

# The Worm's Voice

Red Wiggler's CSA Newsletter

Summer 2021 Week 9  
September 1 & 4

## IN THE SHARE:

“ / ” Indicates Choice

- Lots
- Of
- Choices!!
- And
- Cherry Tomatoes...



## PICK-YOUR-OWN

Blue flag indicates ready to pick.

RED: Mint, Oregano, Chives, Cilantro, Peppermint, Spearmint, Dill, Dill Seed Russian Sage, Lavender

ORANGE: Fennel, Gomphrena, Statice, Basil, Ground Cherries, Marigolds

PINK: Zinnias, Parsley, Marigolds, Salvia, Ageratum, Lemon Basil, Thai Basil, Dill, Cilantro, Sunflowers, Tithonia

YELLOW: Sage, Winter Savory, Lemon Balm,

Ask a Red Wiggler staff for help finding these in the PYO.

**REMINDER: This is the last CSA of the Summer Session. There will be no CSA next week. For members of the Fall Session, the first CSA pick up will be on Wednesday, September 15<sup>th</sup> and Saturday, September 18<sup>th</sup>.**

**This will also be Darlene's last week at CSA. We wish her the best success as she heads back to school to continue her schooling in environmental stewardship and education. But we have a feeling we'll be seeing her back here now and then, in the future. So, be sure to say "see you later!"**

## FARM NOTES

Let's talk cover crops! Even though we (usually) don't eat them, cover crops are an essential addition to any organic farm. A cover crop is any crop that is used for reasons other than harvest for sale. For example, planting buckwheat in a plot of land you just pulled all your carrots out of. They are used primarily to slow erosion, improve soil health, enhance water availability, smother weeds, control pests and diseases, increase biodiversity. Though farmers (usually) don't make money directly on cover crops, they "reap" the benefits of improved fertility in future seasons; and those benefits compound year after year as the farmer continues to plant them.

Here are a couple of the cover crops that are thriving on the farm right now

**Sorghum-Sudangrass:** this hybrid cover crop is unrivaled for adding organic matter to worn-out soils. These tall, fast-growing, heat-loving summer annual grasses can smother weeds, suppress some nematode species and penetrate compacted subsoil. Sorghum-Sudangrass hybrids can produce more organic matter per acre than any major cover crop grown in the U.S. All these reasons make it a go to cover crop here at Red Wiggler!

**Sunn Hemp:** Originally from India, sunn hemp possesses many soil-building traits, including high rates of nitrogen production. It also helps suppress nematodes, tiny pests in the soil that can damage plants. Sunn hemp thrives in hot, dry summers and will continue to grow well until first frost. The mature plants produce small, bright yellow flowers, which is why you'll find it in our PYO garden!



### Classic Minestrone Soup **Veg, DF, GF**

As the weather starts to cool, I start to think about soup! Minestrone soup is a classic way to use the summer bounty as fall sets in. Make and enjoy on one of the cool, rainy days coming up. Or freeze it to enjoy those summer veggies in the cold of winter! Serves 6; takes about an hour to make.

--Adapted from [cookieandkate.com](http://cookieandkate.com)

- 4 tablespoons extra-virgin olive oil, divided
- 1 medium yellow onion, chopped
- **4-6 small carrots, peeled and chopped**
- 2 medium ribs celery, chopped
- 1/4 cup tomato paste
- **2 cups chopped seasonal vegetables (anything in the share will work!)**
- **4 cloves garlic, pressed or minced**
- 1 teaspoon fresh oregano, minced (or 1/2 tsp dried)
- 1 teaspoon fresh thyme, minced (or 1/2 tsp dried)
- 1 large can (28 ounces) diced tomatoes, with their liquid
- 4 cups (32 ounces) vegetable or chicken broth
- 2 cups water
- 1 teaspoon fine sea salt
- 2 bay leaves
- Pinch of red pepper flakes
- Freshly ground black pepper
- 1 cup whole grain orecchiette, elbow or small shell pasta (GF pasta if preferred)
- 1 can (15 ounces) Great Northern beans or cannellini beans, rinsed and drained
- 2 cups baby spinach, chopped kale or chopped collard greens (optional)
- 2 teaspoons lemon juice
- Freshly grated Parmesan cheese, for garnishing (optional)

1. Warm 3 tablespoons of the olive oil in a large Dutch oven or stockpot over medium heat. Once the oil is shimmering, add the chopped onion, carrot, celery, tomato paste and a pinch of salt. Cook, stirring often, until the vegetables have softened and the onions are turning translucent, about 7 to 10 minutes.
2. Add the seasonal vegetables, garlic, oregano and thyme. Cook until fragrant while stirring frequently, about 2 minutes.
3. Pour in the diced tomatoes and their juices, broth and water. Add the salt, bay leaves and red pepper flakes. Season generously with freshly ground black pepper.
4. Raise heat to medium-high and bring the mixture to a boil, then partially cover the pot with the lid, leaving about a 1" gap for steam to escape. Reduce heat as necessary to maintain a simmer.
5. Cook for 15 minutes, then remove the lid and add the pasta, beans and greens. Continue simmering, uncovered, for 20 minutes or until the pasta is cooked al dente and the greens are tender.
6. Remove the pot from the heat, then remove the bay leaves. Stir in the lemon juice and remaining tablespoon of olive oil. Taste and season with more salt and pepper. Garnish bowls of soup with grated Parmesan.

