



Dear CSA Members,

In light of all the recent debate about the future of healthcare in our country, I'd like to take the time to thank you for supporting the simplest preventative healthcare plan that money can buy: sustainably grown local vegetables. If you are receiving this CSA newsletter, you have already taken the first step towards your health and the health of our planet by entrusting your weekly supply of vegetables to those who know how to grow them best: your local farmers.

As a market manager for Urban Harvest, the non-profit organization that operates the farmers market that Plant it Forward Farms sells at each Saturday, it's been a true pleasure to see the group grow as farmers and entrepreneurs. I am always amazed at the sense of community they have fostered amongst themselves and their loyal customers. When the farmer's families come to visit them at the market you can feel the joy of seeing their loved ones selling the fruits of their labor. Many of these newly crowned urban farmers grew food back in their native countries, so it's powerful to see them as refugees doing the same in their new lives here in Houston.

The beauty of the CSA from Plant it Forward Farms is that it makes you feel like you are competing in an episode of Iron Chef when you bring home your bag of mystery ingredients each week. We have all been there as subscribers to a CSA.... you come home from the market, open your bag and start to think, "what exactly can I cook with all this sorrel I have this week?" If you are like me, you instantly turn to Google and begin your search for recipes. I often stumble across blogs accompanied by beautiful photos with captions that promise it will be the best tasting rendition of your life, only for it to look much better than it tastes. I

can't take pretty pictures, but I can offer you a few tidbits of advice on how to cook your bounty simply, tastefully, and maybe even turn it into a regular way to use up that leftover squash you have from last week.

This week your farm share has basil or mint, Toscano kale, butternut squash, long beans or green peppers, okra or eggplant, sweet potato greens, radishes, and Mexican marigold mint.

Enjoy!

Tyler Horne and Plant It Forward Farms

Basil & Butternut Pizza

I've started a new tradition of making pizzas with friends. Part of the creative process of making unique pizzas is paring unlikely ingredients together that come from the market. The beauty of the pizza is that it is a perfect vehicle for combining ingredients found in your CSA bags and turning them into interesting creations. We have come to find it's hard to make a pizza taste bad! Sliced okra? Yes, it's really good. Arugula and pears? How did I not figure this ingenious method of vegetable application earlier?

The trick to making good pizza with a crispy crust at home starts with the oven as hot as you can turn it up. 500 is great, 550 is better. Make sure to follow a standard olive oil and flour dough recipe and allow the dough the proper time to rise. Make sure to roll the dough out as thin as possible for a crispy crust and do not use too much pizza sauce! A light coating of across the dough is all you need.

My favorite ingredient is butternut squash. Cut the butternut in half, peel it BEFORE you roast it, and drizzle with olive oil. Bake in the oven for 30 minutes while you wait for oven to come to temperature for the pizza. For best results, cut the butternut in half and add ¼ cup of water to roast pan and cover with foil. Remove butternut halves after 30 minutes and cut into 1/2 inch cubes. Top your pizza with butternut and a drizzle of olive oil on the outer crust and bake for 10 minutes or until the crust starts to get crispy.



Kale Chips

This is a household favorite and makes a great snack.

- 1 bunch of kale, pulled from stems
- 1 pinch of salt
- 1 table spoon of olive oil
- 1 tea spoon of crushed red pepper

Toss kale in olive oil. Sprinkle salt and red peppers to taste. Arrange kale on baking sheet, being careful not to overlap, and bake at 300 degrees for 8-10 minutes. You want the kale to be crisp but not brown.



Garlic Butter Spaghetti with Herbs

Serves 8

- 1 lb. whole wheat spaghetti
- 6 tablespoons butter + more for serving
- 8 cloves garlic, minced
- 1 large bunch basil, chopped
- 1 large bunch baby spinach, chopped
- 2 teaspoons salt
- 1 teaspoon black pepper
- Parmigiano Reggiano cheese for topping

Cook the spaghetti according to package directions.

Meanwhile, heat the butter together in a large nonstick skillet over medium low heat. Add the minced garlic and sauté for 3-5 minutes, until soft and fragrant. Be careful not to burn or over-brown the garlic because it will taste bitter. Low and slow is the winner here.

Chop the spinach and basil (I had about 5 cups total – it reduces quite a bit as it wilts) into small bite-sized pieces and add to the skillet, stirring for just a minute or two to get the greens softened slightly. Season with salt.

Add the spaghetti to the skillet (or vice versa depending on pan size) and season with salt and pepper. Toss well to combine and let it all rest for a few minutes to stick together a bit. Serve with an additional pat of butter and/or fresh grated Parmigiano Reggiano cheese.

Notes

For the leftovers, I added a can of roughly chopped fire-roasted whole tomatoes and about ½ cup of vegetable broth and simmered for an additional 10 minutes. The noodles were thick and saucy and loaded with vegetables. So good!

Recipe from www.pinchofyum.com

