



Community Cultivator



Newsletter of the Foggy River Farm CSA, Week 11

Updates from the henhouse

We thought since so many of you are enjoying our hens' eggs, it would be good to give you a little window into their lives. All of our full grown hens and roosters bed down each night in our large coop, which has about a ten by ten foot floor, plenty of perches and nestboxes, and is big enough for us to walk around in. This is their command central, where they sleep, lay their eggs (if they're not being naughty), and get their food. Every evening we shut the door to keep them safe from predators as they gently coo, sleeping on their perches. And each morning when we open the door they all come parading out for a drink of water, and after a few sips, each of our ladies begins her own routine of roaming the grasses, pecking at insects, dust-bathing, or finding secretive places to lay her eggs. (The gents do everything but lay, and of course they also enjoy crowing all day long.)

We feed a basic diet of certified organic "lay pellets" from Hunt & Behrens in Petaluma. But that's not all our hens eat – of course we supplement with surplus produce and black oil sunflower seeds, and they find their own fill of insects and seeds as they wander the property during the day. Beyond basic food and water requirements, the chickens enjoy dust bathing, scratching in the dirt, and foraging for weed seeds, grasshoppers, and basically anything they can get their beaks on. We always make sure they have access to pasture year-round, which means that sometimes we have to fence sections of the yard off to help the grasses re-grow. All that pecking and scratching can be hard on plants!

In addition to our full grown flock, we have some new "teenage" hens and roosters growing up now in our smaller coop. These are our homebred, heritage chickens whose parents are our older hens and roosters. (It's one reason we keep those noisy roosters around, so that we have the option to incubate eggs and hatch out more chicks.) Once they're old enough, the teenagers will join the others free-ranging in the yard, but for now they snuggle down together to keep warm at night. It's about six months from hatching to when a hen lays her first egg, so we'll have to be patient!

There's always a lot more to tell about the chickens, but that's a little overview of their lives. Feel free to ask us any questions you might have any time during pickup. You're always welcome to come and visit "the girls," and learn about the different heritage breeds we have here on the farm.

Your Foggy Farmers,

Emmett, Lynda

Amy & Amy

What's In Your Box:

- **Beets (Mixed)** *More sweet beets from our long beet row*
- **Head Lettuce (Red Cross)** *A summer salad ready for your bowl.*
- **Pole Beans (French Duet & Rattlesnake)** *Summer beans are great sauteed with garlic. (Recipe Included)*
- **Broccoli side shoots (or) Cabbage (or) Cauliflower** *This will be the last of these Brassicas before our fall plantings come in, so we thought we'd let everyone choose their favorite for this week.*
- **Kale (Red Russian or Lacinato/Tuscan/Dino)** *Choose between the two kales. Use it for soup, kale chips, kale pesto, or a simple wilted kale with garlic.*
- **Summer Squash (various)** *With the cool weather, the squash are still coming in slowly. Try these grilled, in a pasta dish, or on a pizza.*
- **Tomatoes (Sungold Cherry & Black Plum)** *Great as snacks, or lightly browned and then tossed into a pasta dish. The Black Plums are an heirloom plum variety. They are ripest when a deep red with brownish-green shade on the shoulders; if you get some that are still lighter color, keep them on your counter for a couple days until they ripen up. You never need to refrigerate tomatoes. (Recipe included)*
- **Onions (Walla Walla 'Sweet Siskyou' & Assorted cooking onions)** *The Walla Wallas sweet onions are very nice caramelized. You can add them to a pizza, or just grill them on the bbq.*
- **Garlic** *What meal isn't improved by a little garlic?*

Foggy River Recipes

Beans

This bean and cherry tomato recipe from the New York Times is simple and brings out the flavors of these summer veggies. The recipe calls for a long cook-time, but you can do a quicker alternate version to go for a firm but tender consistency. Here's the link: <http://dinersjournal.blogs.nytimes.com/2008/11/19/recipe-of-the-day-green-beans-and-tomatoes/>

Ingredients

- 2 tablespoons extra virgin olive oil
- 2 pounds green beans, washed and trimmed
- 2 pints cherry or grape tomatoes, washed
- Salt and black pepper

Method

1. Put 1 tablespoon olive oil in a large skillet and turn heat to high. Add beans and cook, undisturbed, until they begin to brown a little on bottom. Add tomatoes, turn heat to low, and cover. Cook about an hour, stirring occasionally, until beans are very tender.
2. Season with salt and pepper and stir in remaining olive oil. Serve hot or at room temperature.