

Four Friends' CSA News

The Bean Pole

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2009 Season

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Dear Shareholders and Friends,

This week's harvest contains:

Culinary herbs, carrots, edamame, sweet potatoes,
and mixed greens.

PS. For those who are flower share customers, please note that the season is over ☹. You may still find some Blue Skys' Flowers at the Pawtuxet Village Farmers Market on Saturdays, but the pickins' are getting slim. Christina hopes you enjoyed your bouquets and thanks you for your support!

Fried Sweet Potato Chips

Sweet potatoes

Salt or brown sugar to taste

Cooking oil (Grapeseed oil preferred)

Peel the sweet potatoes and cut them into very thin slices. Immerse the slices in a bowl of fresh water and refrigerate them overnight. Drain the sweet potato slices and blot any excess water with a paper towel. Place a little bit of oil in a heavy skillet, and preheat in a 375 degree oven. Remove the hot skillet with the heated oil in it from the oven and lay the sweet potato slices in the oil. Give them enough room so they don't quite touch each other. Return the skillet to the oven and cook the slices for 7 or 8 minutes or till they are golden brown. Remove the slices from the skillet and drain them. Season with salt or brown sugar and serve.

VEGGIE OF THE WEEK: SWEET POTATOES

History

Sweet potatoes are native to Central America and are one of the oldest vegetables known to man. They have been consumed since prehistoric times as evidenced by sweet potato relics dating back 10,000 years that have been discovered in Peruvian caves.

Christopher Columbus brought sweet potatoes to Europe after his first voyage to the New World in 1492. By the 16th century, they were brought to the Philippines by Spanish explorers and to Africa, India, Indonesia and southern Asia by the Portuguese. Around this same time, sweet potatoes began to be cultivated in the southern United States, where they still remain a staple food in the traditional cuisine. In the mid-20th century, the orange-fleshed sweet potato was introduced to the United States and given the name "yam" to distinguish it from other sweet potatoes. Sweet potatoes are a featured food in many Asian and Latin American cultures. Today, the main commercial producers of sweet potatoes include China, Indonesia, Vietnam, Japan, India and Uganda.

How to Select and Store

Choose sweet potatoes that are firm and do not have any cracks, bruises or soft spots. Avoid those that are displayed in the refrigerated section of the produce department since cold temperature negatively alters their taste.

Sweet potatoes should be stored in a cool, dark and well-ventilated place, where they will keep fresh for up to ten days. Ideally, they should be kept out of the refrigerator in a cool, dry, dark place not above 60°F, which would fit the characteristics of a root cellar. Yet since most people don't have root cellars, we'd suggest just keeping your

sweet potatoes loose (not in a plastic bag) and storing them in a cool, dark, and well-ventilated cupboard away from sources of excess heat (like the stove).

A Few Quick Serving Ideas:

Purée cooked sweet potatoes with bananas, maple syrup and cinnamon. Top with chopped walnuts.

Steam cubed sweet potatoes, tofu, and broccoli. Mix in raisins and serve hot or cold with a curried vinaigrette dressing.

Desserts made with sweet potatoes are an autumn favorite but can be enjoyed year round. Try making sweet potato pie, bread, muffins or pudding.

Baked sweet potatoes are delicious even when served cold and therefore make a great food to pack in to-go lunches.

ANOTHER VEGGIE OF THE WEEK: EDAMAME OR SOYBEAN

**When you open your share this week, you will see some branches with pods on them...this is soybean or edamame...
read on...**

Not everyone knows what an Edamame is. Perhaps you know them better with the name fresh green soybeans or sweet beans. Yup, perhaps you recognized what it is when the name soybean was mentioned. The edamame is a popular finger food in Asian countries such as Japan and China. Thus, the word Edamame comes from the Japanese. They are also often used in salads, stir fry dishes and soups. Let's get to know more about this bean and learn how to cook edamame with this helpful information below.

Edamame is an edible bean that comes in pairs. These beans can be found inside this green pod and has that sweet and nutty flavor in it. They are high in protein and are easy on the stomach. Aside from that, it is also a good source of Calcium, Fiber, and Vitamin A. What's more is that Edamame has Phytochemicals in it such as the Isoflavins that are great Antioxidants!

The Edamame bean has yet to be popular in the Western regions of the world. However, it is slowly making its way to the US. On the other hand, the Eastern countries like China, have already been cultivating this bean for ages. You can find Edamame either fresh or frozen, in the pod, or shelled in Oriental stores, natural-food stores, and now in some supermarkets. It can also be found at farmers' markets during the summer as it is sold as whole plants.

Now if you like to learn how to cook edamame, the best way to do it is simply by boiling it. Remember, Japanese loves eating it right out of the pod? They enjoy eating Edamame as a finger food. So just by boiling it for a few minutes will be enough for you to try it out. Note however that only the beans inside the pod are edible. The pod itself should not be eaten! So make sure to tell your family and friends who will be trying out your Edamame. So if you want to know how to cook edamame, here are the few easy steps.

- ❖ Rinse your Edamame before using.
- ❖ Prepare your pot and fill it with water. Let it boil.
- ❖ Add salt.
- ❖ Now, add in a pound of fresh pods. If you purchased shelled beans, you can use that too.
- ❖ Let it cook for 3 to 5 minutes.
- ❖ Drain and spread on a baking sheet to cool for a few minutes. Add salt and pepper to taste.
- ❖ When cool, you are ready to eat!

Using your thumb and forefinger, squeeze the cooked beans from its pod into your mouth and enjoy. They are really delicious and nutritious.

FARM NEWS: All is kind of quiet this week, however,

The farmers are starting to think about the many tasks yet to come, and it is time to plan for next year already...

It is time to order more soil (a \$1,000 plus investment); clean up of the greenhouses; dismantling of the pipe to the diesel pump (which we never turned on!); clear the brush around the deer fencing, rent a dumpster to do farm clean-up in general; do some final plowing and lay more cover crops. And, of course, continue to harvest and plant for the next few weeks remaining of the CSA. That is, there are only six more weeks to go. Whew, I am already tired!

Katie of Scratch Farm is thinking about building a cold frame on her land; Christina of Blue Skys Flower Farm is thinking about trying to grow Sunflowers in the greenhouse this fall; Chang of Pak Express is looking forward to some down time in the winter; and Liz of Pie Garden is planning her crops for next year.

Till next week...enjoy our veggies!