



NEWS TO GROW ON

**2011
Markets
Opening
Edition**

Vol. IV, No. 2

A seasonal newsletter of the Connecticut Farm Fresh Cooperative Association

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CT Farmers' Markets: What's Old Is New Again, All Across the State

In 1643, Hartford established what may be CT's earliest farmers' market. The "great country store" was held on Meeting House Yard, and was "for all manner of commodities that shall be bought in, and for cattle." 368 years later, a farmers' market still exists there. In the last 20 years, the number of markets has increased more than 500%, providing Connecticut Grown products from more than 400 farmers. In the summer of 2011, Connecticut will be home to 120 certified farmers' markets in 90 different towns and cities statewide.

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This week marked the opening of many farmers' markets around the state. After a hard winter and chilly, wet spring, all the friendly faces, favorite foods, and fresh, fresh produce are a welcome sight indeed!



Inside this 2011 Markets Opening issue:

- Seasonal recipes
- This issue's theme: It's Good to Eat Green
- Websites and blogs of interest
- Virtual visit to the farm
- **Even more good reasons to buy local. . .**

Sesame bok choy

When I find bok choy, especially baby bok choy, at the market, I can't wait to make this dish: its fragrance fills the kitchen, and it couldn't be easier or quicker to make. Sesame oil enhances many things, so it's good to have a bottle on hand.

--Alice Ely

- 1 cup chicken broth (canned is fine)
- 2 T butter
- 3/4 lb bok choy, fleshy stems cut off
- 1/2 teaspoon Asian sesame oil

Bring broth and butter to a simmer in a large, heavy skillet or sauté pan.

Arrange bok choy evenly in skillet and simmer, covered, until tender, about 5 minutes. Transfer bok choy with tongs to a serving dish and keep warm, covered.

Boil broth mixture until reduced to about 1/4 cup, then stir in sesame oil and pepper to taste. Pour mixture over bok choy.

Makes 2-3 servings



This quick and delicious seasonal salad idea comes from Dana Angelo White, registered dietitian, culinary nutritionist, local food junkie, stalker of farmer's markets and all-around great cook. (See Dana's blog at healthyeats.com)

Store-bought chicken salad is far from a healthy option, with some kinds weighing in at more than 550 calories and 40 grams of fat per cup! Instead of the mayo-drenched take-out versions, try this fresh and light recipe – all it takes is 5 simple ingredients. -- Dana Angelo White

Green Herb Chicken Salad

Yield: 6 servings

Ingredients:

- 4 large split chicken breast, bone-in, skin on (about 2 1/2 pounds)
- 2 tablespoons mayonnaise
- 2 tablespoons plain nonfat Greek yogurt
- 3/4 cup chopped celery
- 1/2 cup chopped desired green herb (Recommendations: basil, tarragon, flat-leaf parsley)

Additional ingredients: olive oil, kosher salt and freshly ground black pepper

Split Chicken Breasts: Leaving the bone in and skin on helps keep the low fat chicken breasts super moist and juicy. Instead of poaching in liquid, roast the chicken to concentrate the flavors (see directions below).

Mayonnaise and Greek Yogurt: You can't have chicken salad without a little bit of mayonnaise. Mixing it with creamy and flavorful Greek yogurt cuts down on fat but preserves all the creamy goodness.

Celery: Adding fresh veggies will add color, crunch and volume to the mixture. Diced bell pepper, thinly sliced carrot or even diced apple also work well.

Green Herb: Fresh herbs add the final touches of color and flavor to this recipe. Choose whatever herbs you have on hand. Tarragon has a stronger flavor with hint of anise that goes surprisingly well with chicken, while basil is sweeter and more subtle. For a totally different flavor, experiment with dried spices like in these [Curry Chicken Lettuce Cups](#).



Above: Photo courtesy of foodnetwork.com

Directions:

Preheat oven to 375 degrees F. Place chicken breasts on a sheet pan lined with aluminum foil. Drizzle each piece with a 1/2 teaspoon of olive oil, and season well with salt and pepper. Bake for 35 to 40 minutes (or until the internal temperature reads 160 degrees F on a meat thermometer). Remove from oven and set aside to cool. Once the chicken is cool enough to handle, discard the skin and remove breast meat from the bone; chop or shred into bite-sized pieces. Transfer chicken to large bowl and add the remaining ingredients and season with 1/4 teaspoon each of kosher salt and black pepper; mix well. Serve immediately or store in the refrigerator to chill slightly.

Nutrition Info Per Serving (3/4 cup of chicken salad)

- Calories: 227
- Total Fat: 8 grams
- Saturated Fat: 2 grams
- Total Carbohydrate: 1 gram
- Protein: 38 grams
- Sodium: 225 milligrams
- Cholesterol: 100 milligrams
- Fiber: 0 grams



Spring Greens and Bulgur Soup, Italian Style

SERVES 6-8



Got greens?? Here's a truly flavorful and easy soup to make – works with virtually any kind of green you have. Approved by my veggie-phobic spouse, no less!

- 5 tbsp. extra-virgin olive oil**
- 8 cloves garlic, chopped**
- 6 leeks, white and light green parts only, halved lengthwise, rinsed and thinly sliced**
- 6 stalks celery, peeled and chopped**
- 1 tbsp. finely chopped fresh rosemary**
- 1 tbsp. chopped fresh sage**
- 1/4 tsp. red pepper flakes**
- 8 cups chicken broth, plus water as needed**
- 1 1/2 cups bulgur wheat**
- Salt and freshly ground black pepper, to taste**
- 1/2 lb. spring greens (radish, beet, chard, turnip, spinach, mustard, escarole) leaves only, roughly chopped (strip and discard long stems)**
- 6 tbsp. grated parmesan**
- 1 lemon, sliced into wedges**

1. Heat 5 tbsp. oil in a 6-qt. pot over medium heat. Add garlic, onions, and celery and cook, stirring occasionally, until soft, about 10 minutes.
2. Add rosemary, sage, and pepper flakes and cook, stirring frequently, until fragrant, about 1 minute. Add broth, bulgur, and 2 cups water. Season with salt and pepper. Bring to a boil over high heat; reduce heat to medium-low and simmer until bulgur is soft, 20–25 minutes.
3. Add greens and cook, stirring occasionally, until wilted, about 5-10 minutes; add water /stock as needed, depending on how much broth you like. Serve soup, drizzling each bowl with good olive oil, a generous sprinkle of parmesan and a squeeze of lemon to taste.



Smith's Acres, Niantic CT

If you ask Joe Smith how long he and his wife, Teri, have been farming in CT, he'll probably laugh and say, "Too long!" In fact, they've been running their 35-acre family farm in East Lyme since 1978. Their continuing success is a testament to their commitment to what they do, and their versatility and flexibility, in finding ways to keep CT residents supplied with a cornucopia of produce (and flowers, too) from April through November. The Smiths operate a retail store in Niantic, as well as participating in many farmers' markets from Greenwich to West Hartford. Thanks to their new 30,000-square-foot greenhouse, they are able to start tomatoes in early February – enabling their market customers to taste some CT grown tomatoes as early as the beginning of June – the picture above shows some healthy specimens



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Guadalupe Lopez, a familiar face at the Smith's Acres stand, helps a customer at the Westport Sunday market.

in the greenhouse. Using row covers is another way Smith's gets a jump on spring, with hardy crops such as kale and collards, and spinach, which will keep growing even under the snow. During market season, Joe and his team make it a point of pride to have fresh picked produce every day – even when that means they are out picking by headlights at 4 a.m. The variety of produce Smith's Acres grows is impressive: from fruit trees to raspberries, strawberries and blueberries, and just about any vegetable you can grow in CT. Plus, a few you might think you couldn't: I was astonished to see artichokes at the Smith's Acres' stand last summer, something this locavore didn't think could be grown anywhere but California! They weren't enormous globes, but they sure were tasty. Nowadays, Joe and Teri are joined in their farm enterprise by daughter, Kirsten, and all three regularly attend seminars and conferences to stay up-to-date on developments in the plant world. To see more about Smith's Acres, visit their website at smithacres.com, where you can sign up for their emails and newsletter, *Farmer's Joes' Dirt*.

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Websites worth a look for passionate locavores

<http://www.slowmovement.com/>

On the slow food movement and community agriculture

<http://www.care2.com>

Site for green living, community involvement

http://chge.med.harvard.edu/programs/food/food_guides.html

Online guide and detailed profiles of more than 40 fruits and vegetables

<http://www.localharvest.org/>

Find farmers' markets, family farms, and other sources of sustainably grown food in your local area

www.buyctgrown.com

find farms, CSA's, restaurants, nurseries, pick your own orchards, catering companies and much more in the Nutmeg State

www.Ctfarmfresh.org

The official site for the CT Farm Fresh Cooperative Association, with lots of farmer's market news including back issues of this newsletter

www.ct.gov/DOAG

The CT Dept. of Agriculture maintains a comprehensive list of farmers' markets in the state

Submissions welcome:

We'd like to include photos taken by our farmer's market visitors next issue. Please email your pictures to the editor, aliceely@optonline.net, and include your name, phone number and the name of the market where you took the picture. We'll publish our favorites, with your name if you like, in an upcoming issue.



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