

Bee Heaven Farm ~ Redland Organics 2003-2004 CSA
Week 1- November 22, 2003

Hello and welcome to Bee Heaven Farm C.S.A. We are so excited to be starting our second year of bringing you fresh, locally grown, healthy, organic fruits and vegetables. Thanks to all of you who are back again from last year and welcome to all the newcomers!!

We will be extremely busy this season as subscriptions are up from 57 shares last year to a whopping 242 shares this year!! Fifty-one of those are trial shares, which won't start until January (to give us time to grow more for everyone). Thank you so much for your support!!

We have been busy rock-plowing new soil in order to make new beds to accommodate all the planting we have done and anticipate doing.

Helping out on the farm this year are W.W.O.F.ers (Willing Workers on Organic Farms) Jackie, Eric, Peter, Sky, and Aaron from Michigan, Stephanie from Texas, and Curtis, our long-term part-time employee. And returning to help again this year are the TMH students from Southridge Senior High. They are learning valuable skills while helping to count, weigh, sort, and pack some of your share items.

What's in my share?

Green Beans –Homestead Organic Farms
Salad/Greens Mix- Bee Heaven Farm
Chinese Kale- Bee Heaven Farm
Monroe Avocados- Paradise Farms
Eggplant- Lady Moon Farms**
Zucchini- Heartland Organics
Basil- Three Sisters Farm (transitional)

And to choose from the Extras Box (take what you like!)

Red Kale, Green Beans, Chinese Kale, Eggplant, Mizuna, Salad Mix, a few Radishes, some Turnips, plus Lemongrass and Cucumbers left over from Ramble!

the fiasco of the week- there's always something!! This week, we obtained eggplant from Lady Moon Farms, which is near Punta Gorda. As we didn't get enough, we asked for more. The delivery truck brought us certified organic eggplant all right, but this stuff was from Mexico! What a fiasco! We accepted it this time, but told them they can't mix up our stuff with anyone else's ever again, or we'll simply refuse it. We're committed to providing you with **LOCALLY-GROWN food, and that means from South Florida (and, because of the citrus canker quarantine, citrus will most likely come from Central Florida farms).

PLEASE REMEMBER TO BRING BAGS OR BOXES WITH YOU EACH WEEK TO BAG YOUR SHARE-we're giving you bags this time, because it's always crazy the first week, but we won't be providing bags after today.

If you're going to be away, please send us an email at least 48 hours in advance. We'll suspend delivery of your share for that week and credit you for an extra week at the end of the season. If you don't notify us in time, we'll send your share as usual, and you will forfeit the credit.

Farm News & Recipes on Back-Check it Out! →→→→

Featured Item of the Week

Chinese Kale: also known as Chinese broccoli or flowering broccoli. It is mainly the young, flowering stems, with the flower buds and small leaves which are eaten. The flowers, flower buds, and shoots can all be used in salads. Chinese kale is also delicious stir fried with meats, chicken, prawns, veggies, or on its own.

Farm News

This summer was very, very hot and extremely wet. We got a late start because we couldn't work the land while it was soggy. It all worked out, though, because it was too hot to plant many of the crops.

The terrible rains a couple of weeks ago (we had 6 ½" !!) caused us quite a bit of anxiety. At one point we thought we lost the arugula- it has recovered quite nicely, but we did lose a whole lot of baby onion and pepper plants to damping-off. The rest of the greens loved the rain, and the carrots got a big push. Of course, so did the weeds!! We can always use help weeding, so if you want to help, come on out to the farm for a couple of hours for some hard work and companionship.

The purple beans are starting to set now, and the salad greens are taking off! The tomatoes are growing madly, getting ready to start blooming soon. We're already fighting the caterpillars that are trying to eat everything. We spray BT, and do a lot of squishing, too. The carrots, onions, chard, collards and broccoli are barely up, but the turnips and tatsoi are growing nicely.

Last year our BIG outlay was the farm building, the walk-in cooler, and the solar-powered water pump & freezer. This year, we purchased a one-row bedder with drip tape layers to help us prepare the planting beds. Although we still do a lot of hand work, it's quite an improvement over hand-preparing over one acre of planting areas spread throughout our 5-acre property.

Congratulations to Three Sisters Farm (the source of most of last year's wonderful heirloom tomatoes). They have just received transitional organic certification for their farm, and now have a certified-organic greenhouse. If you want to try your hand at growing some of your own heirloom tomatoes, contact Cliff for starter plants.

Recipe of the Week - Eggplant and Zucchini Caponata

(taken from The Ultimate Vegetarian Cookbook)

1 medium eggplant, cubed	2/3 cup water
2 medium zucchini, cubed	2 tbsp balsamic vinegar
1 large onion, sliced	juice of one lemon
2 garlic cloves, crushed	2 tbsp sliced kalamata (or black) olives
1 large red pepper, sliced	2 tbsp capers
4 tbsp olive oil	salt and pepper
1 large can pureed tomatoes	

- 1) Lightly salt the eggplant and zucchini and leave to drain in a colander for 30 minutes. Rinse and pat dry with a paper towel.
- 2) In large saucepan, lightly fry the onions, garlic and pepper in the olive oil for 5 minutes, then stir in the eggplant and zucchini and fry for another 5 minutes.
- 3) Stir in the tomatoes along with the water. Bring mixture to a boil then add all the rest of the ingredients. Season to taste, then simmer for another 10 minutes. This mixture is great served hot over pasta or eaten cold as a topping for bruschetta!