



HIGH ALTITUDE HARVEST

Community Supported Agriculture

June 29, 2016 —

Farm Mentor

by Elizabeth Powell,
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I think one of the things that keeps us farmers hooked on growing is the fact that the learning is never done. There will never be a day when I say, “Yup, I got it all figured out this year!” Every season there are new strategies to try, new successes and new failures. It keeps us stubborn types coming back for more, the feeling that there’s always room to run a farm operation that’s more efficient, to grow produce that’s more beautiful and abundant.

We all learn to farm through different avenues. Most farmers I know piece together work experience, trial and error, advice from farmer friends, and book knowledge from winter months of reading. At Five Foot Farm I’ve learned through a combination of work on other farms, my bachelors program, and a ton of experimentation. I look back at some of the ‘techniques’ I tried even a year or two ago and can only shake my head, wondering how we even made it this far. But we have learned from our mistakes and made plenty of progress towards a fully functioning farm.

Our best training lately has been a mentoring relationship that I stumbled into this winter. Alan Haight runs the gorgeous and very successful Riverhill Farm in Nevada City, 10 acres of produce and berries tucked into the foothills. We met at a workshop

years ago, and this winter he mentioned that he was mentoring another young farmer down in the bay area. He must have noticed my not so subtle look of interest, because soon after he generously offered the same to Five Foot Farm. We began meeting over the winter months at coffee shops in Truckee, pouring over crop plans, farm financials and marketing strategies. He gave us advice about how to start a farm stand on site, how great u-pick strawberries are, what veggie crops to focus on, and benchmarks for our financial plans. Some of the most valuable feedback he gave us was encouragement that our farm’s development is fairly on track, and that we have a good shot at creating a financially and ecologically sustainable farm.

Though our meetings have taken a hiatus over the summer, Alan checks in on us periodically with encouraging emails. I have a running list of questions for him that I think of in the field, things that seem little but make a big difference in farm operations — like how do you avoid heat shock when transplanting in the morning?

Though I know I will never have everything on this farm 100% figured out, we do aim to have our systems fine tuned to the point where we’re making a respectable living off of the land. When that day comes I will make a point of sitting down with some young farmer and paying it forward.

Full Share

- Sunflower Sprouts
- Mizuna Greens
- Kale
- Sugar Snap Peas
- Tomatoes
- Spring Mix
- Chives
- Blueberries

Half Share

- Mizuna Greens
- Cilantro
- Sugar Snap Peas
- Radishes
- Blueberries
- Head Lettuce

What Grows Where

DAWN GARDENS

head lettuce, chives

FIVE FOOT FARM

cilantro, kale, radishes, snap peas, mizuna, sunflower sprouts

SHOOFLY FARM

tomatoes

GREEN CEDAR FARM

blueberries

SASQUATCH FARMS

salad mix

Wash that produce!

All of our produce is fresh off the farm, so please remember to wash before enjoying!

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Bread Share Flavor

roasted onion, parmesan and smoky cheddar

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Mizuna Quinoa Salad with Lemon Scallion Vinaigrette

Mizuna is back by popular demand! A couple of you members have requested that this Asian green make a reappearance in your shares, and we listened. Mizuna is the bunched green with tender, serrated leaves. The creators of this recipe say, "Mizuna is a farmer favorite! It's a feathery looking green that adds texture to salad, is delicious wilted, and easy to cook. Try cooking it like you would spinach or any light tasting green. I like to remove the bottom stems before I put it into dishes, but the whole leaf is vegetable. This salad is a perfect meal on it's own or try serving it with grilled chicken or salmon. Enjoy outdoors with a cold beverage on a hot night!"

SALAD

2 cups dry quinoa
1 bunch mizuna, stems removed, chopped into bite size pieces
green tops of 2 scallions, sliced
1 cup diced radishes or kohlrabi (optional)
1/2 cup crumbled blue cheese
1/2 cup dried cranberries
1/2 cup pecans
salt + pepper to taste

LEMON SCALLION DRESSING

1/2 cup olive oil
juice from half a lemon
1 tsp dijon mustard
green + white parts of 2 scallions, minced
salt + pepper to taste

Cook the quinoa according to package instructions. I placed it in a pot with 4 cups of water, bring to a boil, cover, and simmer for about 20 minutes. Remove from heat and fluff with a fork. Let cool to room temperature before tossing with the mizuna leaves. (If you want the mizuna to "cook" a little toss it with the hot quinoa and then follow the recipe as written.) **Combine dressing ingredients** in a jar and shake to combine. Toss the mizuna, radish or kohlrabi (if using), quinoa, and dressing together. Taste and season with salt and pepper if necessary. **Toast the pecans.** Place the pecans in a small skillet over medium heat. Toast, stirring frequently. You'll know the pecans are toasted when they smell toasty and start to brown. Remove from the pan right away so they don't burn. Fold the scallions, pecans, blue cheese, and cranberries into the salad. Serve at once or chilled. This salad holds up well if you want to make it a day in advance for a party.

Source: www.earlymorningfarm.com

CROP UPDATES

Tomatoes—If you've ever grown a garden in the Sierras you know that getting tomatoes to ripen by the end of June is a gosh darn miracle. We said it wasn't possible, and Shoofly Farm said, "Watch us!" The tomatoes in your share were lovingly started from seed back in January, and have ripened under the protection of a hoop house in the warm microclimate of Indian Falls. Enjoy!

Radishes—This is one of those veggies that folks either seem to love or be ambivalent about. If you love 'em, dig in! If you need a little encouragement, here are some fun radish facts and health benefits to inspire you—

- Radishes have been around since at least 2,700 BC. Egyptians cultivated them before building the pyramids, and Greeks liked them as large as they would grow, served with honey and vinegar.
- They're great for your skin because of all of that Vitamin-C, phosphorus, zinc and some members of vitamin-B complex.
- In Eastern and Ayurvedic healing practices radishes are said to have effective toxin-purging effects, helping break down and eliminate toxins and cancer-causing free radicals in the body.
- Radishes have a calming effect on the digestive system and can help relieve bloating and indigestion.

5 MINUTE AVOCADO CILANTRO DRESSING

A member gave us this recipe recommendation last week and it sounds divine!

INGREDIENTS

half an avocado
¼ cup Greek yogurt
½ cup water (more as needed to adjust consistency)
1 cup cilantro leaves and stems
1 small clove of garlic
½ teaspoon salt
a squeeze of lime juice

DIRECTIONS

Pulse all ingredients in a food processor or blender until smooth. And you're done! Serve over salad, roasted veggies, rice bowls, chicken, you name it.

Source: pinchofyum.com