

FIELD *notes*

UCSC Farm
Community Supported Agriculture
Tenth Harvest: 8/9/11 & 8/12/11

What's in the box?

Romaine, *Plato II*
Spinach, *Tyee and Renegade*
Mustard, *Mizuna*
Beets, *Touchstone Gold*
Cipollini, *Bianca de Maggio*
Basil, *Aroma 2*
Dill, *Hercules*
Yellow Wax Beans, *Gold Rush*
Green Cabbage, *Farao*
Strawberries, *Albion*
Potatoes, *German Butterball*

Upcoming Event

**Fall Gardening Workshop:
Planting the Thanksgiving Feast
Saturday, August 28, 10am-1pm**

Louise Cain Gatehouse on the Farm

Gardening instructor Trish Hildinger will teach you how to plan ahead and extend your gardening season with timely tips on what to plant and how to plant it for harvest in November and through the winter. This workshop is designed for beginning and intermediate gardeners. Questions? Contact casfs@ucsc.edu or call 831.459-3240.



Simon Howden

Notes from the Field *by Liz Milazzo, Field Manager*

Sometimes it seems I spend most of my time chasing ground squirrels. Actually, "chasing squirrels" rarely involves running after them – it usually means taking a shovel and making the rounds of the farm, closing in burrow entrances. Or, taking a bucket of stakes and closing up the largest of the tunnels seen as the various examples of "stick art" along the farm roads and garden edges, which do seem to be helping.

We saw a surprising amount of large animal scat on the roads and even in the furrows this spring, coyote and also bobcat. If left alone, the squirrels will stick to the same dens year after year, which means their active zones are very predictable. The hot spots right now are many: at the base of the lowest Satsuma plum tree, at the top of the Santa Rosa plums, the back of the kiwis, the edge of the pears across from the middle of the Tipi field, the front of the kiwis by Block 1 of the Main field, above compost row (near the Lower field), under the large pineapple guava in the Down Garden, the persimmon slope near the apprentice library, and the hillside below the CSA garden. I am surprised at how my eye has become attuned to catching the shadows in the grass indicating a squirrel tunnel, and the feeling of the spade that seems to know where to go to break up the surface tunnels.

I've got "squirrel on the brain" to such an extent that I noticed the profile of a little squirrel featured in a cover story of "BayNature" magazine (the image was the size of a postage stamp in a mailer I received). "That looks like a ground squirrel!" I went online right away, and found a great story written by naturalist Kathleen Wong in the Jan. 2008 issue: <http://baynature.org/articles/jan-mar-2008/lord-of-the-burrows/?searchterm=ground%20squirrels>

Turns out the California ground squirrel (*Spermophilus beecheyi*) is a keystone species for western grasslands from northern Mexico to southern Washington, an important food source for predators such as golden eagles, coyotes, badgers, and rattlesnakes. Their dens also provide habitat for mice and voles, two species of beetles, and some rare amphibians. I appreciated being reminded of their unique place at the center of the universe, even as I persist on my harassment rounds.

This week the CSA grows by 10% with the folks who signed up for our "Late Season Share." Welcome, and thank you for supporting the Apprenticeship training program and the CASFS Farm, and we're excited to be harvesting each week for you. Enjoy the bounty!



Sautéed Wax Beans with Applewood Smoked Bacon

- 1 pound wax beans
- 1/4 pound Applewood smoked bacon, medium dice
- 1/4 cup candy stripe onion, small dice
- 1/4 cup white wine
- Kosher salt and fresh cracked black pepper

Bring a large pot of lightly salted water to a boil. Add the wax beans and cook until tender, approximately 6 minutes. Drain and then run cold water over beans, until beans cool. Drain and set aside.

In a medium sauté pan add bacon and turn on a medium heat. Cook bacon until fat renders and there is just the meat crumble left, stirring occasionally. Remove bacon from sauté pan, and discard half of the bacon fat. Keeping the heat medium add the onion and sauté until onions start to caramelize.

Stir in wine and reduce by half. Toss in beans and bacon and season with salt and pepper to taste.

CHEFARMER CORNER

MATTHEW RAIFORD

Mizuna is a mild Japanese mustard green and one of the best known in the United States. A very hardy plant, Mizuna is heat and cold tolerant and thrives in rainy weather. Its shape resembles arugula, but with pointed, jagged edges on the leaves instead of round edges. It is used in mesclun salad mixes, stir fry, pasta dishes and soups. Mizuna is low in calories, high in folic acid, high in vitamin A and carotenoids, high in vitamin C, and contains glucosinolates, which are antioxidants that help prevent certain cancers.

Mizuna & Chicken Stir Fry

Serves 4-6

- 1 egg white, lightly beaten
- 1-1/2 teaspoon tamari
- 2 cloves garlic, finely chopped
- 1 pound boneless, skinless chicken breast, small diced
- 2 teaspoons vegetable oil
- 1/3 cup finely chopped carrot
- 1/3 cup finely chopped sweet onion
- 1/4 cup finely chopped water chestnuts
- 1/2 teaspoon chile paste with garlic
- 1 tablespoon Ponzu* with lime
- 1 pound Mizuna mustard, trimmed
- 1/4 cup finely chopped green onions
- 4 cups cooked Jasmine rice

In a medium bowl, mix egg white with 1/2 teaspoon of the tamari, garlic and chicken. Cover and refrigerate for one hour.

Heat a teaspoon of the vegetable oil in a wok or large skillet over high heat. Add chicken mixture and cook, stirring constantly, 4 to 6 minutes, or until chicken is cooked through and appears opaque. Transfer chicken to a plate and set aside. Heat remaining teaspoon of oil in wok. Add carrots, onions and water chestnuts and cook, stirring constantly, for 1 minute. Add remaining teaspoon tamari, chile paste, Ponzu and Mizuna and cook, stirring often, until slightly wilted. Return chicken to wok and toss well.

Serve over Jasmine Rice and garnish with green onions and serve.

*Ponzu is available at most local grocery and health food stores.

Adapted from: *The Whole Foods Market Cookbook*



Simon Howden