



# HIGH ALTITUDE HARVEST

Community Supported Agriculture

June 25, 2014 —

## Sustainable Farming

After last week's share pick up a new member called and asked which of our farmers grow organically. This call was a great reminder that we need to tell you more about our growing practices! The philosophy and practice of sustainable farming is so core to what we do that sometimes we forget to share the details with you.

The answer to our member's question is that some of our growers choose to become certified organic and some don't, but all of them use sustainable practices that take care of farm ecosystems and produce healthy, safe food.

We developed the following summary of our farmers' practices in order to better communicate how our farmers grow.

**Soil**—Healthy soil is the basis for a healthy farm. The fertility and biology of our farmers' soil is protected through the use of cover crops, compost, compost teas, mulch and/or low-till management. These practices eliminate runoff and soil degradation that's caused by synthetic fertilizers.

**Habitat**—Our small farms are diverse landscapes, not sterile monocrops. Insect and wildlife habitat is created by planting a diversity of row crops and/or pollinator plantings, and by keeping uncultivated land around the farm.

**Water**—Our growers conserve water by using efficient drip

irrigation, either entirely or combined with other watering methods.

**Non GMO**—Our farmers don't use genetically modified crops, aka GMO's.

**Inputs**—No synthetic fertilizers, pesticides or herbicides are used on our farms. Our farmers' fertility inputs are manure, compost, cover crops or naturally-occurring amendments. Pests and insects are managed using mechanical and cultural control, and organic-approved sprays (like soaps). Weeds are pulled the old fashioned way – by hand, hoe, rototiller or tractor.

The bottom line is that all of our farmers are deeply committed to using farming practices that make our food system a more sustainable and healthy one. We do this work because we believe in it, and we believe in it because it's good for people and the planet.



Building compost piles is a regular task for many of our farmers. Temperature is monitored to manage turning times and moisture levels. Checking the compost thermometer can be addictive!

## Full Share:

- Arugula
- Blueberries
- Kale
- Sunflower Sprouts
- Spring Mix
- Green Garlic
- Green Onions
- Oregano
- Summer Squash
- Mizuna Greens

## Half Share:

- Arugula
- Blueberries
- Sunflower Sprouts
- Radishes
- European Spring Mix

## What Grows Where:

### DAWN GARDENS

kale, green garlic, summer squash

### FIVE FOOT FARM

sunflower sprouts, bunched arugula, mizuna, green onions

### GREEN CEDAR FARM

blueberries

### HARMONY ACRES

oregano

### SIERRA VALLEY FARMS

euro spring mix, spring mix, radishes, bagged arugula

## Wash It!

Our produce is farm fresh. Please wash before enjoying.

## Bread Share Flavor:

Walnut, Chive & Parmesan

## Herbed Oil Freezer Cubes

Here's the thing about herbs—they are so delicious and we have an abundance of them in the spring and summer, but we want to use their flavors into autumn and winter too. Many spring herbs actually go best with crops that don't mature until late in the summer (oregano and tomatoes, sage and winter squash).

Drying is always a good option for preserving herbs, but today we're going to encourage you—no, *implore* you—to try freezing herbs in oil or butter. Herb ice cubes will keep for 6 months or more in the freezer and will provide instant fresh flavor to any dish in which they're used. And as a major plus, it's totally easy. So grab that sage and oregano and your favorite knife and get chopping.

### INGREDIENTS

Fresh Herbs—sage, oregano, rosemary, chives, basil, thyme or any combination thereof  
Olive oil, butter or your favorite cooking oil

### DIRECTIONS

Start by chopping the herbs, either by hand or in a food processor.

#### Option 1: Olive Oil

Divide the chopped herbs into ice cube trays and fill with olive oil.

#### Option 2: Butter

Combine the herbs with melted butter and spoon into an ice cube tray.

Freeze the trays overnight and transfer the cubes into labeled plastic bags the next day. Use the herb cubes anytime you want outrageous fresh herb flavor in a dish!



## Spring Crops

**Kale** — This leafy green has become the mascot of the local food movement, and for good reason. Kale is productive in the field and versatile in the kitchen, lending itself to both cooked and raw dishes—add kale to any omelet, sauté, soup or salad that needs a little extra-nutritious green in it. For real kale converts no fruit smoothie is complete without a few leaves thrown in. Strip the leaves from the purple stems before preparing.



**Mizuna** — This week's Full Shares are getting mizuna, the bunched greens with the frilly leaves. Mizuna is a cooking green that hails from Japan originally, and goes great in any Asian inspired dish. Try some in miso soup, stir fry or pad thai. Mizuna is tender and only needs to be cooked lightly.



**Sunflower Sprouts** — The sunflower sprouts in your share are grown in flats of soil and harvested when they're just a week old. They have a nutty flavor and a crunch that goes great in sandwiches, salads, tacos and many more dishes. Kids love snacking on sunflower sprouts, and some members have even made pesto with them!

### FUN LOGISTICAL REMINDERS

- \* **Upcoming harvest** lists will be posted on the HAH website homepage each Monday by 3pm.
- \* You'll also find a link on our homepage to our **share schedule**, which includes the dates and times of produce and optional share pick ups.
- \* If you ever forget to grab your **newsletter** you can download a copy from the Newsletters page of our website, too.
- \* For **Portola** members, please remember to return your wooden boxes each week. For **Graeagle** folks, please feel free to return any paper bags that are in good condition. (You can keep the plastic bag liners though, we can't reuse those.)
- \* For Quincy members, please remember to **bring your own bag or box** to pack your share. We have extras in case you forget, but our supplies are limited.

[www.HighAltitudeHarvest.com](http://www.HighAltitudeHarvest.com)