

The Worm's Voice

Red Wiggler's CSA Newsletter

Spring 2024 Week 3
May 29 & June 1

IN THE SHARE

“ / ” indicates a choice

- Greens Choices
- Spring Onions
- Garlic Scapes
- Pea Shoots

PICK-YOUR-OWN

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

RED

Lovage
Oregano
Chives
Tarragon
German Thyme
Peppermint

GREEN

Cilantro
Dill

ORANGE

Fennel
Lamb's Ear
Sorrel
French Thyme

PINK

Arugula (limited time, get it this week!)

BROWN

Verbena

YELLOW

Sage & Sage Flowers
Lemon Balm
Yarrow

NEED HELP?

Just ask any RWCF staff or volunteer. We're here for you!



FARM NEWS

If you grow garlic at home, or have been in the CSA a long time, you might see garlic scapes this week and think it seems a bit early. Well, it is—yet another sign of a confusing and challenging spring. Scapes have only come this early one other time since our detailed records began in 2012. Usually, we're not harvesting them for another week or two. But ready or not, we have scapes! For those of you who aren't familiar with garlic scapes, here's a quick lesson:

The main goal of a garlic plant—from the plant's perspective, anyway—is to reproduce itself. It wants to make a flower, get pollinated, and make seeds. So, when the flower stalk and bud starts to grow, the plant puts lots of energy into making that happen, and less energy into growing the underground bulb.

As is often the case, our human goals are at odds with nature. We don't care about the flower because we can't eat it. Instead, we want the bulb to get as big and tasty as possible. So, how do we do that?

Lucky for us, nature is smart and gave garlic a back up plan. No flower? No problem. The garlic now puts its energy into the bulb, knowing it can grow shoots and reproduce from there. Also lucky for us, humans are smart too! We figured out we can remove the stalk and bud on purpose, send the plant's energy to the bulb, then get bigger, tastier bulbs at harvest time.



The best part about this whole system? Garlic scapes are delicious! They've got a mild garlicky flavor and can be used as an herb/seasoning, like in pesto, or like a vegetable, in a stir-fry or side dish. They're also super cool looking, so if you don't want to eat them, put them in your spring bouquet for a distinct look. The easiest thing to do with scapes is make pesto, like the recipe below. See the [Recipe Index](#) for more ideas—scape recipes are on both the [Garlic](#) and the [Herbs](#) pages. I think I'm going to try the [Butter Lemon Scape Sprinkle](#) from last year!

Recipes

VEG- Vegetarian DF- Dairy Free GF- Gluten Free

Kale and Garlic Scape Pesto **VEG, GF, DF (with modifications)**

Garlic scapes make great pesto, and pesto makes an easy spring dish. Toss it with pasta, spread it on pizza, thin it with oil and vinegar for a salad dressing... Since pesto is one of the only green things my younger son will eat, throwing some kale (or collards) in the mix is a great way to sneak him some veggies. Whether you love greens or not, this pesto is a tasty way to “get your greens” this week!

INGREDIENTS

- 1 cup chopped kale, with stems removed
- 1 bunch garlic scapes, coarsely chopped
- 1 ½ cups toasted walnuts
- Juice of 1 lemon
- ½ teaspoon sea salt, or to taste
- 2 tablespoons nutritional yeast or parmesan cheese
- ¼ cup extra-virgin olive oil



DIRECTIONS

1. Bring a pot of lightly salted water to a boil. Stir in the chopped kale and cook for approximately 4 minutes, or until the kale has softened and turned bright green.
2. Immediately transfer the kale to a colander and thoroughly rinse it with cold water, then let drain. Dry the blanched kale thoroughly, using towels or a salad spinner.
3. Add the garlic scapes to a food processor, and pulse until finely chopped. Add the walnuts and continue to pulse until no large pieces of walnuts remain (do not blend completely).
4. Add the lemon juice, blanched kale, nutritional yeast or parmesan, and sea salt, and continue to pulse until the kale is finely chopped. Slowly stream the olive oil into the mixture while blending, stopping to scrape down the sides and gently stir the mixture as needed.
5. Adjust seasoning to taste. Leftover pesto will keep in the refrigerator for up to a week, and also freezes well.

Fun With Pea Shoots

Though the peas failed this year, the pea shoots have been amazing! They are tender and sweet and versatile. If you're not familiar with pea shoots, here are some ideas:

- Coarsely chop and sprinkle on everything. Eggs, soups, green salads, tacos, potato/egg salads...
- Flash sauté with a bit of butter and garlic for a quick side dish or topping for fish or chicken
- Make [pea pesto](#), or anything else from this great [blog post](#) all about pea shoots



*Snap &
Snow Peas*

Our sugar snap and snow peas failed this year. We tried both direct seeding and transplanting, and neither did well with the weird mix of wet and dry weather. Usually a fairly reliable crop, we count on peas for a fun and tasty addition to the Spring PYO. We're sorry not to enjoy these sweet spring treats this season, but there are lots of herbs to pick, and many flowers are coming on steadily!