



Why Buy Locally Grown?

Like consumers worldwide, as a Farm Share member you are discovering the benefits of buying locally grown food. It is fresher, tastier, and more nutritious. It is also good for the Houston economy--buying directly from Plant It Forward Farmers helps them stay in business.

Five Reasons to Buy Local

1. **Local produce tastes better and it's better for you.**

Food grown in your Plant It Forward Farm Share was picked the same day or the day before and therefore is really fresh. Studies have shown that produce loses nutrients quickly during transportation. Studies show most food travels 1,500 miles from farm to table. During this trip, sugars turn to starches, plant cells shrink, and produce loses its vitality.

2. **Local food supports local farm families.**

Farming is a vanishing lifestyle with fewer than one million Americans now claiming farming as their primary occupation (less than 1%). Your support of Plant It Forward farmers allows families to make a living wage doing work they love.

3. **Local food protects genetic diversity.**

Modern industrial agriculture creates a system in which produce varieties are chosen for their ability to ripen simultaneously and withstand harvesting equipment. A tough skin is needed to survive packing, transport, and a long shelf life in the store. Only a handful of hybrid varieties of each fruit and vegetable meet those rigorous demands, so there is little genetic diversity in the plants grown. In contrast, Plant It Forward farmers grow a large number of varieties selected because they have the best flavors, provide a long harvest season, and come in an array of eye-catching colors.

4. **Local food preserves open space, and can support a diverse environment.**

Plant It Forward takes vacant land in Houston and transforms it into productive, living green space. When you buy locally grown food from Plant It Forward, you are doing something positive about preserving the agricultural landscape.

5. **Local food is about the future.**

By supporting local Plant It Forward farmers today, you can help ensure that there will be farms in your community tomorrow and that future generations will have access to locally grown food.

Adapted from the University of Florida, Living Green. <http://livinggreen.ifas.ufl.edu/food/local.html#csa>

Our recipe database is now active! Please use [this link](#) to access and find recipes for your farm share vegetables. We will continuously be adding new recipes.

Plant It Forward Reusable bag: all new members should have received one. If you are a new member and have not yet received a Plant It Forward reusable bag, please send me a note and we will make sure to get you one.

RECIPES

These are the most bountiful vegetables this week: okra, bok choy, green onions, Malabar spinach, radishes, mizuna mustards, and sweet potatoes. Check out our [Newsletter Archive](#) OR our [Recipe Database](#) for additional recipes.

Mizuna pesto

2 cups coarsely chopped mizuna mustard greens (leaves not stems)

2 garlic cloves, roughly chopped

1/3 cup freshly grated romano cheese

1/4 cup walnuts

1/2 teaspoon salt

1/4 cup olive oil

In a food processor chop the garlic, romano, and walnuts. Add the mizuna, turn on food processor and drizzle the olive oil while it is running. Taste. If it has too much kick, add a couple more walnuts. Transfer the pesto to a jar with a tight fitting lid and chill it, covered. The pesto keeps, covered and chilled, for 2 weeks. Makes about 1 cup.

After boiling the pasta, reserve a couple of Tbsp. pasta water to mix into the pesto and then add to the pasta. Bowties or farfalle work very well with this recipe.

Malabar spinach: check out the Green Enchiladas recipe <http://plant-it-forward.org/tag/spinach/>

Okra: <http://plant-it-forward.org/tag/okra/>

Green onions: Shrimp okra gumbo <http://plant-it-forward.org/tag/greenonion/>

Veggie ID

This is an educational section of some items that may come up in your farm share throughout the season, but not necessarily this week.

Turnips



Turnips are delicious! Add the root and the greens to soups. Roast the roots. Saute the greens.

<http://plant-it-forward.org/tag/turnips/>

Swiss Chard



This is the most beautiful and one of the most nutritious greens! Swiss chard can be enjoyed as an ornamental plant or eaten!



Swiss Chard with Red Lentils and Carrots

4 to 6 servings

1 Tbsp. olive oil
1 medium yellow onion, diced
2 cloves garlic, minced
1 cup vegetable stock
1 cup carrots, sliced, reserve a few slices for garnish
1 cup red lentils, cooked
1 cup brown lentils, cooked
2 cups brown rice, cooked
Sea salt to taste
Freshly ground black pepper to taste
¼ tsp. cayenne
2 cups Swiss chard, chopped and steamed
½ cup cherry tomatoes for garnish, sliced

Cook brown rice according to package directions. You will need 2/3 cups dry rice to yield 2 cups cooked.
Cook lentils according to package directions. You will need ½ cup of each type of lentil to yield 1 cup cooked.
Steam the Swiss chard on medium heat for about 10 minutes.
Heat the oil in a large saucepan over medium heat and sauté the onion and garlic until the onion is translucent. Add the vegetable stock, carrots, lentils, rice, salt, pepper, and cayenne, and simmer, covered for 10-15 minutes.
Place the lentil rice mixture into a mold (small bowl will work), invert onto plate forming a mound, and cover with Swiss chard. Garnish with carrots and tomatoes.

Frittata with Swiss Chard (Frittata di Beito)

This Italian recipe is from Madhur Jaffrey's World Vegetarian cookbook. You can also use beet greens, spinach, arugula, etc. in place of the Swiss chard.

For the Swiss Chard

1 bunch Swiss chard, coarsely chopped (use both stems and leaves)
2 Tbsp. olive oil
1 garlic clove, peeled and finely chopped
About ¼ tsp. salt

For the eggs

6 eggs
¼ tsp. salt
Freshly ground black pepper
3 Tbsp. extra-virgin olive oil

To prepare the chard, bring a large pot of water to a rolling boil, as if you were boiling pasta. Drop in the chard and boil for 3 to 4 minutes, or until it is tender. Drain. Rinse under cold water and then squeeze out as much moisture as you can.

Put the 2 Tbsp. olive oil and garlic in a non-stick frying pan or sauté pan and set over medium-high heat. When the garlic starts to sizzle, add the greens and about ¼ tsp. salt (taste as you go) and mix well. Stir and cook for about 1 minute. Turn off the heat.

Put eggs into a medium bowl and beat them well. Add the salt, pepper to taste, and chard. Mix well, separating the chard pieces.

Put the 3 Tbsp. olive oil into a nonstick, omlette-type frying pan with a metal handle (about 10 in. at the top and 7 in. at the bottom) and set over medium-low heat. Stir the egg mixture in the bowl and pour it in, swirling the pan to spread it evenly. Cover and cook for 5 minutes.

Meanwhile, preheat the broiler.

When eggs have cooked for 5 minutes, turn the heat down to low and cook another 5 minutes. Uncover the frying pan and put it under the broiler for about 2 minutes, or until the top has set. It should go on the top or second to top oven rack. Slide the frittata onto a serving plate and serve hot.

Parsley



You can do a lot with parsley. Add it to salads, soups, pesto, etc. Check out this site:
<http://www.simplyrecipes.com/recipes/ingredient/parsley/>

Dill



Dill (not to be confused with fennel)



Dill when it flowers. Beautiful and tasty!

Roasted Sweet Potatoes with dill recipe:
[http://www.theyummylife.com/Roasted Sweet Potatoes](http://www.theyummylife.com/Roasted_Sweet_Potatoes)

Baked salmon with dill sauce:
<http://www.marthastewart.com/1033633/roasted-salmon-kale-and-cabbage>

French Sorrel



French sorrel Use in salads or soups. Use French sorrel to make pesto. If you have some extra time, try the creamy French sorrel soup recipe in our database: <http://plant-it-forward.org/tag/sorrel/>

French sorrel, squash, and mint salad
Combine arugula, French sorrel, mint, diced summer squash, and feta cheese. Dress with oil and vinegar.

French sorrel and parsley pesto:
<http://www.recipesource.com/side-dishes/sauces/13/rec1305.html>

French sorrel and rosemary pesto

2 cups of sorrel (about ½ bunch)- stems removed
1/4 cup pine nuts
1/4 cup of rosemary
2 cloves garlic
1/3 cup Parmesan or Romano cheese
1/4 cup of olive oil

Combine all ingredients in a food processor until smooth and well blended. Use pesto on pasta or eat with Italian bread and wine.

Chinese leeks (Garlic chives)



Chinese leeks (garlic chives) are great in stir-fry, sauteed dishes or in soups.

Bok Choy (Chinese cabbage)



Plant It Forward Farmers grow a couple different varieties. Some purple, some green.

This is a great recipe that calls for regular cabbage, but using bok choy is delicious:

<http://www.marthastewart.com/1033633/roasted-salmon-kale-and-cabbage>

Edamame (soy beans)



Where else can you get fresh edamame besides Plant It Forward? I'm not sure. Multiple chefs have told us that this is very hard to find, so enjoy it!

Steam the edamame in their pods for 5-7 minutes, drain, and then sprinkle with salt. Edamame beans should pop right out of their pods and into your mouth! Good warm or cold.

<http://www.kevinandamanda.com/recipes/appetizer/10-minute-restaurant-style-steamed-edamame.html>

French filet beans (haricot vert)



These delicious green beans are delicious roasted at 400 degrees for about 10 minutes. Before roasting top with olive oil, salt, pepper and other seasonings such as: parmesan cheese, walnuts, pecans, rosemary, etc. No need to trim before cooking, you can cut off the ends while you are eating or just eat the ends.

<http://www.foodnetwork.com/recipes/haricots-verts-recipe.html>

<http://www.foodnetwork.com/recipes/tyler-florence/parmesan-roasted-green-beans-recipe.html>

Mizuna Mustard Greens



These are spicy greens that you can either add to salads or cook. Check out this website for additional recipes:

<http://www.misshomemade.com/mizunarecipe.html>

Mizuna mozzarella salad

12 small balls of mozzarella cheese
1 large tomato, seeded and sliced
1 bunch mizuna, trimmed
1/3 cup extra virgin olive oil
1 cup fresh basil, chopped
kosher salt and freshly ground black pepper to taste
1 tsp lemon juice

In a large bowl, toss the mizuna and tomato slices with the fresh basil and olive oil. Serve on a salad plate with a few mozzarella balls and season with a few drops of lemon juice and salt/pepper to taste.

Mexican Marigold Mint (Texas tarragon)



Use this herb like tarragon to flavor chicken salads or fruit salads. Can also be used to make flavored water and tea.

Sweet potato greens/leaves



These are the delicious leaves of the sweet potatoes. To prepare, blanch first (drop in boiling water for 1-2 minutes), then add to stir-fry or curries. Another great way to enjoy these tasty greens is to blanch, then sauté in sesame oil and top with soy sauce and toasted sesame seeds.

Sweet Potato Greens in Coconut Cream

Ingredients:

1 large bunch sweet potato greens
1 tablespoon vegetable oil
2 shallots, minced
1 clove garlic, minced
1 teaspoon minced fresh ginger root (from a 1/2-inch piece)
2 teaspoons grated fresh turmeric root, or 1 teaspoon ground turmeric
1 red thai chili, finely sliced
2-inch lemon grass stalk, trimmed and finely sliced
1 to 2 teaspoons soy sauce, or to taste
1 cup coconut cream plus 1 cup water (or substitute 2 cups light or regular coconut milk)
2 to 3 teaspoons raw or brown sugar, or to taste
Salt and pepper, to taste

Directions:

Bring a large pot of water to a rolling boil. Trim off any thick stems from greens. Add to boiling water and blanch for 60 seconds, then immediately transfer greens to a bowl filled with ice water to stop the cooking. Drain.

Heat oil in a large pan or wok over medium heat. Add shallots, garlic, ginger, turmeric, chili, and lemongrass and stir until fragrant, 1 to 2 minutes. Stir in soy sauce.

Add coconut cream and water (or coconut milk) and bring to a simmer. Add blanched greens and return to a boil; reduce heat to low and simmer for 2 minutes. Add sugar and season with salt and pepper to taste. Spoon into bowls and serve with rice.