

# Four Friends' CSA News

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## The Bean Pole

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July 15, 2008

2008 Season

Issue No. 25

**Dear Shareholders and Friends,**

The vegetables you will find in this week's harvest are: Green beans, pak choi, cucumbers, mixed lettuce, baby leek bunches, Summer squash, cut herbs, (cut herbs may include a choice between basil, sage, parsley, chives, sorrel, and oregano.) There will be heads of lettuce for the full shares.

### Cucumber Salad

3 medium sized cucumbers  
1 baby leek or 1 medium sized onion  
½ cup of Mediterranean style yogurt  
1/3 cup of apple cider vinegar  
1 tablespoon of extra virgin olive oil  
Salt and pepper to taste

\*Mediterranean style yogurt is thick, as the consistency of spreadable cream cheese. Plain yogurt can be substituted in the recipe by placing about 2 cups of it on a fine mesh strainer or cheese cloth overnight in the refrigerator to allow some of the whey to drain off. This process will probably give you about ½ cup of thickened yogurt.

\*Peel the cucumbers. Remove the seeds by halving the cucumbers lengthwise and scooping the seeds out with a spoon. Slice them thinly. Set aside.

\*Clean the leek carefully. Trim away the top leaves, the root, and any part that is not tender. Cut the remaining leek in half lengthwise and wash out any dirt that may be between the leaves. Remove the outer layer of skin if it is wilted or not tender. Chop or slice the leek or onion to a medium fine texture, then sauté gently not to brown it, but just to bring out some of the sweetness. Set the sautéed leek or onion aside.

\*Combine the sliced cucumber, sautéed leek or onion, olive oil, and apple cider vinegar in a non-metallic bowl. Salt and pepper to taste. Place the mixture in the refrigerator for a few hours so the flavors will develop. Blend with the yogurt and season with salt and pepper if needed before serving.

### **News from the Five Farms:**

A reminder...counting or weighing produce items is just our way to assure that, at the end of the day everyone gets their share of vegetables. Thank you for weighing carefully!

### VEGETABLE OF THE WEEK: CUCUMBERS

Cucumber is a vegetable that belongs to the same family as pumpkins, zucchinis and other squashes. It has a dark green skin, which reveals whitish or very light green flesh, when peeled. There are basically two types of cucumbers - the pickling varieties and the slicing varieties. Of these, the pickling variety is relatively small, around 2 - 4 inches

long. Most of us know that cucumbers have cooling properties and are extremely good for bringing relief to the eyes in summers. However, they are associated with a number of other health and nutrition benefits too.

- Raw cucumber, when applied on the skin, can help reduce heat and inflammation.
- The diuretic, cooling and cleansing property of cucumber makes it good for skin.
- Fresh cucumber juice can provide relief from heartburn, acid stomach, gastritis and even ulcer.
- Placing a cucumber slice over the eyes not only soothes them, but also reduces swelling.
- Daily consumption of cucumber juice helps control cases of eczema, arthritis and gout.
- Cucumber has been found to be beneficial for those suffering from lung, stomach and chest problems.
- The potassium in cucumber makes it useful for the problem of high and low blood pressure.
- Cucumber contains Erepsin, the enzyme that helps in protein digestion.
- Cucumber juice is said to promote hair growth, especially when it is added to the juice of carrot, lettuce and spinach.
- Cucumber juice, when mixed with carrot juice, is said to be good for rheumatic conditions caused by excessive uric acid in the body.
- Cucumber can prove to be beneficial for those suffering from diseases of the teeth and gums, especially in cases of pyorrhea.
- Being rich in minerals, cucumber helps prevent splitting of nails of the fingers and toes.
- Cucumber has been associated with healing properties in relation to diseases of the kidney, urinary bladder, liver and pancreas.
- Those suffering from diabetes have been found to benefit from the consumption of cucumber/cucumber juice.

#### **FARM UPDATE:**

Although the farmers of Four Friends CSA have a great irrigation system, thanks to the hard work of the employees of Southside Community Land Trust, and funding from the NRCS, we really need rain. We irrigate two times per week, but unfortunately we can only irrigate certain sections of the fields at a time. Can we all get out our rain sticks and do a little rain dance? We need the rain!

#### **OTHER WEATHER RELATED NEWS:**

[Total U.S. crop losses may top \\$8 billion for 2008](#)

The market value of weather-related crop losses so far this year may hit \$8 billion, the American Farm Bureau Federation said this week, due largely to flooding in the greater Mississippi Valley area, but also to continuing

drought in California and the Southeast.

In the U.S. heartland region, wet weather and flooding prevented many farmers from their initial planting, flooded out many planted acres, are making it difficult to replant and will greatly reduce the yield of the crop that is harvested.[Full story: Stormwire](#)