

Laguna Farm CSA

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October 27 and 29, 2009 WEEK B

Farmer Scott

.....is travelling and will return to the newsletter next week.

In your box today:

From the windy fields of the farm, our “beyond organic” salad mix, chard, parsnips, potatoes, scallions, basil and parsley.

Parsnips are among the most sorely underrated garden vegetables in the U.S.! In other parts of the world, however, they’ve enjoyed great popularity since ancient times. They grew wild all over the European continent and were heavily cultivated during medieval times. Sugary varieties were commonly fermented into wine. But never since their introduction to North America in the 17th century have they been more than a minor crop here -- even though they win the “most sweet and delicious” award of all the root vegetables. Exposure to frost improves their taste and sweetness, as the starches within are transformed into sugars.

LAST WEEK FOR THE PUMPKIN deduction: for the month of October we’ve been deducting \$1 each week from the value of your box toward your Halloween pumpkin. For additional pumpkins, visit the pumpkin patch at the entrance to the farm!

Pumpkins are native to America -- originally south and central America, but by the time of the historic first Thanksgiving, they had been cultivated by north American Indian tribes for centuries, which is one reason they figure so heavily in this holiday. The flesh is high in Vitamin A (one cup provides three times our adult daily need), Vitamin C, niacin, iron, potassium and phosphorus. There are hundreds of varieties of pumpkins, in a wide variety of colors and shapes. The seeds are high in zinc and other minerals, and are an old remedy for enlargement of the prostate. Scoop them out, rinse them off, leave them out for a day to dry them, and then toast them in a frying pan with a splash of olive oil and tamari or salt for a crunchy and tasty snack.

NO FRUIT IN YOUR BOX THIS WEEK? Yes, the fruit share has ended for the year, and from this point on, seasonal fruits will be included in all boxes as they are available.

“Out of the Kitchen, Onto the Couch”, by Michael Pollan, NY Times Magazine, cont’d.

On cooking from scratch: Today’s cooking shows and recipes often rely heavily on ingredients that themselves contain lots of ingredients: canned soups, mayonnaise, frozen vegetables, powdered sauces, and concentrates. Many of these convenience foods have been sold to women as tools of liberation; the rhetoric of kitchen oppression has been cleverly hijacked by food marketers and the cooking shows they sponsor to sell more product. So the shows encourage home cooks to take all manner of shortcuts, each of which involves buying another product, and all of which taken together have succeeded in redefining what is commonly meant by the verb “to cook.”

The path to a diet of fresher, unprocessed food, not to mention to a revitalized local food economy, passes straight through the home kitchen.

Cooking is a defining human activity. The anthropologist Claude Levi-Strauss, in 1964, stated that cooking is a metaphor for the human transformation of nature into culture: making food more digestible meant that humans could devote their time and metabolic resources to other purposes, like creating culture.