



HIGH ALTITUDE HARVEST

Community Supported Agriculture

July 29, 2015 —

Cheap Food

by Elizabeth Powell, Five Foot Farm

My family came up for a visit recently and my brother-in-law brought up the topic of how expensive food is these days. Now, he's a perceptive guy, and I'm sure he noticed as my voice rose an octave and I gripped the arm of my chair. As a farmer, this issue is personal for me. When people say good food costs too much, what I hear is, "You know all of those hours you spend toiling in the hot sun? You should get paid *way less* than minimum wage for that work." Naturally, this is discouraging because I love what I do, and I want to feel that the work is valued.

But I settled down, and my brother-in-law and I talked about how the industrial agriculture system creates the perception that food should be cheap. From what I've learned over the years, there are a few big reasons.

Subsidies: Between 1995-2012 the US Government paid out \$292.5 billion in ag subsidies. This money goes to a really small portion of farms—10% of US farms collect 75% of all subsidies. So in addition to industrial agriculture having more profit from their economy of scale, they also get a handout from the government for growing some of the most unhealthy products on the supermarket shelves (corn, soy and tobacco, to name a few), and are able to keep the cost of their products low.

Cheap Energy: The use of fossil fuels to mechanize agriculture has

slashed one of the most expensive line items in the agribusiness budget: labor. Take the people out of farming and you save money... but become more dependent on unsustainable fossil fuels and synthetic inputs.

Cheap Labor: The people who do work in agriculture are undervalued. The US has 3 million migrant and seasonal farm workers, 48% of whom don't have legal authorization to work in the US (and are thus easier for employers to take advantage of). 23% of these farmworker families live at or below the federal poverty level.

Processed Foods: The nutrient-dense fruits and veggies that we grow get to compete with the processed, high-calorie/low-nutrition foods that Americans have become accustomed to. This food is cheap because *it's cheap*—as in, not valuable to our health. But it sets the bar low for people's perception of food costs.

I don't talk about these topics much because they're a bummer, and I don't want the local food movement to turn into a pity-party for the poor, small scale farmer. But my conversation with my brother-in-law reminded me that talking with people about the true cost of food is important and needs to keep happening.

Our farmers love growing for you HAH members and other local markets, where they get paid a fairer price for their work. With eaters and farmers working together to rebuild our food system I believe that we really can foster a more accurate understanding of the true value of food.

Full Share

- Basil
- Blueberries
- Carrots
- Garlic
- Asian Pears
- Spring Mix
- Lemon Cucumbers
- Green Cucumbers
- Summer Squash
- Green Bell Pepper

Half Share

- Blueberries
- Cabbage
- Strawberries
- Carrots
- Beets

What Grows Where

BLOOMSTONE FARM
beets

DAWN GARDENS
garlic, basil

FIVE FOOT FARM
beets, carrots, cabbage, summer squash

GREEN CEDAR FARM
blueberries, Asian pears

GREENVILLE HIGH SCHOOL
lemon & green cucumbers, green peppers

SASQUATCH FARMS
spring mix

SUNDBERG GROWERS
strawberries

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Bread Share Flavor

Pesto, sundried tomatoes & asiago

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Pickled Eggs with Beets

To fill 2 quart-sized jars you will need:

INGREDIENTS

| | |
|--|------------------------------------|
| 1 dozen hard-cooked eggs | ½ small onion, sliced |
| a pound or so of cooked and peeled beets | ¼ cup granulated sugar |
| a little over ½ cup of cooking liquid from the beets | 3 cloves of garlic cut into chunks |
| ¾ cup apple cider vinegar | 1 teaspoon sea salt |



DIRECTIONS

1. Peel the eggs and place in quart-sized glass jars alternating with the cooked beets. Larger beets can be cut into quarters.
2. In a medium saucepan combine the vinegar, beet juice, onion, sugar, garlic, and salt. Bring to a boil then simmer, uncovered, until the sugar has dissolved and the onions are translucent, about 5 minutes. Remove from heat and let cool a few minutes.
3. Pour the vinegar onion mixture over the eggs in the jars, covering the eggs completely. Tighten lids. Refrigerate up to a month.

The pickled eggs will be ready to eat after a few days. The longer the eggs sit in the pickling juice, the more the juice will penetrate the eggs.

Source: adapted from www.thehungryfarmgirl.blogspot.com

ASIAN PEAR SALAD WITH MAPLE DIJON DRESSING

Asian pears are a delightfully sweet, crisp and refreshing addition to salads!

Salad Ingredients:

4 or 5 cups salad greens
(Sasquatch Farms spring mix works great!)
½ small red onion, thinly sliced
1/3 cup Gorgonzola cheese, crumbled
½ cup toasted pecans or walnuts, chopped
1 Asian pear, thinly sliced

Maple Dijon Dressing:

3 tablespoons lemon juice
2 tablespoons maple syrup
2 teaspoons Dijon mustard
¼ cup olive oil
salt and pepper

Whisk all the dressing ingredients together and pour over assembled salad. Toss gently and serve.

Source: adapted from www.blog.katescarlata.com

Crop Updates

Strawberries: We're thrilled to have strawberries in our shares for the first time ever! You can thank Brian and Presley of Sundberg Growers for these beauties. Hooray for new farmers and new crops!

Summer Squash: The squash is here so it must really be summer. You can expect to get this tasty summer squash about every other week this summer.

Asian Pears: These sweet, juicy pears are meant to be eaten firm, so don't wait, dig in.

Beets: We have 3 growers who planted beets for us this year and each of them have had a heck of a time with production. This has become our #1 most elusive crop... so enjoy them while you got 'em! We'll keep troubleshooting in hopes of better yields next year. Half Shares, here are a couple more ideas for how to use the beets in this week's shares:

- Chop beets, onions, carrots into large pieces, add garlic cloves, toss with olive oil and salt. Cover with foil and roast in the oven (or solar oven) at about 400 degrees until tender.
- Grate the beets and sauté them in a pan with butter, lemon juice, salt and pepper. This is one of the fastest ways to cook beets (just takes a few minutes) and it's delicious!