



In the Share

Snap Peas, 1 bag
Snow Peas, 1 bag
Summer Squash, 4 pieces
Shell Peas, 1 bag
Scallions, 1 bunch
Kohlrabi, 1 big & 1 small bulb
Red or Green Chard, 1 bunch
Basil or Mint, 1 bunch

Three bags of peas this week - each bag with a different type of pea! Two are edible-podded peas and one must be shelled, so now it really is important that you are able to tell them apart.

The snap and snow peas are the types with the edible pods. You had some of each of these in your share last week, so they should be somewhat familiar to you. The snows are longer, wider, and flatter than the others, and will be the easiest to identify. These are the last of the snow peas we will have this season. As you know, most of the trellis collapsed in the storms and the vines are now too stressed to produce much more. Still, you have close to a pound of them today! There is a recipe that features snow peas on the back of the newsletter.

The snaps and the shells are the two that may be hard to distinguish from each other. The most important difference is that the snaps have a thick, juicy, edible pod; and the shells have a thin leathery pod that, while technically edible, is not exactly palatable. If you have any doubt about whether or not you identified them correctly, a bite into each will immediately answer your questions. The snaps will be sweet and crisp. The shells will be sweet as well, but the pod will be unpleasantly chewy.

Once you can tell them apart, you can enjoy them both. As you know, the snaps can be eaten as is after you snap off the end and pull down the

(continued on the back)

Claire's Comments

Even Weeding

What a lovely week! The sun is shining, the air is cool, and most importantly there has been no rain since Sunday. It is so good to work in the sun! Good for us and good for the plants, especially the tomatoes.

Now that I am not so focused on the next downpour, I have been thinking more about the nature of our work at the farm. Not in the larger, philosophical sense of growing organic food and feeding our local community, but in more of a dirt and sweat kind of way. I'm thinking about it especially in relation to our farm interns. Most of them come to the farm because they have values in line with that higher philosophical level of farming and they want to gain some knowledge and skills on the dirt and sweat level. Now that it is July and the tasks that dominated our early season work like transplanting and greenhouse seeding are waning, our work is a steady rhythm of harvest, weed, harvest, weed. That rhythm will change as the weeds stop germinating later in the season and as we have even less time for anything but harvest, but for now weeding is the most important task that we do (after harvest, of course).

We do a field walk first thing every Monday morning. On that walk we talk as a group about what is happening in each section and we make a list of tasks for the week. We have heard many times from past interns that the field tour is one of the most educational parts of the farm internship. One of the goals of the field tour is to help interns see how our activities in the field, as well as weather and other factors, affect the crops. As they participate in setting the task list and prioritizing it, we hope that they are able to take some ownership of and also pride in accomplishing those tasks. In that way, we hope to connect the sometimes difficult work of farming to the larger satisfaction of growing great food.

As useful and educational as it may be, it turns out that the field tour has not succeeded in making weeding a favored task among interns. As one who genuinely enjoys weeding - the simplicity, and satisfaction of moving a hoe through soil and creating a space where vegetables can flourish - I struggle to understand why weeding is perceived as an arduous or unpleasant task. When the conditions are right, we can cover a great deal of ground in a short time while also having an active conversation. I love that. I also love knowing that a weeding job well done will make all the other work we do so much easier - from mulching to trellising to harvesting, even on to next year's weeding.

One of the best things about farming is that there are so many different tasks to do and that they are all so interdependent. The variety is never dull, but rather a new challenge most every week. Even with the tasks that I do not particularly favor, I know that doing them quickly and well will make my more favored jobs even more enjoyable. What I wish for the interns is that their attraction to the philosophical level of farming will pull them through the difficult parts of the dirt and sweat level so that they settle in a place of appreciation of if not complete enjoyment in all the various things the farm has to offer, even weeding.

Recipes

After the pea harvest this week, farm intern Meghan Morris thought you all might like a yummy way to eat up some of the many snow peas you have in your share. Meghan loves this recipe. When I asked if we could substitute basil or mint for the cilantro, her answer was an emphatic “no.” It is too bad the new cilantro planting was not ready in time.

Vietnamese Rice Vermicelli and Vegetables

from Meghan Morris

1 cup snow peas, coarsely chopped (plus other vegetables like kohlrabi or summer squash, if you like)
1-2 tbs. fresh ginger, minced
1 jalapeño, minced
¾ cup coarsely chopped scallions OR 1 onion, chopped
½ lb. firm tofu, cut in triangles or cubed
½ cup peanut butter (or peanuts plus sugar)
½ cup coconut milk
¼ cup soy sauce
¼ cup lime juice
4 tbs. cilantro, chopped
8 ozs. rice vermicelli
cooking oil (sesame, safflower, canola, are all fine)

1. Heat the oil in a large skillet. Sauté the snow peas (plus other optional vegetables), ginger, and jalapeño for a couple of minutes. Then add the scallions and sauté another minute.
2. Stir in the tofu and stir fry for a couple more minutes. If you want your tofu extra firm, press the water out of the triangles you cut with a cotton cloth and then bake it in the oven or toast it in a skillet for a few minutes before stir frying it with the vegetables.
3. Blend the peanut butter, soy sauce, lime juice, coconut milk, and cilantro in a blender or food processor.
4. Pour the sauce over vegetables and bring the heat down to low.
5. Cook the rice vermicelli in boiling water.
6. Drain the vermicelli and mix it with the sauce.
7. Garnish with cilantro and lime wedges.



Meghan also sent along this suggestion for greens. The chard and kale look so good, that we expect there will be many greens in the shares this year.

Beans and Greens

from Meghan Morris

I use this with any kind of greens - chard, kale, escarole, are all delicious. Sauté chopped garlic in olive oil until golden, then add roughly chopped greens and sauté until lightly cooked but not wilted. Add cooked white beans such as Great Northern or cannellini beans to the pan. Add fresh lemon juice, salt, and either black or crushed red pepper. Sauté just until the entire dish is warm - it is best when the greens still have some shape.

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string. I cannot think of a time I have ever actually cooked snap peas. I always just eat them right out of the bag.

The shell peas, must be shelled before you eat them. Just press on the somewhat pointy spine on the back of the pod to open it, and slip out the peas with your finger. These too can be eaten raw. They are also delicious lightly steamed and served with butter. As you open your shell pea pods, you will see that some of the peas are more filled out than others. This type of pea is the most difficult to harvest. Every year it is a challenge for the crew to distinguish the mature from the immature. Wednesday was our first big harvest of shell peas, and I know there will be some immature pods in your bag. The good news is that the peas themselves will be sweet, even if they are small. I am expecting another big shell pea harvest next week, so we will have time to refine our picking skills!

Chard is new this week. The plants are large and lush, so we are expecting a prolific chard harvest this year. I love chard and am looking forward to trying Meghan’s “beans and greens” suggestion on the left.

Scallions are also new. I believe this may be the best scallion harvest we have ever had. They are thick and green and crisp. Our intern Liz was bagging peas while Jenna and Alexa were cleaning and bunching the scallions nearby. As we were praising the quality of the scallions, Liz said that just the smell of them was enough to make her hungry. Use them in the recipe on the left or raw on salad or as a substitute for onion in most any dish.

The last new item this week is the purple kohlrabi. I am sad to say that this is not the best kohlrabi we have ever had. The color is lovely as always, and the flavor is good, but the texture in these elongated bulbs is not quite what it should be. I think the kohlrabi lovers among you will appreciate these bulbs, but the kohlrabi haters may not be swayed. I recommend using them in the recipe on the left. Just discard the leaves, peel away the purple skin, and chop the white bulbs into bite-sized pieces first. I also like kohlrabi raw in salad. It is sweeter and juicier than broccoli, but with a similar flavor.

Next week: The last of the peas, kale, fennel, and possibly beets and green kohlrabi.

Troy Community Farm

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