



August 27, 2014 —

**Microbe Friends**

Maybe it's just the folks we farmers hang out with, but it seems like over the past couple years everyone and their mother has suddenly discovered that microorganisms are everywhere and that they're not all bad. In fact, they're great!

Did you know that each of us humans has between 2 to 6 pounds of microorganism in our bodies, a whole ecosystem of critters who are integral to our health. That's *trillions* of microorganisms in one human being! In fact, the cells of microorganism in our bodies outnumber our own human cells. (Next time you feel lonely just remember that you have a trillion best friends with you at all times!)

So what's with the biology lesson? Well, it turns out that the communities of microbes in our bodies have fascinating parallels to the microbes that live in the soil. Beneath our feet there are huge communities of bacteria, fungi, protozoa, nematodes, earthworms, millipedes and many more.

In a healthy acre of soil there can be *thousands* of pounds of microorganisms in the top 6 inches alone. There are 50 billion microbes in one tablespoon of soil! When we're out

working in the field it's fun to imagine them all swarming around under our feet, living their little microbe lives.

Collectively, these microbes are so important to farms. It's the microbes who unlock nutrients in the soil for plants to use. It's the microbes who suppress disease by keeping the soil ecology in balance. The health of these little critters determines the health of our farms, and the quality of the food that we produce. That's why ecological farming practices are so important – by composting, cover cropping, mulching, planting diverse crops and limiting tilling we're able to encourage the life in our soil.

So when you eat your next carrot, remember the vast team of tiny workers in the soil who grew it in partnership with your farmer. And also take a moment to ponder that people, microorganisms and produce are all just members of one big ecosystem.



Summer squash in the caterpillar tunnel hoop house at Five Foot Farm

*Full Share*

- Slicer Tomatoes
- Blackberries
- Summer Squash
- Lemon Cucumbers
- Carrots
- Green Onions
- Basil
- Green Bell Peppers
- Jalapenos

*Half Share*

- Romaine
- Cherry Tomatoes
- Summer Squash
- Green Cucumbers
- Carmen Peppers (sweet, not hot)

*What Grows Where*

**DAWN GARDENS**

cherry tomatoes, blackberries, slicer tomatoes, summer squash, basil, carmen peppers

**FIVE FOOT FARM**

green onions, summer squash, spinach

**GREENVILLE HIGH SCHOOL**

lemon and green cucumbers, green bell peppers, jalapenos

**SIERRA VALLEY FARMS**

romaine lettuce, carrots

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*Bread Share Flavor*

kalamata olive, parmesan and thyme

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**Thank you for returning the little baskets from your shares!**

**It's Survey Time!**

Please check your e-mail for a link to our mid-season survey. This is a great chance for us to get your feedback on how the season's going. It only takes a few minutes. Thanks!

## Cherry Tomato Galette

The Dawn Gardens is having a bumper crop of cherry tomatoes this season and this looks like a suitably divine dish for them. Check out our HAH Facebook page for a link to a really neat video of this recipe—[facebook.com/HighAltitudeHarvest](https://facebook.com/HighAltitudeHarvest)



### INGREDIENTS

#### For the Pastry:

1 1/4 cup unbleached white flour chilled in the freezer for 15 minutes (I used spelt and it worked beautifully)  
1/4 tsp. salt  
8 tbsp. (1/2 cup) cold unsalted butter  
1/4 cup full-fat yoghurt (if liquidy, drain it first so it is thick and creamy)  
2 tsp. fresh lemon juice  
1/4 cup ice water

#### For the Filling:

1/2 cup ricotta cheese  
1/2 cup grated parmesan  
About 1 pound of cherry tomatoes, halved  
1 tbsp. olive oil  
Freshly minced basil for garnish (4 or 5 basil leaves)  
Salt and pepper, to taste

#### For the Glaze:

1 egg yolk    1 tsp. water

### DIRECTIONS

1. Make sure your flour and butter are chilled. In a medium mixing bowl, mix the flour and salt together, then cut the butter into the flour with a pastry blender, a food processor, or two knives, until the butter is evenly distributed with the largest chunks about the size of peas (these chunks of butter are what will give your crust its delightful flakiness). In a small bowl, mix together the ice cold water, cold yoghurt, and 2 teaspoons of lemon juice. Pour this mixture into the flour. With a wooden spoon, gently mix together, just until you can get it into a ball. It doesn't have to be perfectly mixed, you want to avoid overworking the dough. Flatten the ball into a disc and wrap in plastic or parchment paper and chill in the fridge for at least 1 hour.
2. On a floured surface, using a floured rolling pin, roll the chilled dough into a large round about 12 to 14 inches wide and between 1/8 to 1/4 inch thick. Place the rolled-out dough on a piece of parchment paper on a large baking sheet. (It can be easier to handle the dough if you roll it out directly onto the floured piece of parchment paper).
3. In a small bowl, mix the ricotta and grated parmesan together. Crumble and spread this mixture onto your dough, leaving a 2-inch border all around. Place your halved tomatoes, cut-side up, tightly together to fill the circle, leaving the 2-inch border intact. Fold the border edges of the dough inwards so that the tomatoes are encased by dough around the edges but exposed in the center. Brush the edges with the egg yolk glaze. Season with salt and pepper if you wish and drizzle the olive oil on top of the tomatoes.
4. Bake in a 375 F oven for about 45 minutes or until crust is golden.
5. Remove from the oven, let it cool for a few minutes before sprinkling shredded basil on top. Slice and serve.

Source: [pbs.org/food](https://pbs.org/food)

## Crop Updates

**Spinach** — We are quite pleased to offer another crop of spinach from Five Foot Farm for the Full Shares this week. A lot of experimental crops have gone in the ground this year at the new Five Foot Farm land, many of which have come to harvest beautifully. We tried our hand at a mid-summer spinach crop which can be tricky business considering spinach's tendency to bolt in the heat. It seems that our extra-cool valley bottom nights are good for something after all—this batch of spinach exceeded our expectations in flavor and production. Enjoy!

## Love Your Summer Squash Year Round

### IN THE FREEZER

Make **blended summer squash soup** with garlic, onions, basil and cream or coconut milk. Cool and store in ziplock bags in the freezer. This soup makes for a quick, summery meal on winter nights.

Grate and freeze summer squash for your favorite **zucchini muffin** recipe. Simply thaw and use for fall and winter baking. Pre-measuring the grated zucchini makes it a snap.