer Squash—makes great casseroles and stirfrys
- Onions—Walla Walla and red.
- Honey—Blackberry, fresh from our bees!

Look forward to next week for:

- Cherries