

The Worm's Voice

Red Wiggler's CSA Newsletter

Summer 2022 Week 1
July 6 & 9

IN THE SHARE

“/” indicates a choice

- Potatoes
- Summer Squash
- Garlic Scapes/Onions
- Lettuce
- Turnips/Kohlrabi
- And more!

PICK-YOUR-OWN

Look for the **BLUE** flags on items ready to pick!

RED

Bee Balm, Oregano, Chives, Parsley, Lavender, Peppermint, Shiso, Marigolds

GREEN

Chamomile
Cilantro/Coriander
Dill Flowers/Seeds

ORANGE

Lamb's Ear, Fennel, Chamomile, Nigella Seeds, Basil, Dill, Cilantro

PINK

Bachelor Buttons

BROWN

Phacelia
Poppies
Borage

YELLOW

Lemon Balm
Yarrow
Sage
Bee Balm

NEED HELP?

Ask a Red Wiggler staff for help finding these in the PYO, ideas on how to use them, or anything else!



Welcome to Red Wiggler's Summer CSA session! Whether you are continuing from Spring, this is your first pick-up of the year, or your first pick-up ever, we are excited to see you! Here are some things to remember about your pick-ups.

- Wednesday pick-ups are from 2-5pm; Saturdays from 9am-12pm
- Bring a bag, box or basket for your share
- Leave the pets at home
- Drive carefully when entering/exiting the parking area
- Wash/sanitize your hands upon arrival
- Be mindful of maintaining 6' physical distance
- Remember to check-in
- Visit the PYO (before or after getting veggies)
- Enjoy the farm!

FARM NEWS

One of my professional goals this season is to learn more about our food relief partners. So during my week off from CSA, I visited one of our main distribution partners, [So What Else](#), where Megan Joe, Director of Operations, showed me around. Before March 2020, SWE was an organization that ran [after-school programs](#) for at-risk youth. But when the county locked down, SWE mobilized—almost overnight—to provide food to kids (and their families) who were no longer able to get school meals. True to their motto, “so what else can we do to help?,” SWE’s student food packs quickly turned into a full-fledged food pantry, diaper distribution program, home delivery service, and second-hand warehouse filled with clothes, books, household goods, and more. In



MEGAN AND ME AT SWE'S WALK-UP FOOD

the height of the pandemic, SWE was distributing food to 1000 people a day (4-5 days a week), delivering food to 600 homes per week, and distributing over 100,000 [diapers](#) per month! Sadly, with inflation and other struggles, these numbers haven't receded very much, and are, in fact, starting to rise again. The need is still great, and SWE, Megan says, is in it for the long haul: the food distribution program is now a permanent part of SWE.

On the day of my visit, the mood at the food pantry was cheerful, even festive. [Volunteers](#) bustled around, emptying crates and filling tables with a variety of canned, boxed and fresh food. Clients are gently encouraged to make a small donation to SWE (even if it's only a quarter or a dollar), and when they did, a volunteer would yell out, "donation," and everyone would cheer. When a van full of hydroponic lettuce pulled up, volunteers and staff quickly formed a human "distribution chain," to quickly get the cases from the van to the distribution area, smiling and laughing all the while.



VOLUNTEERS AND CLIENTS AT THE FOOD PANTRY



THE BEST KIND OF "DISTRIBUTION CHAIN"

Though the need is great, and the pressures are high, Megan and the rest of the SWE staff are full of energy. They are 110% dedicated to helping their community, and truly seem to love the work that they do. Sure, Megan worries what will happen when the pandemic grant money dries up, or when the vacant mall space they're renting is sold to a developer. But she has faith that those things will all work out eventually. For now, she and her crew are out there making deliveries, picking up donations, running the food pantry, and figuring out what else they can do to help!

PYO HIGHLIGHT: SHISO

Shiso, a first for us, is an aromatic herb from the mint family. It's most commonly associated with Japanese food, but is popular all over Asia. You know that little fringe of bright green plastic in your grocery store sushi container? That's supposed to replicate the saw-tooth leaves of shiso! Shiso has been used for centuries in Japanese cuisine to separate foods and prevent their flavors from mixing. They have also traditionally wrapped food in shiso leaves to slow spoilage, thanks to compounds called phytoncides.

But it's not just a garnish! Shiso (also called perilla) is beloved in many Asian cuisines for its unique flavor—a mash-up of citrus, cinnamon, clove, mint, and even cumin! Shiso is used as an ingredient in sushi because it pairs well with fatty fish like tuna and salmon. It is added to salads for its bright, citrus-like astringency. It is even used in drinks and desserts, or just cooked as a side dish in its own right.

Red shiso, which is the one we grew this year, is stunning to look at, with its deep green and red leaves. It's used to make a traditional sweet juice that is served in the summer.

It's also the traditional coloring agent for well-known Japanese ingredients like pickled ginger and umeboshi plums. Red shiso is dried and mixed with salt to create a seasoning called *yukari*, and is a common ingredient in *furikake* seasoning blends.



I hope you're as excited as I am to try this new herb! See below for some ideas on how to use it!

Recipes

VEG- Vegetarian DF- Dairy Free GF- Gluten Free

Shiso Juice **VEG, DF, GF**

Shiso juice is a traditional summer beverage in Japan. This recipe is for a kind of simple syrup that can be mixed with sparkling water or made into a cocktail. Its brilliant red color and fruity, minty flavor makes for a fun and refreshing summer beverage to help you beat the heat!

INGREDIENTS

- 2 oz **shiso leaves**
- 2 cups water
- ½ to ¾ cup sugar
- ¼ to ½ cup apple cider vinegar

DIRECTIONS

1. Rinse the shiso leaves and bring the water to a boil in a medium saucepan.
2. When boiling, submerge the shiso leaves in the water and cook for 5-7 minutes.
3. Strain and press the shiso leaves from the liquid.
4. Over medium heat, add the sugar and vinegar to the liquid. Stir until dissolved. Add more or less sugar and vinegar according to your tastes. The juice will keep longer in the fridge with more sugar/vinegar.
5. Cook to desired thickness, then turn off heat and let cool. Store syrup in the fridge in a sterilized jar for 3-6 months, depending on how much sugar/vinegar you added.
6. To make the shiso juice drink, mix the shiso syrup and sparkling water in a 1:1 or 1:2 ratio and serve over ice. Garnish with lemon or lime wedge and mint leaves.



Shiso Leaf Kim Chi **VEG, DF, GF (with substitution)**

I can't wait to try this one! This Korean condiment comes to us from Maddy's (one of our hard-working crew leaders) mom. Maddy says they always grow shiso (called *kaenip* in Korea) in their home garden, and eat it often in summer.

INGREDIENTS

- **Kaenip (shiso) leaves**—up to 30
- 3 tbsp chopped **green onion**
- 1 tsp minced garlic
- 5 tbsp soy sauce (tamari if GF)
- 2 tbsp red pepper powder
- 1 tbsp sugar
- 2 tsp toasted sesame seeds

DIRECTIONS

1. Wash and pat dry shiso leaves. Set aside.
2. Mix the remaining ingredients together to form a paste
3. Lightly spread the mixture on the first shiso leaf. Set into a jar or other airtight container.
4. Repeat with remaining leaves. Spread mixture onto leaf and layer until all leaves are stacked.
5. Seal jar/container and leave in fridge for at least 3 days.
6. Serve with rice, eggs, vegetables or meat.

