



# Weekly Note

Spring Box #1

Week of May 15

## Farm Snapshot

Last week's big task was moving chicks to the field. It involved getting the pen and equipment set up in the field, loading, transporting, and unloading the chicks, cleaning up all that equipment, and then setting up a new compost pile with the brooder bedding. Within two days our new compost pile was cooking at 150 degrees F. That was Monday. Tuesday through Saturday included maintenance & planting tasks, and getting ready for 1st delivery!



## What's in this week's box?



Lettuce  
Spinach  
Mixed mustard greens  
Kale - *any of four kinds including White or red Russian, Lacinato, or Siberian.*  
Rhubarb  
Carrots

## Vegetable of the week

### Mustard greens -

Arugula (a peppery flavor) - lobed leaves; Mizuna (a slightly bitter, jagged edged green); Mustard mix - several different mustard greens including some frilly, red types. Great mixed into salads, use on burritos, taco salad, or try them sautéed with a splash of vinegar and parmesan cheese for a side dish of cooked greens.

Carrots?, you ask. These are held over from our fall crop. Bolero - very good storage crop and end of season carrots are the best.

## Cooking out of the box

With this first delivery, we are heading into the season of salads. I'll be featuring one recipe each week - many focused on salads - to encourage your full enjoyment of the weekly supply of vegetables. I welcome any and all suggestions and am happy to share your own favorite recipes. This week, the focus is on both rhubarb and the mixed greens.

### Rhubarb Salad with Goat Cheese

#### Ingredients

3/4 pound **rhubarb**, cut into 3/4-inch pieces

1/4 cup honey

1/2 cup walnut halves

2 tablespoons olive oil

2 tablespoons balsamic vinegar (preferably white)

Coarse salt and ground pepper

4 bunches **mixed greens** (about 1 pound total), mid ribs removed if applicable

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# Growing into the sun

A phrase we've come to use for this time of farm is "growing into the sun". This refers to the fact that we are still gaining sunlight hours. This pattern plays out through late June when the fact that we've past the Summer Solstice begins to catch up with us.

Two weeks ago, when we finally had repeated days of sunshine and warmth, our field planted crops finally started to show some growth. This is crunching our crop schedule a bit as the plan was for some of these crops (green onion, radish) to be ready the 2nd or 3rd week. Their arrival will be delayed, but because we are still "growing into the sun", we expect they'll catch up relatively quickly.



*Cooking Out of the Box continued...*

1 fennel bulb, cored and thinly sliced crosswise (optional)

1/2 cup fresh goat cheese, crumbled

## Directions

1. Preheat oven to 450 degrees, with racks in upper and lower thirds. On a rimmed baking sheet, toss rhubarb with honey. Roast on upper rack until beginning to soften, about 5 minutes. Let cool on baking sheet. On another rimmed baking sheet, toast walnuts on lower rack until fragrant, 5 minutes. Let cool, then chop. This can be done on your stove top as well using a skillet.

2. In a large bowl, whisk together oil and vinegar and season with salt and pepper. Add chopped greens and fennel and toss to combine. Top with rhubarb, walnuts, and goat cheese.

# Food for Thought

## Values reflected in our agriculture investments

We got the final news on the Governor's decision about the Leopold Center for Sustainable Agriculture the same day we got the spring fundraising letter from Practical Farmers of Iowa newsletter. What a contrast! The PFI letter header claimed "Living Our Values" and was filled with member quotes about how PFI holds fast to values of creativity, collaboration, and community. Governor Branstad's and the Iowa Legislature's decision about the Leopold Center reflects a whole different set of values about their perspective on Iowa agriculture. In spite of strong lobbying by many Iowans, farmers and non farmers alike, Friday, May 12 Gov. Branstad signed legislation that did not eliminate the Leopold Center, but did redirect all of its funding to the Iowa Nutrient Research Center at Iowa State University, essentially gutting the resources for the Center to do its work.

It's a stinging, sad closure to Gov. Branstad's leadership legacy in Iowa ; he signed the Iowa Groundwater Protection Act In 1987 , establishing the Center to identify and develop new ways to farm profitably while conserving natural resources as well as reducing negative environmental and social impacts." The Center has played a key role in Iowa's sustainable agriculture development over the past 30 years. The mission, to some, carries a criticism of Iowa agriculture and has been targeted for several years . This legislative session's budget decisions reflect a new set of priorities in Iowa and unfortunately, it appears, the work of the Center is no longer seen as a state priority. What a pity that legislative leaders are not responsive to the voiced values of the people.



## Farm schedule:

Tuesdays - Garner, Clear Lake, Mason City

Wednesdays - Belmond, Clarion, Farm

Weekly deliveries Mid May to early July and August to September

## Farm contact:

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