

Newsletter July 4th 2011

Yippie! We are finally here...our first delivery is tomorrow. I have to salute the incredible team who labored today from dawn to well beyond dusk to harvest, package and organize all of the beautiful herbs, veggies and flowers that you will find in your bags. So a big shout out to Jean-Pierre and Maude our hard-working and always cheerful WWOOFers from Quebec, the indomitable Tanya from Denmark and, of course, Claire and Kim who hold it all together...and, as always the help and humour, of my daughter Addie.

Once again, I urge everyone to get to their lovely bags as soon after we deliver as you can as we are not sure how well things will hold up over time in these "insulated" bags. As you can see, I will be putting some serious miles on my car tomorrow so the drop-off times are a bit approximate at this point but I will do my best to keep to this schedule. I am looking forward to lots of feedback from all of you so we can work out whatever kinks may happen or simplify things to make it all more efficient...trust me, this is a lot of work!

Below is the list, once again with revisions, of delivery times, locations and names. If you see anything that doesn't make sense to you please call my cell ASAP and let us know (902) 212-0660. Also, while I have left messages for all the Haligonians, I just want you to note that the pick up location has changed and is now at the Mid-East Food Centre, 2595 Agricola Street at the corner of North Street. Salaam has offered the use of his store and walk-in cooler so please thank him and consider buying some of his wonderfully fresh spices and other food items as a token of appreciation.

Just below the list of locations and an introduction to what you will find in your bags. For those who have indicated that they want eggs, you can expect to see them on a rotating basis...likely every third week. This week the "A TEAM" will get their all organic eggs but please remember that they won't be in your bags but rather in a box beside the bags so don't leave without them. And please leave your egg money, (\$5.50) in an envelope inside your nicely cleaned, dry and folded bag next week so that when we pick it up we will find it there.

Bridgewater: The Ark, 655 King Street, 8:30-3:30pm

Rose Bay: Anje's General Store, 3425 Highway 332, 9:30-9:00pm

Lunenburg, Claussen Walters, 6 King Street, 10:30-5:00pm

Mahone Bay, Mateus Bistro, 533 Main Street, 11:00-8:00pm

Chester, Leah's home, 165 Duke Street, 11:30-7:00, 273-2083

Halifax, Mid-East Food Centre, 2595 Agricola, 1:00-8:00pm

This week's bag contains the following delicious food:

Parsley pesto: this small jar contains a powerfully delicious and healthy treat. We ground our fresh garlic scapes (more on these strange looking things below) with extra virgin olive oil, toasted organic sunflower seeds, organic lemon juice, fresh mint, herbed sea salt, pepper and lots of

parsley. You can use this straight out of the jar spread on toast or homemade pizza or mixed into your favourite pasta or try adding a spoonful to your soup for a burst of nutrition and flavor. You can keep this frozen for quite some time or keep it in the fridge and use it within a week or two. There will be more pestos on the way so we hope you enjoy this and we are always happy to get the jars back so we can send them back to you full of the next round of delicious flavours.

Salad Mix: Every week is a new discovery in the salad world. Our salad mix is unlike most others because we do not like to use too many immature leaves that have become the convenient staple of so many mesclun mixes. We construct our toothsome salad from many different leaves and flowers including four different kinds of fully grown lettuce, bronze and green fennel fronds for that licorice flavor, pepper cress for that sweet and spicy note, purple mizuna, red rain, and arugula for that tangy note, pea tendrils and flowers, young chard leaves and beet green, loads of baby spinach and lots of edible flowers including Johnny Jump-ups, calendula petals and rose petals. The mix changes from week to week and we look forward to hearing your comments, It is unwashed and if it feels a bit wet, it is with morning dew as we harvested very early this morning so that the plants were still nicely chilled by the night air.

Stir Fry Mix: This bag is a mixture of four or five different Asian greens, all with succulent stems, a bit of broccoli and the very first few snow peas so you should have everything you need for a great stir fry or sauté with a dash of tamari or soya sauce, some sliced ginger and a splash of sesame oil at the end for flavor.

Herb Bouquet: Our herb bouquet this week contains lovage, that's the tall broad leaf and strong celery like smelling plant, some parsley, both flat leaf and curly, mint and cilantro. Some of you may who have full size shares will also find a few springs of oregano or lemon balm in your bouquet. Try adding some fresh herbs to your next sandwich to give yourself a flavor boost or chop some cilantro into a salsa for that incredible green flavor that wakes you up. The mint is always a refreshing addition to a cold drink but also adds a great summery feel when finely chopped into a salad. Lovage is powerful herb and should be treated with respect. A little goes a long way but it is wonderful added to a soup or stew or cooked meat. It dries really well and retains its flavor over time.

Garlic Scapes: So now you know what that strange bundle of goose necked green things are tied with a blue elastic band. These are the flowers heads of the hard-necked garlic plants. They are cut so that the plant sends more energy to the bulb which is the part of the plant we are most used to eating. At the same time, the by-product is a tender, mild and slightly sweet version of that remarkable garlic flavor that we all love. You can use the entire stem up to and including the slightly whitish immature flower head but from there to the narrow tip it may be a bit fibrous. You can steam these elegant stalks, sauté them, stir fry them, add them to soups, cut them up and freeze them for future use or throw them in the Cuisinart and chop them into pesto. For the next few weeks you can expect to see these in your basket but then they will disappear till next year so enjoy them while they are here.

Onions: As we thinned our storage onions, pulling every second one in the long rows, we can offer you these tender and sweet green onions with their still small bulbs. Try the greens raw as they are quite sweet and not terribly strong.

Cut Flowers: Kim and Tanya worked hard to give everyone a lovely bouquet of flowers in the complementary colours that I love so much. The calendula blossoms are the yellowy and orange ones and you can dry the petals and use them medicinally in your teas (great for making hand salves) or sprinkle them on your salads as we have for colour. The spirea is a lovely soft purple and should continue to give you blooms for some time. You might try re-cutting the stems of your flowers when you get them before plunging them into a vase of water. Let us know how they held up. We are all curious about whether our damp paper towel/plastic bag technique worked or not.

The full size share bags will also contain a beautiful **dried herb tea mixture** that includes lemon balm, mint, raspberry leaf, red clover and dried rose petals as well as sprinkle of calendula petals. Enjoy this tea in the evening for a soothing drink that will help you unwind. It is also delicious cold and very refreshing on a hot day with squeeze of lemon juice.

The full size bag also contains a **head lettuce**. Mostly these are enormous Romaine lettuce so plan on a crispy Caesar salad sometime this week. I hope they survive the transport and the time in the bag before making it to your table. If they seem droopy you can often resuscitate them by submerging them in a sink of ice cold water for a few minutes.

Here's the lucky A TEAM for those receiving eggs this week. Again, these will not be in your bag but in a separate box at the pick-up site so please grab your egg cartons when you pick up your bags and then please return all empty cartons as we reuse them:

I intend to buy a bottle of champagne tomorrow to crack open and enjoy with after the deliveries with the team at Watershed Farm and hopefully take a long lazy dip in the river at the end of a road weary day.

Enjoy your bags and look forward to hearing from you,

Camelia

PS. The Farm Day on Saturday was a lovely event. Thanks to all who came including our talented musician friends, Bev, Liam and Peter and a huge thank-you to Jack for that unbelievable experience of shearing the ewe so skillfully in record time. Her pedicure was pretty fascinating too! And thanks to Sophie for taking all the great pictures. I will send some along soon once I recover from the madness of Day One.