



In Your Box

Sugar Snap Peas

*Garlic Greens

Spinruts

*French Breakfast Radish

*Basil

Lemon Balm

*Lettuce, Red Leaf or Romaine

*starred items in this box
indicate their inclusion in the
salad share.

Farm Trucks

After 4 years of driving up and down Highway 52 looking at pick up trucks for sale alongside the road, I finally found the one I had been looking for last Thursday, just five miles from home.

Until Monday night, we've farmed without a pickup truck. Our first farm truck was the Toyota Previa minivan we bought the summer we moved onto the farm. With this we hauled feed, pigs, sheep, children, bushels of seeds, and all of our harvest from the farm. Chris and Zane, then 8, would set out each Saturday morning for farmers market with the van loaded to the gills, drivers and passengers seats pushed forward as far as possible, and additional vegetables crammed under Zane's feet.

Once, at a farm auction, we backed the van up to hook onto a newly-purchased feed wagon. Several young men were laughing and gesturing in our direction. Kim got out of the van, put her clenched fists on her hips, and snarled, "This is my farm truck. You laughing at my truck?"

The following winter we purchased an aged Ford Econoline van, something I had dreamed of ever since reading William Least Heat Moon's *Blue Highways*. It served until the middle of the summer, when we discovered that it, like the minivan, was too small. We purchased our current refrigerated truck, and the white van became our first harvest wagon. Now that we have some big, luggy, off-road-style tires on it, the van serves this role quite well, providing a covered space out of the sun to store vegetables until we can get them out of the field.

Driving to market in a big refrigerated truck made us feel as though we had truly arrived. With the ability to keep our vegetables fresh all day long, this truck has been a huge stride forward in our ability to deliver high quality produce.

But we still couldn't haul pigs in it. And we'd hauled pigs in the minivan once, and that was enough.

This spring we did go out and buy an electric golf cart to add to our field vehicle selection; we use it for small harvests like herbs and (eventually) zucchini, as well as to provide quick transportation for checking on all the things that have to be checked on each day. We like it so much we're looking for a second one.

So there that truck sat, at six o'clock on a Thursday afternoon. An old rusty blue Ford. I glanced at the front wheels for the locking hubs that indicate four-wheel drive, made a quick price check (\$500 obo), and fell in love. The roll bar I was willing to overlook. On Saturday, I left my phone number and anxiously waited for a return call. When the call came, it was readily apparent that the former owner love that truck as well. Buying it, I listened to long stories about deer hunting trips, listened to the litany of parts that had been replaced and overhauled, and found out about the various shimmies, squeals, and tricks involved in driving a 25-year old vehicle. Driving it home, I felt like the farmer in me was finally complete.

Weather: It's getting hard to remember—did it rain yesterday, or was it the day before? By Tuesday, things had dried off enough to get into the field, although it was plenty hot and muggy for harvest, and we made good use of the time when we weren't harvesting before it rained again Wednesday night.

Activities on the Farm: Chris drove to Wisconsin on Friday to get three pallet-loads of new boxes, including the new easy-fold CSA box featured this week. We transplanted the crop of sweet corn that we couldn't get into the field to direct seed—it is the nicest stand of corn we have ever had. All of the greenhouse crops were pruned and trellised, firewood and brush left from deer fence construction were picked up and hauled out of the fields (using our new truck), and we did our best to do some tillage between one rainfall and the next.

Comings and Goings: We didn't have a spectacular turnout for Sunday's Weed and Feed, but we did have enough people to make the farm look much better by the end of the day. Faye Jones, the director of the Midwest Organic and Sustainable Education Services, came down Sunday for a visit, before she and Chris attended the planning meeting for the Upper Midwest Organic Farming Conference in La Crosse on Monday. Chris is the Presentations Coordinator for this conference, the largest organic farming conference in North America. While Chris was gone, seven pigs arrived and were put into the pig pen, a fenced-in area full of deep straw bedding.

Next Week's Box may include: more snap peas, radicchio, maybe some carrots?

The Farm Kitchen

While we are happy with what's in the box, we are disappointed in what is not. June's harvest relies on a succession of quick-maturing crops that are harvested once and left, and the wet weather has left us between too many crops now. The first salad mix is history now, the carrots, beets, and greenhouse cucumbers not quite ready; so this box is a little lower on selection than anybody here would really like.

We are excited about this week's **Sugar Snap Peas**. These peas have a thick, edible pod. The suture is inedible, and should be removed. When I'm picking peas, I always eat a couple of pounds of raw peas, but I prefer them lightly cooked.

The **Basil** patch in the greenhouse is really producing now, and we are able to be a little more generous than we were with the last distribution. If anything makes us glad to have greenhouses, it is this sort of spring. If you find you have not gobbled up the snap peas on the way home, here is a nice quick way to serve 'em up.

Sugar Snap Peas with Basil

fresh sugar snap peas
1 garlic green, minced
2 teaspoons butter
2 Tablespoons minced basil
salt and pepper to taste

String the peas. Melt butter in a skillet over medium heat. Add the garlic greens, saute lightly. Turn heat up and add the peas, cook quickly for 1 minute. Remove from heat and toss with basil, salt and pepper. Serve right away while hot.

Lemon Balm, also known as sweet melissa, is a member of the mint family with a lemon taste that is as strong as the aroma. Used in aromatherapy to lift one's spirits, it is also a pleasant accent from fish, chicken, and vegetables, and complements basil well. If cooking, add near the end of the process. With all of the wet weather, it is also worth noting that it makes an excellent mosquito repellent.

French Breakfast Radishes are a milder-than-average radish, more common now with the surging popularity of farmers markets than it was fifteen years ago.

Spring Radish and Lemon Balm Salad

About 10 small to medium Spring radishes

3 large ribs of celery
1/4 cup chopped lemon balm
1/4 teaspoon salt
2 Tbs olive oil
ground black pepper

Trim radishes, halve lengthwise and slice thinly. Slice the celery. Combine the chopped radishes and celery with the rest of the ingredients and toss.

The name **Spinruts** sometimes throws our CSA members for a loop, but we can't bear to call these by their more common name, "Spring Turnips". A farmers market customer once said to us that

as long as we continued to call them turnips, people who should try them wouldn't; it was his suggestion that we turn the name around, since, as he noted, they are completely backwards from what you would normally expect out of a turnip: mild, sweet, and juicy, without the hearty iron flavor common in fall turnips. We most often prepare them by steaming them whole, and serving quartered with a small bit of butter.

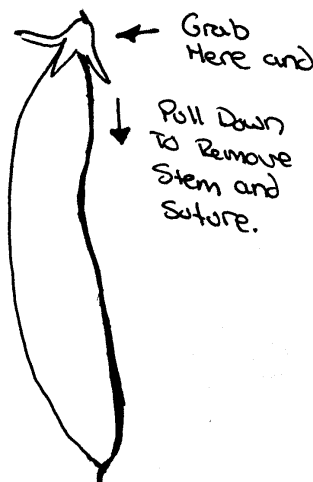
The following recipe, like the name, comes from a farmers market customer; from the first week of market forward, she asks every week for our spinruts, which she treats in the following fashion:

Lemony Spinrut Pickles

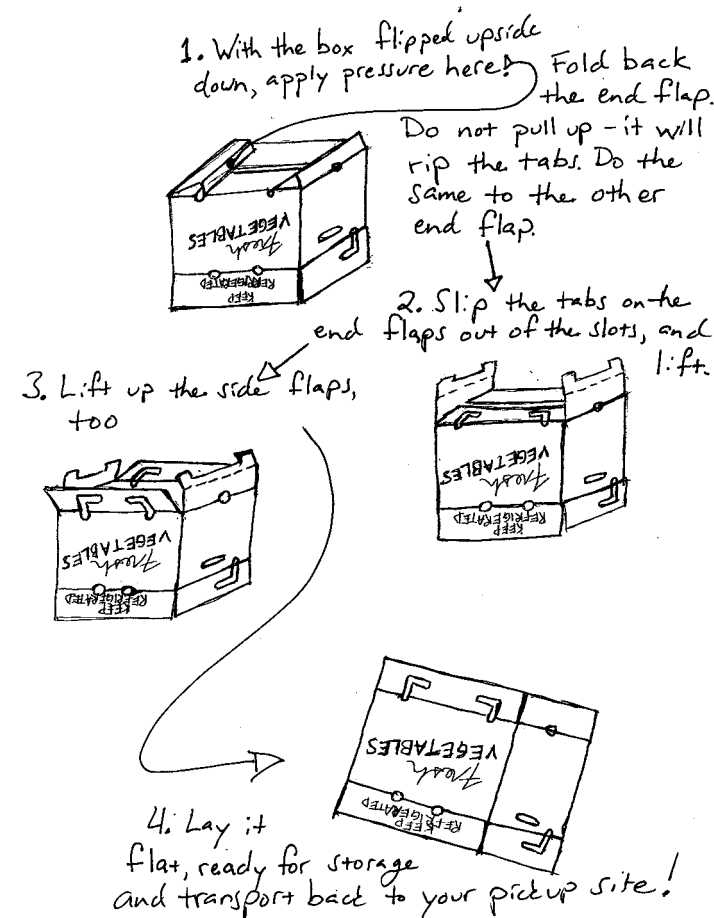
1 bunch spinruts, sliced 1/4-inch thick
Zest of one lemon

1 tsp salt

Mix lemon zest and salt. Arrange some of the spinruts in a single layer in the bottom of a non-reactive dish, sprinkle with lemon-salt mixture, and continue to layer spinruts and lemon-salt mixture. Cover, place in refrigerator for 4 hours or more, then serve.



Please Return Your Box— New Box, New Folding Directions!



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