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THE WSU ORGANIC STANDARD

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From Hoop Houses to Hops: New Things to Notice out the Farm!

I hope everyone enjoyed getting back into the swing of spring with the first CSA boxes. The first Pullman Farmer's Market was a hit with 12 vendors showing up for opening day and plenty of shoppers getting out for the nice weather. There's a great variety of eggs, bread, meats, veggies, plants, grain, and even wool to see at the market, so make sure you get down to support our local businesses and growers!

We're also excited to see our Friday visitors at the farm in the afternoon. There have been some fun changes that I'm sure you noticed, as every year is a little different on our special farm.

Our summer class has met twice now and we have a great crew of students for the season. We have a mix of students from my spring session and new students just joining the crew. They are the backbone of our labor force and the farm literally could not operate without their hard work. Last week for class they replaced the plastic on our resting hoop house, which will be home for this year's tomatoes. They've also been busy finishing our new irrigation system which finally came on-line last week as well.

The new system will allow us much more control of watering for all our fields and will be metered for continual research into our water usage. Another new feature at the farm is a large 10 foot pole trellis for a small hop planting. A few students have joined forces to put this planting together and are excited to see how this unique crop does on the Palouse.

As usual, I can't help but comment on the weather, especially this time of year. After that nice week of weather it seems like we're still struggling with wind, hail, and freezing temperatures. As I write this letter on Thursday night I'm nervously awaiting below freezing temperatures. We spent a busy day securing the hoop houses, moving tender transplants to the heated shop, and covering all the planted cucumbers and tomatoes that went in the ground a few days ago. I'll hope for the best and let you know how it goes!

--Brad Jaeckel

Visiting The Farm

Deb, the Tukey Orchard manager has asked me to remind all of our visitors and Friday pickups to please be cautious and courteous when driving up to the farm. There are a lot of other folks using the orchard and we need everyone to drive slowly up the big hill and be aware of slow moving equipment and orchard workers. Also, remember our Friday pickup ends at 6 and our workers will be eager to making their way home. Please plan on coming before 6 so the farm can be closed up for the weekend. Thanks!



Chard & Turnips!

This will be a week of salads, what with spinach and salad mix in our boxes, and I am so glad as salads signal, to me, warmer weather! Chard, also makes a nice, simple salad. Before moving to the Palouse, we lived in Australia. Chard was abundant at the summer farmer's markets, and a friend turned me on to a simple side dish with fresh, raw chard (cut away the tough middle rib and chop the greens into bite-size pieces) tossed with a little olive oil, lemon juice, and salt and pepper. It's a refreshing way to enjoy your dark, leafy greens! For warmer meals (which I'm still cooking, what with these cooler temperatures lately), the recipe below is one of my favorite ways to enjoy chard. Spinach is also very good cooked this way. You will see, lemon juice appears to be a theme. I have read that turnips are at their sweetest in the spring and fall. Some people slice them and eat them raw, but I enjoy them most when roasted or glazed. The glazed turnips recipe below makes a nice side dish with roasted meats.

--Jamaica

Braised Greens with Garlic and Lemon

1 bunch of chard
1 Tablespoon olive oil
2 cloves of garlic, minced
¼ teaspoon red chile flakes
¼ teaspoon salt
1 Tablespoon fresh lemon juice
Cracked pepper, to taste

Remove the midrib of the chard and discard (compost!), then chop the greens a few times so they're in fairly big pieces. Heat in a skillet over medium-high heat, the olive oil. Add the garlic and sauté until just golden. Add the greens, chile and salt, and toss together in the pan for a moment before covering. Cook, covered, for a few minutes until the greens have begun to wilt. Uncover and mix in the lemon juice and cook for a minute more. Then, remove the greens to a plate, and turn up the heat under the pan to reduce the juices left in the pan. This will take just a minute. Remove the pan from heat, drizzle the reduced olive oil/lemon juice over the greens, sprinkle with pepper, and serve.

Glazed Turnips

For 2 lbs of small turnips:
1 ½ cup plus 3 Tablespoons water
2 Tablespoons butter
1 Tablespoon sugar
½ teaspoon salt
Parsley

If the turnips are large and the skins thick, peel first. Otherwise, halve horizontally, then quarter the turnips. Place turnips in a skillet with 1 ½ cups of the water, the butter, sugar, and salt, and boil, covered, for about 10 minutes, stirring occasionally. Remove lid and continue cooking until water evaporates and turnips turn golden brown, about 10-15 minutes. Add the 3 tablespoons of water and some chopped, fresh parsley, stirring to coat the turnips with the glaze. Enjoy.