

# Happy Hollow Farm CSA

Week of October 25<sup>th</sup>, 2010

Week 22 CSA Distribution

## Veggie of the Week

### **Fennel**

This may be a new vegetable to many of you. So, let me introduce you to one of my favorite all time veggies!

Florence fennel, *Foeniculum vulgare dulce*, and the Roman word for “fragrant hay” has been cultivated by the Egyptians, Greeks, Europeans and Asians for the last thousand plus years. Although, relatively new to the U.S. the culinary uses for bulb fennel as well as the seed are many. In the Middle Ages chewing the seeds was a favorite way to stop gastric rumbles during church sermons. In 17<sup>th</sup> century Italy, fennel was often served at the end of the meal, sprinkled with salt.

The Greeks referred to fennel as “marathon” (surprisingly enough this is the name of the variety I grew this year) after the celebrated battle of Marathon in 490 BC was fought on a field of fennel. Socrates recommended a stalk of fennel and a glass of water as the lone cure for a night of overindulgence.

The sweet anise, or licorice, flavor of fennel make it a rare treat for cooking with. Both the bulb and tops can be used either raw (the tops added to salads) and the bulb cooked or also eaten raw. I hope you will try the easy and delicious recipe this week. Although, there are many ways to prepare fennel and if you have a favorite recipe I'd be happy to post it on the website!

## Farm Happenings

Lots of small projects happening this week. Still feeding the bees a 2:1 sugar to water ratio. They go thru about a quart a day so I have to refill their container every other day. With the unseasonably warm weather we've been having they are staying much more active than they normally are this time of year.

Katie, a friend Bill, and I built another packing bench and storage shelf this past weekend for the barn. This will allow for easier packing of the shares and more organization of “stuff” in the barn.

The high tunnel is now completely planted and ready for the Winter CSA season. I'm hoping that the radishes will be ready for the last week of our regular season and possibly one or two of the other crops. There is still plenty of time to join the Winter CSA so if you are interested please sign up on the website.

All of the cover crop seed is in the various fields; now all we need is a little rain and they will pop up in no time. Cover cropping is the primary source of nutrients (i.e. fertilizer and soil revitalization) that I use here on the farm. Certain crops like field peas and hairy vetch fix Nitrogen. Other crops like winter rye produce lots of plant growth that when tilled back into the soil adds other important nutrients and helps improve the soil structure (which is important especially during wet years).

## **Happy Hollow Farm's Weekly Newsletter...**

HHF said goodbye to a couple of very special people this week. Cat & Bryon were integral in the high tunnel project and a real joy to have on the farm over the past month and a half. They're off to new adventures in D.C. and we wish them well!!

Vegetable	Refrige rate?	Store in Plastic Bag To Retain Moisture?	Approx. Storage Life	Comments
Arugula	Yes	Plastic bag	1 wk	Saturday Pick up group
Broccoli	Yes	Plastic bag	1 wk	
Chinese Cabbage	Yes	Plastic bag	1 wk	Full shares
Eggplant	Yes	Crisper	1 wk	Full shares
Fennel	Yes	Plastic bag or crisper	1-2 wks	Check out this week's recipe!
Garlic	No	Counter	1-2 wks	
Kale	Yes	Yes	1 wk	Red Russian or Dinosaur
Peppers	Yes	Crisper	1 wk	A mix of sweet & hot varieties
Scallions	Yes	Crisper	1 wk	
Swiss Chard	Yes	Plastic bag	1 wk	
Tat Soi	Yes	Plastic bag or crisper	1 wk	

## Recipe Corner

Just the beginning of some of our favorite recipes are available on the Recipes Page of the [www.happyhollowfarm-mo.com](http://www.happyhollowfarm-mo.com) website. More recipes will be added each week!

### **Pan-Roasted Fennel**

( from The Whole Foods Market Cookbook)

- 1 large fennel bulb, root end trimmed and top fronds removed (save the lacey green fronds for a great addition to salads and for garnish on this dish)
- 3 talbespoons olive oil
- Salt and freshly ground pepper to taste
- 1 lemon, cut in half

Preheat the oven to 375 degrees.

Stand the fennel bulb in a vertical position on a cutting board and cut it into ½ inch-thick slices. The root end will hold the fennel slices together. Sprinkle the fennel with the olive oil, and arrange the slices in a single layer on a baking pan. Try not to overlap the slices, so they can brown evenly. Sprinkle the fennel generously with the salt and pepper. Roast the fennel for 15 to 20 minutes, and then turn carefully to brown the other side. When softened and well browned, remove the slices from the oven, and squeeze the lemon halves over the fennel, drizzling it with juice. Garnish with reserved fennel fronds. Try topping the fennel with freshly grated Parmesan cheese during the last 5 minutes of cooking. It also makes a wonderful addition to salad especially with crumbled feta cheese.