

Johnson's Backyard Garden, May 6th

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We'd like your input for the newsletter! Please send us brief personal stories about your CSA experience to include in a new 'Member Spotlight' column. Related news articles, book reviews, recipes, etc are also welcome. carolyn@johnsonsbackyardgarden.com

We're on MySpace, [be our friend!](#)

1) In Your Box this Week

Arugula
Asparagus
Beets
Cabbage
Onions
Rainbow Chard
Red New Potatoes
Spinach
Tomatoes
(and possibly Zucchini)

As the unexpected never fails to happen, keep in mind that this list is subject to change depending on availability and quality of crops on harvest day. You'll find the most accurate packing list on the homepage of our [website](#). The website list also features links to online recipes, pictures (for the more unusual veggies) and other interesting tidbits.

2) Farm News

- Saturday during harvest, 4-year old Drew Johnson learned to ride a two-wheeler! Brenton gave him one push and then away he went. Only about a half-hour later he came speeding into

the fields having figured out how to start all by himself too. Way to go Drew!

- Summer vacation time is coming up - remember that if you let us know by **email** at least **48 hours in advance**, we can suspend your delivery and start it up again on the date you request. So don't cancel your vacation plans on account of missing your veggies!
- This Friday we will be welcoming our next new intern, Caleb Hammargren. Caleb will soon be a graduate of North Texas University and will be working with us for awhile before his final semester of school and then a Peace Corps assignment next year. Caleb has worked with us sporadically over the past year; we are all excited to have him here full-time!
- This past week one of our main tasks has been staking up tomato plants, 20 rows of them all with nothing but a post driver and Will's brute force.



- We keep saying the farm is transitioning into summer, but so far you might not believe us just by looking at your CSA boxes. Very soon though there will be ripe summer squash, zucchini, winter squash (delicious but admittedly not very 'summery'), peppers, we promise.



- We are beginning plans for a new well which we anticipate drilling in the fall.

3) Potluck Fun

Sunday's potluck was our biggest yet, lots of good people, food, and music! And no one got sick from the barrel races, what more could we ask? We really enjoyed having everyone out here and hope you got a good look at where your veggies are coming from.









There was quite a spread of food, much of it made from items in the CSA boxes – spanikopita, coleslaw, grilled leeks, spinach quiche, a killer collard and sausage dish – could ya’ll cook for us every night?



Thanks again to the bands – [The Flatcar Rattlers](#), [Dear Henry](#) and [La Tampiquena](#). There are at least two CSA members in these bands, check out their websites and go see their shows!

4) Online Payment and Website Updates

We're entering the 21st century, folks! Our website is now equipped for online payment with credit card for renewals and new memberships. The next step is to add a customer login, so that you will be able to manage your CSA account online. Through this system you will be able to view your scheduled pickups, change your pickup location and suspend your box while you're on vacation.

5) 'The Silent Tsunami' – Thinking Globally, Acting Locally

Unless you've been living in a pumpkin, you're probably well aware of the world food situation – price jumps larger than any in the past 30 years due to increases in fuel prices, increased demand for meat in China and India, and the conversion of agricultural land from food crops to fuel crops. The gravity of the situation as led the UN to refer to it as a "silent tsunami."

As with so many things, addressing these large-scale food issues really begins at home. Supporting local farms with sustainable practices is one of the best things you can do to engage these large issues on an individual level. If you're receiving this newsletter, you are likely a person who's already aware of the many benefits of buying local, but let me just remind you that one of those benefits is that far less energy is used in producing and distributing food from local farms. Eating local probably doesn't make a dent in the global food market, but it does affect your household energy consumption (and health!).

Austin is fortunate to have an active local farm scene (and a year long growing season) – a wide variety of vegetables, meats, nuts, cheeses, herbs, mushrooms, and fruits can all be found near the Austin area. We hope that you will continue to choose us as the growers of your vegetables; check out the [Austin Farmer's Market](#) and [Local Harvest](#) (a resource for communities nationwide) to find local sources of the products that comprise the rest of your diet!

There are also many great [organizations](#) working hard to bring relief to the poor nationally and internationally that you may think about supporting – some of these are: [Care International](#), [Food First](#), [Oxfam](#), [Heifer Project International](#), and [America's Second Harvest](#).



6) Win a 4-week CSA Membership...

...by designing the winning Johnson's Backyard Garden logo or t-shirt design!

Submit logo and/or t-shirts designs by email (carolyn@johnsonsbackyardgarden.com), snail mail, or in person. Winner(s) will be chosen by the JBG team, or perhaps we'll put it to a vote through the newsletter.

We also need a good name for our tractor and our farm truck...we'd love suggestions. In exchange you'll get everlasting fame and glory, and a truck load of pecan wood (if we can convince you to take it).

Deadline: June 15, 2008

7) Vegetable Storage Tips

We aim to grow and package our vegetables to maintain the highest taste and nutritional quality possible. However, once they've left the farm it's up to you to keep them fresh and nutritious. There's no refrigeration at the CSA drop points so it's good to pick up your box as early as possible, especially

as the weather heats up. Here are some additional tips for storing this week's share:

- **Arugula** should be washed immediately then spin dried. Rebag and place in the refrigerator.
- **Asparagus** is delicate and should be used within 2-3 days, wrap in a damp towel and store in plastic bags or bins.
- **Beets** should be stored in plastic bags, with both roots and tops in the bag. They'll last two weeks in the fridge.
- **Cabbage** has a fridge life of up to two weeks.
- **Greens** should be kept in plastic bags. Any bunch greens can be freshened by cutting an inch of the bottom stalks and soaking the entire bunch in cold water for 10 minutes. Place in a plastic bag in the fridge for a few hours to revive.
- **Potatoes** and **Onions** are best kept moderately cool, no lower than 50 degrees. A cool, dry dark place is best- on the counter, in a cupboard or basket.
- **Tomatoes** should be kept uncovered at room temp, but can be refrigerated if very ripe. All other fresh vegetables belong in the refrigerator.

Checkout our [storage tips](#) on our website for a more complete guide, and of course feel free to contact us with any questions.

8) Recipes

I got a new cookbook! Recommended to me by a foodie friend, it's called *Three Bowls: Vegetarian Recipes from an American Zen Buddhist Monastery* by Seppo Ed Farrey and Myochi Nancy O'Hara. *Three Bowls* focuses on mindful food preparation and presents recipes that are healthy, filling and flavorful, yet simple and suitable for large groups. And man, are there some great recipes! Especially for the summer veggies that will be coming soon – **Ginger-Butternut Biscuits, Orange-Ginger Spaghetti Squash, Savory Whipped Sweet Potatoes with Ribbons of Collard Greens.**

-Carolyn

“The right qualities of heart and mind in cooking are just as important as a stove or a knife.”
- Farrey's introduction to *Three Bowls*

Red Potato Salad with Asparagus on a Bed of Greens

Adapted from *Three Bowls*

3 pounds **red potatoes**

1 pound fresh **asparagus**

4 ½ T cider vinegar

1 T Dijon mustard

1 ½ t honey

¾ t salt, more to taste

6 T olive oil

1 14-oz can artichoke hearts, drained, each heart cut vertically into eighths

3 oz blue cheese
2 T chopped fresh dill
black pepper
Fresh **Arugula** and/or **Spinach**

Boil potatoes until tender enough to pierce with a fork. Let cool, cut into bite-size pieces and place in a large bowl.

Steam asparagus until tender, about 8 to 12 minutes. Slice into 1-inch lengths and add to the potatoes.

Whisk together: vinegar, mustard, honey, and salt. Drizzle in olive oil, whisking until well blended and creamy. Add the dressing and artichokes to the potatoes, toss lightly.

Sprinkle with bleu cheese, salt and pepper and serve over a bed of arugula and/or spinach. Refrigerate until served.

We would love to share your recipes too! Please email your favorites to carolyn@johnsonsbackyardgarden.com

9) Subscribe/Unsubscribe To Newsletter

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10) Johnson's Backyard Garden Contact Information

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