



# High Ground Organics Community Supported Agriculture

August 31<sup>st</sup> and September 1<sup>st</sup>, 2011

## Homework This Week? Eat Your Vegetables,

from Jeanne

Every year our little parent participation K-8 charter school in Watsonville agonizes over hard decisions as it faces budget cut after budget cut. How much more can we cut music, art, field trips, and physical education? How much more can we raise class size? Meanwhile conscientious teachers send home food logs, so the kids and hopefully their parents, can think about eating more healthy foods. Both of our kids came home with food logs to fill out this week. Go teachers!

Getting kids to eat vegetables is a worthy goal that needs to be addressed on many fronts. Education is vital. So is availability of really good fresh produce. That's where a CSA comes in. In the past, we have struggled with requests to use schools as a CSA drop off point, as they tend to be closed during about 1/3 of our delivery season. However, we really like the idea of serving schools as a way to get vegetables into children and get children into vegetables. So this week we are introducing our **CSA at School** program. Any school that is within our service area can become a pick-up site with as few as 10 members (assuming some basic logistical criteria are met—a shady place to keep the boxes, not too far off our delivery route, etc.). Just ask Chrissi for a **CSA at School** packet (including fliers and sign-up sheets that you can hand out to interested parents).

Schools that become pick-up sites will have the opportunity to learn about their farm through the newsletter, and can come visit their farm on a field trip once a year. In addition, we will donate \$1 per box to participating schools, to help struggling schools with their fundraising efforts. (Sell vegetables, not candy bars!)

If you'd like to arrange for a CSA pick-up site at your kids' school, contact Chrissi ([csa@highgroundorganics.com](mailto:csa@highgroundorganics.com) or 831-254-4918) and she can get you started. Thanks!

## Veggie Notes

To store basil (Andrew Cohen's method): roll the bunches in paper towelling after taking off the twist-tie, and then store a loose plastic bag in the fridge. Store tomatoes (if you get

*Everything in your box and the flowers are certified organic. Dry-Farmed Early Girl Tomatoes are from Dirty Girl Farm. Some of the padron peppers are from Coke Farm. All other veggies and fruits were grown by High Ground Organics. Organic flowers are from the Thomas Farm.*

them) on a counter top. Potatoes should go in a cool dark place. Everything else should go in the fridge. Thursday folks will get tomatoes next week.

## Notes from Chef Andrew

This **padron** recipe was inspired by how shishito peppers (a mild Japanese pepper that looks quite like a smaller version of padrons) are prepared, which is to grill them. So, I gave some padrons a turn around the grill and loved them. And, no wiping off oil spatter from the cook-top. Thinking of Japan, the **Tokyo turnips** might just get caramelized with some very small watermelon radishes I have, or I might use a fixed-

blade slicer to make fine shreds to go into a slaw with the **cabbage**. An interesting salad could be med from fine slices of **turnip, fennel**, and some red onion. Dust it with some ground fennel seed and a dress with a white balsamic vinaigrette.

The **turnips** would be good in a gratin made with some **potatoes** as well, but I'd use a stock instead of any dairy for this one. The **basil** sends my mind in several directions at once, with the most obvious being a pesto. Pesto is so much more than just pasta, though. Cut **filet beans** into 2 inch lengths and cook them, and then toss them while hot with several TBS of pesto. Cut some Desiree **potatoes** into rounds, gently cook them off and add to the aforementioned for a heartier dish. If you have leftover polenta, slice it and fry or grill it and top with a dab of pesto, or use pesto in sandwiches. I also use **basil** leaves in my sandwiches, as in a Caprese sandwich made with fresh mozzarella, many thin slices of ripe **tomato**, and torn

basil leaves. Just drizzle some olive oil in along with a few drops of balsamic vinegar and a sprinkle of salt and you have a high point of summer in your hands. You could make a salad of wedged **strawberries** drizzled with balsamic vinegar, then tossed with shredded **basil** and either some soft lettuce leaves or some finely shredded **cabbage**. Panzanella is a great way to use both **basil** and **tomatoes**, as is a fresh pasta sauce. I have also been experimenting with **fennel**, using the stalks and leaves, along with fennel seeds, for a stock that is reduced and then used to braise heads of fennel. The heads can be eaten as a side, or you can puree and reduce the fennel to a sauce-like consistency, for use on pork-chops or thick fish like halibut or salmon that you can grill.

## This Week

Basil

Fennel

Tokyo Market Turnips

Green Cabbage

Padron Peppers\* (Wed) OR  
Strawberries (Thurs)

Early Girl Tomatoes\* (Wed) OR  
Filet Beans (Thurs)

Romanze or Desiree Potatoes

Flowers: Mixed Bouquet

## CSA Cooking Demo - Williams Sonoma, Los Gatos

Saturday, September 10th from 10-12, \$10. Sign up at [www.jonisare.com/cooking-outside-the-box/](http://www.jonisare.com/cooking-outside-the-box/).

## Grilled Padron Peppers, from Chef Andrew E Cohen

Certainly the easiest way to cook Padrons, especially if you are grilling already, and you happen to have a spritz bottle for your oil. Keep an eye on these as they go quickly. When I first made these, I only did a few, figuring the kids wouldn't care for them. Wrong! By the time I cleaned the grill and sat down, they had eaten most of them. Fortunately, it didn't take long to grill up some more for myself.

Padron peppers, as many as you wish	Olive oil (just enough to lightly coat the peppers)
Coarse salt such as Maldon, Murray River, Fleur de Sel, Diamond Crystal (just enough to lightly dust the cooked peppers)	

Fire up the grill and get it hot. If you do not have an atomizer for oil, lightly coat the peppers with oil by putting them into a large bowl and drizzling a tiny bit of oil over the peppers. Use your fingers to coat the peppers by rubbing and lightly tossing the peppers. If you have an atomizer, wait until the peppers are skewered, and then hold the skewers over the sink or the cold grill and mist them with oil.

Skewer the peppers so they are snug, but not crowded. If spritzing the peppers with the oil, do so now. Grill the peppers over medium-high heat until blistered and charred in places. Turn over and repeat. Cook enough to eliminate the raw taste, but don't worry about getting the entire pepper. Some texture variation is a good thing.

Sprinkle with salt, and eat.

*Chef's Notes and Tips:* Although not usually a fan of gadgets, there are a couple that have worked their way into my heart, an **atomizer for oil** is one of them. Mine is made of a dense hard plastic and has a button on the top that you use to pump up the pressure like a non-aerosol hair product, and if you push fast and hard you get a mist, and slow and steady yields a stream. The mist is perfect for a light coat of oil before grilling. This is a great way to oil things that you do not want to soak up tons of oil like eggplant and summer squashes. I also like it for when I am cooking potatoes or frying rice. It provides a nice, even, light, coating that is just right to lubricate and not inundate.

Regarding grilling and skewers, I use **flat metal skewers**, (which I recommend to anyone who grills a fair amount), but if you do not have these, soak bamboo skewers an hour before use so they don't burn up. Use two skewers side-by-side per each set of peppers so they don't spin on the skewers. This holds true for any vegetables on the grill if you want them to cook evenly and you don't want to worry about getting all sides. Look for the metal skewers at flea markets and thrift stores. I find the older ones are better made than the new ones, unless you buy the expensive ones.

## Japanese Inspired Cole Slaw, from Chef Andrew E Cohen

¼ head medium cabbage, halved through the core, most of the core cut away	2 medium carrots, peeled
1 recipe of Japanese Miso Vinaigrette (recipe follows)	

Use a Ben-Riner mandolin and slice the cabbage finely using just the blade. Use the mandolin with the medium comb to slice the carrots at an angle into fine shreds. Toss the vegetables with the dressing below and serve.

## Japanese Miso Vinaigrette

½ TBS rice vinegar	½ TBS water
1 tsp. sugar	1 TBS light miso
1/8 tsp. toasted sesame oil	1/8 tsp. soy sauce
½ cup neutral flavored oil such as grapeseed or canola	

In a non-reactive bowl, whisk together the vinegar, water, soy sauce, and sugar. Whisk in the miso to form a light paste. Add the sesame oil and whisk to incorporate. Slowly whisk in the oil to form a "creamy" vinaigrette. The dressing should be able to be poured. If too thick, thin with some water.

*Chef's Notes:* If you like a stronger dressing, just use vinegar. You can also add orange juice into the mix instead of the water, or use it to thin the dressing. Grate some ginger and squeeze the juice into the dressing to add some spice to it. This dressing will keep 5-7 days before the miso starts to lose its bright flavor.

## "Raw" Tomato Sauce on Spaghetti, from Chef

Andrew E Cohen

This is my riff on a dish from *The Silver Spoon Pasta* book, and it is the epitome of "easy". Because it is so simple, however, there is nowhere for inferior ingredients to hide, so only use tomatoes that are full of flavor, and basil that is fresh and aromatic.

1 lb., around 4-6, tomatoes, seeded and cut into ½ inch dice	1 clove garlic, peeled
Salt and pepper to taste	10-15 basil leaves
Olive oil as needed	Parmesan cheese
¾ pound spaghetti	

Rub a non-reactive bowl vigorously with the garlic clove, coating the interior with oil from the garlic clove. Add the tomatoes to the garlic rubbed bowl. Season with salt and pepper. Tear or finely slice half the basil and add it to the bowl, and toss to mix it in. Drizzle 3-4 TBS of olive oil over the tomatoes and basil, and allow to "marinate" 30 minutes. While tomatoes marinate, bring a pot of well salted water large enough for the pasta to a boil. When there is around ten minutes of time left to marinate the tomatoes, start cooking the spaghetti. Just before the pasta is done, add the rest of the basil to the tomato "sauce", tossing to evenly distribute. When spaghetti is done, drain well and add the noodles to the "sauce". Toss gently to combine, and serve. Pass the cheese separately.

*Chef's Notes and Tips:* If you do not feel like fussing with the basil twice, just add all of it when you marinate the tomatoes. I use a two step process because I feel the fresher basil added at the end will add a certain brightness to the dish that comes from just cut basil. If you wanted to add more "brightness" to the dish you could give a squeeze of lemon to it at the end. Some variations would be to add some capers to the tomatoes or toss in the pitted chopped olives.

## Renew Now For Fall

If you are paying on our 9-week schedule, it's time to renew for the fall session (September 21<sup>st</sup>/22<sup>nd</sup> – November 16<sup>th</sup>/17<sup>th</sup>). \$198 for vegetables/fruits only, \$270 for vegetables/fruits plus flowers. Please send checks to High Ground Organics at the address below. Contact Chrissi with any questions: (831)254-4918. Thank you!