Happy Hollow Farm News

Week 4 of 25 - June 6, 2011

Happy Hollow Farm
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All parts of the fennel plant *(Foeniculum vulgaris)* – the bulb, foliage (fronds), and seeds – are widely used in many of the culinary traditions of the world.

Dried fennel seeds are an aromatic, anise-flavored spice; often used medicinally to treat indigestion, gas, hypertension, and spasms of the digestive tract. The leaves are delicately flavored and similar in shape to those of dill. The bulb is a crisp, hardy root vegetable that can be sauteed, stewed, braised, grilled, or eaten raw.

Raw and cooked fennel bulbs and fronds feature prominently in Mediterranean cuisine in side dishes, salads, pastas, and vegetable dishes. Many cultures in the Indian subcontinent and the Middle East use fennel seed in their cookery.

Spotlight on Fennel

Salmon with Fennel and Pernod[1]

1 & 1/2 teaspoon (tsp) fennel seeds, crushed

1/4 cup (1/2 stick) butter[2], room temperature

2 tablespoons (tbs) minced shallots

1 large fennel bulb quartered and cut lengthwise into 1/4 inch slices

2 tbs fennel fronds chopped, divided

2 salmon (or trout) fillets (6–7 ounces)

2 tbs Pernod, other anise-flavored liqueur, or dry white wine

Stir fennel seeds in large nonstick skillet over medium heat until fragrant, about 1&1/2 minutes. Transfer seeds to small bowl; cool. Mix in butter, shallots, and 1 tbs fennel fronds; season butter mixture with salt and pepper.

Melt 1 tbs butter mixture in same large nonstick skillet over medium heat. Add sliced fennel bulb and 1/4 cup water to skillet; cover and cook until fennel is crisp-tender, about 8 minutes. Uncover skillet and sauté until fennel begins to brown, about 2 minutes. Transfer fennel to plate.

Sprinkle salmon with salt and pepper. Add 1 tbs butter mixture to same skillet and melt over medium heat. Add salmon; cover and cook 5 minutes. Turn salmon over; add 1/4 cup water to skillet. Cover and continue cooking until salmon is just opaque in center, about 5 minutes longer. Slide salmon to one side of skillet; return fennel to skillet. Add Pernod, 2 tsp butter mixture, and remaining 1 tbs chopped fennel fronds; stir to heat through. Divide fennel mixture between 2 plates. Top with salmon; spoon remaining butter mixture over salmon.

[1] Recipe from Bon Apetit magazine
[2] Could use olive oil for less saturated fat

What's in your share this week

For full, partial, and single shares

- Baby bok choy
- Fennel
- Garlic scapes
- Head lettuce
- Swiss chard
- Tat soi

In addition for full and partial shares

- Arugula
- Dinosaur kale

Remember to return one box when you pick up your share!

Farmer Liz Update

WOW has it been a scorcher the past few days! We certainly weren't prepared for the intense heat and humidity that have hit us hard here on the farm. Luckily, the pond is full and cold, enticing us after a long hot day in the sun. I think I've consumed an average of 3 or 4 gallons of water every day this week. It's amazing that after many inches of rain less than a week ago, we spent most of Saturday afternoon irrigating the fields.

The month of June is most definitely the busiest time of year on this organic farm! Up and outside by 6 a.m. and usually moving towards the house between 7 or 8 p.m. Not only are we still seeding in the greenhouse, transplanting in the fields, weeding, harvesting, irrigating, weeding some more, mowing, weed eating, fixing things that break all on a weekly basis, there are still all the little things that have to be taken care of; AND this is when the pest pressure really starts to show it's force! The cabbage moths are out in the hundreds and I'm already seeing stink bugs (earlier than last year). Luckily, we've got a great crew on the farm this season and will be welcoming two new interns/apprentices to the farm in the next couple of weeks. More on them in the coming weeks. For now, enjoy your veggies this week. Tis' the season to enjoy stir fries!

Cheers, Farmer Liz

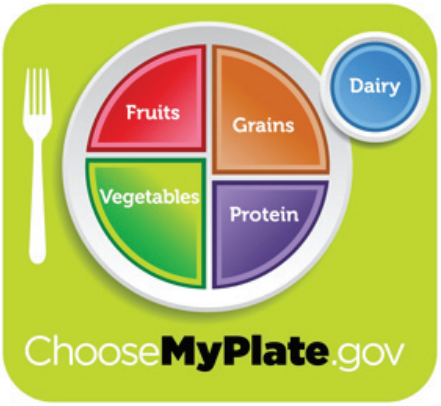
What does the gold-dashed rectangle around words mean?

The rectangle around words (see sidebar) designates a link to a web site. If you pass your cursor over the rectangle, you'll see the url address show up. If you're online while reading the pdf of the newsletter, and click on the rectangle, it will automatically open the web site.

New Food Guide Unveiled

On June 2, First Lady Michelle Obama and Agriculture Secretary Tom Vilsack unveiled a new food plate to replace the food pyramid, which not only departs in shape, but in meal structure. Half the plate consists of fruits and vegetables and "meat and beans" are replaced with the term, "protein," acknowledging there are ways to get protein without eating meat.

The food pyramid has gone through many iterations since 1916 when the first USDA food guide was published. The new version is part of Michelle Obama's Let's Move! campaign, aimed to solve the epidemic of childhood obesity within a generation. Interestingly, the new food plate is similar to the Mediterranean Diet often recommended for maintaining a healthy heart.



"As long as [our plates are] half full of fruits and vegetables, and paired with lean proteins, whole grains and low-fat dairy, we're golden." explained Michelle Obama when she unveiled the new Food Plate.

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LocalHarvest

Happy Hollow Farm is a one of the 20,000 members of LocalHarvest, an informational organic- and local-food web site founded in 1998 by Guillermo Payet, a software engineer and activist dedicated to generating positive social change through the Internet. LocalHarvest is located in Santa Cruz, California, where it maintains a definitive and reliable "living" public, nationwide directory of small farms, farmers markets, and other local food sources. Their search engine helps people find products from family farms, local sources of sustainably-grown food, and encourages them to establish direct contact with small farms in their local area. The site's online store sells products from small farmers seeking to expand sales beyond their local area.

A recent story in the LocalHarvest newsletter by director, Erin Barnett, concerns proposed budget cuts in the food stamp program and food foreign aid to reduce the Federal deficit. According to Barnett, the Pew Research Center recently reported that there is no concensus on how to cut the deficit. She encourages people to get involved in the discussion at the web site of the Center for American Progress, through the story entitled *A Thousand Cuts, What Reducing the Federal Budget Deficit Through Large Spending Cuts Could Really Look Like.*