

TALK *of the* TOWNES

THE TOWNE'S HARVEST GARDEN WEEKLY NEWSLETTER

AUGUST 5, 2010

This week is week 7 and marks the "over-the-halfway point" for this season's CSA and my goodness how the time has flown (December is here before it's June; it's morning before it's afternoon – for you Dr. Seuss fans)! We have three weeks left with our dynamite interns and we've all been continuing the typical schedule this time of year – harvesting and field maintenance with a little bit of fall planting.

Our chickens are laying more eggs than ever, so make sure and check out our eggs for sale at CSA distribution. If you have any egg cartons, please make sure to bring them as we end up having more eggs than cartons these days.

Many of the intern projects are coming to a close and we're mighty proud of how many of them have represented us in the community – Lacey Norstrand has managed the Towne's Harvest booth at Bogert Farmer's Market; Mike Nault planned and installed a garden and compost bin with the Child Development Center on campus; Nick Alba, Ben Clark, and Jon Orsi built an adobe earth oven for the MSU Horticulture Farm; John Thiebes has managed this CSA newsletter; Katie Henderson has reared our laying hens for those tasty eggs you've been getting—there are many more and we'll get to the others in the coming newsletters!

On other announcement: beginning today—Friday, August 6th—Towne's Harvest Garden will host a fresh produce farm stand in case you need some more produce for a particular recipe or have friends that could not join our CSA but would like to eat our produce.

When: Fridays in August and September, 3pm-6pm

Where: 7th street between Grant Street and Kagy Blvd on lawn adjacent to the tennis court parking lots.

WHAT TO EXPECT THIS WEEK...

Squash, assorted herbs, fava beans, chard, beets, carrots, lettuce heads, possibly sugar peas, spinach, cherry tomatoes, onions both bulb and bunching...



please let us know what you think.

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RECIPES

How to shuck the fava bean

Fava beans require a bit more preparation than most vegetables. You first have to remove the beans from the pods, blanch the beans, and then squeeze them out of their skin.

Start by cleaning off the pod.

Snap the end off of the pod

Pull down and remove the string that runs down the length of the pod

Open the pod and remove the beans.

Blanch the beans. Bring a pot of water to a boil and then add the beans. If you want to preserve the color then add salt to the water. Cook for one minute then remove. Have a bowl of ice water ready.

Place the beans into the ice water bath and keep them there until they are completely cool. 3-5 minutes.

The final step is what makes this process so labor intensive. Take the bean, and this might require some trial and error, and using your thumbnail, break into the shell near the top and pull it off. Then squeeze the bean out and you should have a beautiful, emerald fava bean ready to eat.

Recipes for the Fava Bean:

Fava Bean Puree

3 cups shelled fava beans (roughly 3 pounds unshelled)

2 tablespoons unsalted butter, melted

1/4 cup heavy cream

Salt and freshly ground black pepper, to taste

Bring a large saucepan of water to a boil. Add the beans, reduce the heat and simmer until the beans are tender, about 20 minutes.

Drain the beans and puree them in a food processor or blender. Add melted butter, cream, and salt and pepper. Serve immediately.

3 green onions, cut into 1/4-inch long slices

3 garlic cloves, minced

1 teaspoon red wine vinegar

1/2 teaspoon ground cumin

Salt, to taste

Lemon- and Garlic-Roasted Chicken with Fava Beans, Radishes, and Pecorino

2 (3- to 4-pound) roasting chickens, necks and giblets removed and discarded, rinsed and patted dry

5 lemons, 2 cut into 1/4-inch-thick slices, 2 halved

2 tablespoons kosher salt

2 teaspoons freshly ground black pepper

2 heads garlic, halved with skins left on

2 sprigs fresh rosemary

2 bunches fresh oregano

8 tablespoons extra-virgin olive oil

*1 cup fresh fava beans**

2 cups radishes, thinly sliced (from 2 bunches)

2 cups loosely packed arugula leaves (from 2 bunches)

1/2 cup loosely packed fresh mint leaves (from 1 bunch)

1/2 cup loosely packed fresh flat-leaf parsley leaves (from 1 bunch)

1/2 cup loosely packed celery leaves (from 2 bunches celery)

1/2 cup Pecorino Toscano or other mild Italian sheep's milk cheese (less than 6 ounces), coarsely grated

Preheat oven to 400°F. Place chickens on rack set in large roasting pan. Starting at each cavity end, slide hand between skin and breast meat to loosen, being careful not to tear skin. Arrange lemon slices under skin to cover breast meat.

Season each cavity with 1 1/2 teaspoons salt and 1/2 teaspoon pepper. Stuff each with halved lemons, garlic, rosemary, and oregano.

Flip wings of each chicken back and tuck under body. Using pastry brush, brush 3 tablespoons oil over skin of each chicken, then sprinkle each with 1 1/2 teaspoons salt and 1/2 teaspoon pepper. Tie legs together loosely with kitchen string.

Roast chickens, basting with pan juices every 15 minutes, until skins are crisp golden-brown and juices run clear when thighs are pierced, about 55 to 60 minutes. (Instant-read thermometer inserted into thickest part of breast should register 170°F.) Remove from oven, then remove lemons, herbs, and garlic from cavities and discard. Reserve pan drippings. Transfer chickens to carving board and tent with foil to keep warm.

In 2-quart pot of boiling water, blanch fresh fava beans 1 minute. Drain, then immediately transfer to medium bowl of ice water to stop cooking. Drain. Slip outer skin off each bean and discard skin; place beans in medium bowl. Add radishes, arugula, mint, parsley, celery leaves, and cheese, and toss to combine. Stir in lemon juice and remaining 2 tablespoons olive oil.

Divide fava bean and radish salad among 10 plates. Carve chickens and arrange pieces atop each portion of salad. Spoon pan drippings over.

Fresh Fava Beans w/ Olive Oil and Garlic

1/2 cup water
2 pounds fresh fava beans, shelled (about 1 cup)
1/4 cup olive oil
3 green onions, cut into 1/4-inch long slices
3 garlic cloves, minced
1 teaspoon red wine vinegar
1/2 teaspoon ground cumin
Salt, to taste

In a small saucepan over medium-high heat, combine the water, fava beans, and 1 table-spoon olive oil. Cook covered until the beans are tender, about 20-25 minutes.

Drain the beans and transfer to a serving bowl. Toss with the green onions. In a small bowl, combine the remaining 3 tablespoons olive oil, garlic, vinegar, and cumin. Whisk to mix well. Season with salt. Pour dressing over the beans and toss to coat evenly. Serve at room temperature.

Fresh Pasta with Fava Beans, Tomatoes, and Sausage

2 tablespoons extra-virgin olive oil
1/2 cup finely chopped onion
2 large garlic cloves, coarsely chopped
1/8 teaspoon dried crushed red pepper
1/2 pound Italian sausages, casings removed
1/4 cup dry white wine
1 3/4 cups chopped plum tomatoes
1 cup shelled fresh fava beans (from about 1 pound), blanched 3 minutes then peeled, or double-peeled frozen, thawed
3/4 pound fresh pasta sheets, cut as desired, or dried egg fettuccine
2 tablespoons finely grated Pecorino Romano cheese plus additional for passing

Heat oil in large saucepan over medium heat. Add next 3 ingredients. Sauté until onion is translucent, about 6 minutes. Add sausages; break up with fork. Sauté until brown, about 3 minutes. Add wine; simmer 1 minute, scraping up browned bits. Add tomatoes and fava beans. Sauté until tomatoes soften, about 5 minutes. Season sauce with salt and pepper.

Meanwhile, cook pasta in large pot of boiling salted water until tender but still firm to bite. Drain, reserving 1/2 cup pasta cooking liquid. Return pasta to same pot.

Add sauce to pasta. Toss over medium heat until sauce coats pasta, adding reserved cooking liquid as needed if dry, about 2 minutes. Mix in 2 tablespoons cheese. Transfer pasta to bowl. Serve, passing additional cheese.