

The Worm's Voice

Red Wiggler's CSA Newsletter

Summer 2022 Week 3
July 20 & 23

IN THE SHARE

“/” indicates a choice

- Potatoes/Carrots/Beets
- Summer Squash
- Cukes
- Garlic/Fennel
- Peppers/Eggplant
- 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, Tarragon

GREEN

Cilantro/Coriander
Dill Flowers/Seeds

ORANGE

Lamb's Ear, Nigella Flowers/Seeds, Basil, Dill, Cilantro, Zinnias

PINK

Bachelor Buttons
Mini Zinnias

BROWN

Poppy Seeds
Borage

YELLOW

Lemon Balm
Yarrow
Sage

NEED HELP?

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



FARM NEWS

Like most people, I learned the basics of photosynthesis in elementary school: CO₂, water, sunlight in; oxygen, water and sugar out. Then in junior high and



high school, I got more of the details: stoma, chloroplasts, chlorophyll, and the like. Then I took a plant biology class in college, where I learned even more: ATP, NADPH and the Calvin Cycle. But whatever I've learned about photosynthesis over the years, I usually leave in the classroom, and only give it an occasional passing thought; perhaps when I notice light filtering through leaves on a sunny day, or sunflowers turning their blooms to face the sun. I think, "photosynthesis, wow," and then move on.

On our weekly Field Walk, as I looked at a row of squash plants, each with several

squash that had each grown several INCHES over the weekend, I thought, "photosynthesis, wow." But this time, I didn't move on. I've been thinking about it almost constantly since. This morning, I

[brushed up on the process](#) (it's been a long time since biology class!), and now I'm sitting here, awestruck, thinking about how photosynthesis weaves into my day. Breathe in, "photosynthesis, wow." Eat (literally anything), "photosynthesis, wow." Drink water, "photosynthesis, wow." Read a book, "photosynthesis, wow." You get the idea...

I encourage you this week, when you're at the farm, in your yard, eating a meal, or simply breathing in and out, to take a moment and think about the [haphazard yet miraculous process of photosynthesis](#). And how lucky we all are to have found ourselves

on a planet, the perfect distance from a not-too-hot, not-too-big star, filled with plants that make breathable air and nutritious food. Photosynthesis, wow...



Recipes

VEG- Vegetarian DF- Dairy Free GF- Gluten Free

Potato-Fennel Gratin **VEG, GF**

We've got a culinary treat in the share this week: fennel bulbs! Some people love them raw, with their celery-like crunch and licorice flavor. But even if the words "celery" and "licorice" make you want to run away, don't discount this unusual vegetable. Try this gratin, where the sauteed fennel softens both its texture and its flavor, mingling beautifully with the starchy potatoes and creamy filling.

INGREDIENTS

- 1 medium **fennel bulb**
- ½ yellow onion, thinly sliced
- 1 tbsp olive oil
- ½ tbsp butter
- 1 pound **potatoes**
- 1 ½ cups heavy cream
- 1 ¼ cups Gruyère cheese (¼ lb)
- Salt and pepper to taste



DIRECTIONS

1. Preheat the oven to 350°. Butter a 9x9 oven-safe dish.
2. Remove the stalks from the fennel and cut the bulbs in half lengthwise. Remove the cores and thinly slice the bulbs crosswise, making approximately 2 cups of sliced fennel. Sauté the fennel and onions in the olive oil and butter on medium-low heat for 10 to 15 minutes, until tender.
3. Peel the potatoes, then thinly slice them by hand or with a mandolin. Mix the potatoes in a large bowl with the cream (reserve 1-2 tbsp for later), 1 cup of the Gruyère, ½ teaspoon salt, and ¼ teaspoon pepper. Add the sautéed fennel and onion and mix well.
4. Pour the potatoes into the baking dish. Press down to smooth the potatoes. Combine the remaining cream and ½ cup of Gruyère and sprinkle on the top. Bake for 1 hour, until the potatoes are very tender and the top is browned and bubbly. Allow to set for 10 minutes and serve hot.

Simple Cucumber Salad **VEG, GF, DF**

I am sucker for this simple cucumber salad. It is so easy to make, and is such a versatile summer dish. It also keeps really well, and only gets better with age. Serve the potato-fennel gratin and the cucumber salad at the same meal! The bright acidity of the salad is the perfect foil for the creamy, rich gratin.

INGREDIENTS

- 1 lb **cucumbers**, thinly sliced crosswise
- 1 ½ tsp sugar
- 2 ½ tbsp red wine vinegar
- ½ small onion, thinly sliced
- Salt and pepper to taste



DIRECTIONS

1. In a medium bowl, toss the cucumber slices with the sugar and salt and let stand for 5 minutes.
2. Stir in the vinegar and onion and refrigerate for at least 10 minutes before serving.
3. Can be made a day ahead and stored in the refrigerator.
4. Sprinkle with chopped fresh **dill** or **mint** just before serving, if desired.