

OWN YOUR
FOOD.



CROMWELL VALLEY C.S.A.
Organic Community Supported Agriculture

CVCSA Community Newsletter 2009 Season

JUNE 13, 2009

Featured Food: Garlic Scapes by Maggie Beetz

Highlights in this issue:

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What are Garlic Scapes?

Garlic scapes are the stems that garlic plants produce before their bulbs mature. They are a relatively underutilized part of the garlic plant in America, though they have been used in Asian and Italian cooking for hundreds of years.

Garlic is part of the "allium" family along with leeks, chives, onions, and shallots, all of which grow underground. As garlic bulbs mature and harden, a shoot begins to work its way out. The shoot grows long and thin and then begins to curl. This shoot is the scape. If left alone it will turn white and harden, though most farmers clip the scapes before they reach this point to encourage the bulbs themselves to grow larger. This is also when the scapes are their most tender and delicious.

Harvesting Garlic Scapes

Scapes are an early summer treat. Writer and farmer Mary Jane Butters suggests harvesting at about the third week in June. Ted Jordan Meredith, author of *The Complete Book of Garlic*, suggests harvesting just after the scape curls downward and "definitely before it uncurls and starts to straighten out."

Others recommend harvesting scapes even earlier, before they begin to curl and while they're at their most tender. This may be a good practice for people who plan to eat the scapes raw, such as in a salad. If you harvest them after they've started to curl, you may want to trim the base of the stem, which may be a little tough (similar to the ends of asparagus).

Harvesting scapes in the afternoon when the sun is hot is the best way to preserve the garlic plant, according to William Woys Weaver of MotherEarthNews.com. "That way, the wound you create

by cutting off the scapes will dry quicker and heal better. If you harvest early in the morning, the garlic plant may weep its sap for several hours, which is not good for the plant."

Using Garlic Scapes

You can use the entire stalk, including the white bulb at the end. Scapes have a milder garlic flavor than the bulbs, so you can use them in anything that would traditionally benefit from garlic: dice them up and add them to a stir fry or use them in scrambled eggs or an omelet. They can also be steamed, boiled, roasted or grilled.

The most popular recipes include garlic scape pesto. Making a pesto from the scapes also allows you to preserve them long past the harvest. Pickling the scapes is also common among scape enthusiasts.

Resources:

MotherEarthNews.com

<http://www.motherearthnews.com/Real-Food/2005-10-01/Garlic-Scapes.aspx>

WashingtonPost.com

http://voices.washingtonpost.com/mighty-appetite/2006/06/my_friend_the_garlic_scape_1.html

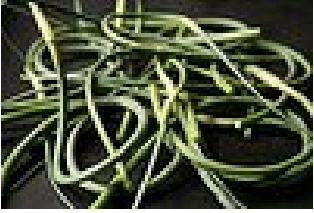
MoscowFood.coop

<http://moscowfood.coop/archive/scape.html>

MaryJanesFarm.org

<http://www.maryjanesfarm.org/About/articlesawards/sr-garlic-scapes-6-08.asp>

What Are You Doing with Those Scapes?



(Picture courtesy of Flickr user thebittenword.com)

Garlic Scape Pesto (from maryjanesfarm.com/SimplyMJ)

1 cup grated Parmesan cheese
3 Tbsp. fresh lime or lemon juice
1/4 lb. scapes
1/2 cup olive oil
Salt to taste

Puree scapes and olive oil in a food processor until smooth. Stir in Parmesan and lime or lemon juice and season to taste. Serve on bread, crackers or pasta.

Fried Scapes (from dakotagarlic.com)

Cut scapes to green bean size and saute them in butter and salt for six to eight minutes. During the last minute of cooking add about 1 tsp. of balsamic vinegar.

~ Submitted by Judy Breitenbach

“The garlic scapes
were amazing!”

“Super-delicious.”

“We sautéed in olive oil with sun dried tomato, fresh corn cut off the cob, parsley, added lemon juice, lemon zest, a big splash of wine, two glugs of broth and a handful of shrimp. Served over pasta with lots of red pepper flakes. It was a beauty with all the flavors, colors and textures.” ~ Holly Coleman

“We just whipped up a batch of mashed potatoes and added some chopped, lightly sautéed scapes along with the milk and butter. Super-delicious.” ~Caroline Carlson

“The garlic scapes were amazing! I'd never cooked with them before but we made a risotto with herbs, garlic scapes and fontina that turned out well.” ~ Kara Bagranoff McGee

“ Make pesto. Throw the scapes in a food processor with a handful or 2 of nuts (pine nuts are traditional, but I prefer to use walnuts or hazelnuts) until well-processed. Add parmesan cheese (or we use pecorino romano) and olive oil until you get the texture you want (more olive oil = more runny, more cheese = more firm). You want it more like a sauce for tossing with pasta, but more thick if you want to use it to add flavor to cooking meats (this pesto works great on fish and chicken - slather it on top and cook as usual). Add salt and pepper to taste. Freezes well (in ice cube trays, or in sheets on wax paper), but if you're going to freeze it, best not to add the cheese (add cheese once thawed and ready to serve). “ ~ Cami R.

Workshop Reminders

The Rain Barrel Workshop is coming up soon and space is limited, so if you haven't signed up yet, contact the park office at 410.887.2503 or email info@cromwellvalleypark.org for more details. And don't forget about the other upcoming activities around the farm as well. Workshop details are below:

SATURDAY JUNE 20

10 AM - NOON, WILLOW GROVE NATURE CENTER

RAIN BARREL WORKSHOP

Building your own rain barrel is fun and easy, and best of all, you'll have your very own barrel to take home with you by lunch time! This workshop is meant for individuals interested in saving water and reducing rainwater runoff which can carry pollutants to our streams and bay. The water you save can be used for garden and lawn watering, washing your car or tools, or it can simply be released more gradually into the ground where it can recharge our groundwater supplies. Save water, save money, and save our streams all at the same time! If you are interested in assembling your own rain barrel or just want to learn more about rain barrels, register today! Workshop is free. If you wish to take a barrel home with you the cost is \$60 (Gunpowder Valley Conservancy members \$50); cost includes rain barrel and assembly kit. Space is limited to 15 builders or participants.

If you would like a rain barrel but can not attend the workshop you can buy one pre-assembled for \$75 (GVC members \$60). To buy a rain barrel contact Peggy Perry at 410-668-0118 or little-owl@msn.com.

SUNDAY JUNE 28

9 - 11 AM, SHERWOOD FARM

COMPOSTING 101

Cromwell Valley CSA Head Farmer Matt Belmont digs dirt, and can teach you how to enrich your own soil with composted yard and kitchen waste. Meet at the CSA sign just inside the Sherwood entrance. CSA members \$2, non-members \$4.

SUNDAY JULY 19

2 - 4 PM, WILLOW GROVE NATURE CENTER

FREEZING FOOD 101

Learn how to deal with the July bounty of squash and other veggies by freezing some for a taste of summer next winter! Basic preparation techniques and freezing processes for optimal taste and nutrient retention will be covered. \$3 CSA members, \$5 non-members

Ever considered
composting?
Our own Matt
Belmont will
teach you how
to get started!

For the Kids

Name: _____

Date: _____

**Eat Your Vegetables
Word Search**



Complete the activity.

N B R O C C O L I G J Q Y W C I
 B S M O X A S P I N A C H Z K E
 R A R O D P A R S L E Y U E U H
 U N R C U C U M B E R C L C B S
 S C Q T E Y V M M O C E L E R Y
 S A A E I C A X P H V E F L O A
 E B Z U U C R L I K Z M T F R V
 L B P T L A H N F I I E E A H O
 S A I E D I I O L A M N S Y U C
 S G L I P P F F K H L P H C B A
 P E S Y G P O L F E A F D A A D
 R H O A B M E T O R S C A R R O
 O Z N M E M K R A W F A L R B J
 U A I V A Q L G E T E N H O L P
 T O O O N Y U H R L O R Z T N E
 S I N T S S L E T T U C E H W A

pea	zucchini	beans	potato
celery	corn	cucumber	radish
onion	brussels sprouts	carrot	cauliflower
pepper	avocado	cabbage	asparagus
broccoli	yam	lettuce	
alfalfa	spinach	parsley	
pumpkin	artichoke	rhubarb	

Farm Update (June 16 & 20, 2009)

Well, it's delayed this year, but it's happening, the annual pea avalanche. This is assuming no vicious heat spells; several days in the mid- to upper nineties can make short work of a pea harvest. No, they don't seem to be minding the rain at all.

Peas are a legume, of course, which means that they have a symbiotic relationship with a certain strain of Rhizobia bacteria which infect their roots, absorb carbohydrates manufactured by the plant, and in "return" fix free-standing nitrogen found in the soil pore spaces into organic compounds (amino acids, proteins), which the plant utilizes when the bacteria die. When plant roots die, these compounds are released into the soil, where they slowly break down once again into simple nitrogenous compounds that plants can absorb out of the soil. So in this way, growing some legumes can provide nitrogen, a vital plant nutrient, to the soil.

We grow two types of peas at Cromwell Valley CSA—snow peas and snap peas. Snow peas will be given out as flat pods, in which the seeds have not yet developed very far. They can be used in salads, stir-fries, and are a vital ingredient in many Asian dishes.

Snap peas are given out as full, or rounded, pods, in which the seeds or peas are full size but still green and tender. They look like "regular" English or shell peas BUT YOU DON'T NEED TO SHELL THEM! Every year people complain about how long it takes to shell them, or how little is left after shelling them, when they could have just eaten them pods and all. They can be used with just about any type of cooking, or just eaten raw.

So, when you show up for your pickup this week, just be sure you mind your peas and queues.

Matt



(Picture courtesy of Flickr user [thebittenword](#).)



(Picture courtesy of Flickr user Darwin Bell.)

In Your Shares

It looks like your shares for the upcoming week will include a bit more variety. You can expect:

- Peas
- Lettuce
- Herbs
- Possibly some greens