

## Journey School Food Community CSA Newsletter

### Week Fifteen; April 28, 2007

When I was growing up in the Columbia Gorge (Lyle, WA), I worked every summer from sixth grade to eleventh grade in the truck gardens. Dallesport WA was home to several gardens owned by Japanese families. Each week, a semi-truck arrived at the packing shed and we loaded box after box of fresh produce to be hauled to Portland for distribution to Pacific NW Fred Meyer's, Safeways, and Albertsons. I don't know how many acres the Toda family gardens encompassed, but I know that we had dozens of fields each as large as our entire growing space here at Plain Old Farm.

I flashed back to the enormity of those fields today while I was harvesting the bunching onions. It doesn't rain much in Lyle – only about 9 inches a year. The image lodged in my muscle memory however is layered in rubber rain gear, mud, and chilly fingers doomed to hold the smell of onions far into the coming school week. I swore I would never be a farmer.

How different it is to grow for twenty two families, each of whom I've come to know and care about. RaeLani and I worked together for 20 minutes or so to selectively harvest the mature onions, leaving the smaller ones for another week. Then I washed and bunched next to Jeff and Zoe who were trimming and rinsing wild-crafted watercress. We talked about what we'd include in our newsletter this week, what may be ready for harvest next week, and what plants are ready to be seeded, transplanted, or turned under. I swear I'll never not be a farmer.

In your share this week is another gift from wild nature. As a renowned cruciferous vegetable, watercress is in company with other medicinally recognized fresh vegetables like broccoli and spinach. For centuries watercress has been recognized as an effective treatment for a wide-range of ailments and medical conditions. Hippocrates located his hospital near a stream to allow for ready access to watercress (he thought it a blood purifier), Greek generals fed it to their troops before battle to enhance stamina, recent medical research is discovering a unique cancer-fighting ability, in the rural areas of America a well-known spring ritual is a tonic of watercress that purifies your system after a long sedentary winter. [www.watercress.com](http://www.watercress.com) has a load of interesting recipes for watercress as well as nutritional information and lore.

### Watercress Soup

2 medium onions, peeled and chopped  
3 Tablespoons butter  
1 ½ quarts chicken or vegetable sauce  
4 red potatoes, cut into quarters  
2 large bunches watercress  
Sea salt and pepper

Saute onions gently in butter until soft. Add stock and potatoes, bring to a boil and skim. Simmer until potatoes are soft, about ½ hour. Add watercress and simmer another 5 minutes, no longer.

Puree soup with a handheld blender or regular blender. Season to taste. Ladle into heated bowls and serve with tasty bread. \*\*\*\*\*Nettle makes a great substitution for the watercress but be sure to cook for 10 minutes rather than 5 after you add the nettle.\*\*\*\*\*

From Nourishing Traditions by Sally Fallon

### Stir fried Watercress with Ginger and Almonds in Miso Dressing

2 tablespoons soy sauce

1 tablespoon miso

1 tablespoon rice vinegar

2 tablespoons sliced almonds, raw

4 – 6 bunches washed, trimmed and cut into 2 – 4 inch pieces

2 tablespoons sesame oil

1 tablespoon fresh ginger, finely chopped

Directions: Combine soy sauce, miso, and vinegar until smooth. Set aside. Heat wok over high heat. Add almonds and stir-fry quickly until fragrant and toasted, about 45 seconds. Remove. Add sesame oil to wok and heat. Add watercress and ginger and stir-fry until tender, about 2-3 minutes. Drizzle with miso dressing and serve immediately from [www.watercress.com](http://www.watercress.com)

### Golden Glazed Greens

Lightly sauté or steam greens such as nettle, chard, or kale. When done to your preference, remove from the pan and while still warm, spoon some Golden Glaze over the top and stir gently. Serve with rice and fresh fish for an awesome meal.

(A peek into late night CSA food prep at the Mathias house)

Lisa, Myself, Zoe, and RaeLani have formed a new rock group based on the plots and themes of Starsky and Hutch the second season. New age funk meets 70's hip cop. All the fun plus the glory in a custom painted Lemans. Yeah that's it and it's all rolled up into a cup of Jam. Triple Gold - Gold Raspberries, Gold Chilis and Golden Honey cooked up to perfection. The fruity sweetness up front is followed by a little golden sunshine to liven up the Pacific Northwest Spring. Take another bite cuz partly cloudy just isn't enough - Go for the Gold – the Triple Gold Chili Jam. OH YEAH!