



# Cal Poly Organic Farm

## Community Supported Agriculture Newsletter

[www.calpolyorgfarm.com](http://www.calpolyorgfarm.com), we grow the future!

### CPOF ANNOUNCEMENTS

Spread the veggie word. We need 30 more members to make our budget. If you sign up a new member, you will receive a free organic cotton CPOF tote.

- \* Come here one of our CSA members speak. History Prof Christina Firpo presents *'Abandoned' Children: Race, Empire and Miscegenation in Colonial Vietnam 1890-1956* on Thursday April 16<sup>th</sup>, 11am-12, Bldg 26, Rm 104, Cal Poly.
- \* Cal Poly's 16<sup>th</sup> Annual **Open House**—"Design Your Future" is April 16<sup>th</sup>, 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup>. **On Sat, the 18<sup>th</sup> your farm will host tours** on the hour from 11-2 pm. Please come out and enjoy the day. <http://studentlife.calpoly.edu/ori/openhouse>
- \* **Cal Poly Respect Campaign.** The campaign will run from 10-2 pm each day, **April 13<sup>th</sup>-16<sup>th</sup>**. There will be four locations on campus (Dexter lawn, UU Plaza, Campus Market, and parking lot H4) where **individuals can sign the pledge banner and receive the wristband**. The banner will be hung in the UU Plaza on Thursday and it will be up during Open House activities.
- \* SLO Botanical Garden – **April 11<sup>th</sup>: Botany for Gardeners** at 1 pm and Plant Pollination at 2 pm. Oak Glen Pavilion, \$5 (\$3 members). [www.slobg.org](http://www.slobg.org).
- \* **Annual Earth Day Event** at Mission Plaza, SLO. April 18<sup>th</sup>, 11am-5pm. Green-oriented businesses, service providers, food and beverage vendors, government agencies, health practitioners, teachers, students, artisans, musicians, and volunteers come together to raise awareness and offer tips for leaving a lighter footprint on the planet at this Green Living Expo. Sponsorship details, a vendor application, or volunteer opportunities: 544-8529.
- \* April 26<sup>th</sup>, **Gardens by the Sea**, The Morro Bay Branch of AAUW presents their 23rd annual garden tour. A self-guided tour allows you to visit 8 unique residential gardens located in Cayucos, Morro Bay & Los Osos. \$10. Proceeds benefit local educational & community projects. Tickets available at all Miner's locations, Volumes of Pleasure (LO), Coalesce (MB) & Pacific Coast Garden & Home (SLO) & AAUW members.
- \* Children's Day in the Plaza, Saturday **April 11th**, 10am-3pm, San Luis Obispo Mission Plaza. "Learn to Play-Play to Learn". Children's Day in the Plaza is a day designed to bring education, fun, and families together in the community.
- \* Fri., April 24<sup>th</sup>. 6:30-9 pm. Smiling dog Café, SLO. \$15. Two of the world's foremost authorities on raw foods, Matt Monarch and Angela Stokes, will be speaking and answering questions. There will be great raw food available through the restaurant as well as books and information on raw foods and healthy living.
- \* Recycled Treasures Show, Garden Art and Vintage Sidecar Show comes to downtown Paso Robles on April 25 from 9am-3pm in the downtown city park. Free. Info: 238-4103 or [pasoroblesdowntown.org](http://pasoroblesdowntown.org).

April 13 – April 19, 2009

**Welcome to Week 3!**

**Full Shares expect 10-12 items**

**Small Shares expect 8-10 items from the following list:**

**All Shares will receive:**

Golden Beets  
Carrots  
Fennel  
Lettuce (head or leaf)  
Kohlrabi  
Red Turnips  
Spinach  
Strawberries (DG Berry, Santa Maria)  
Butter Turnips

**Large Shares also receive:**

Escarole  
Celery  
Cabbage

- \* WANTED: Bike Art. The Tall Bike Posse is sending out a call to artists for BIKE ART 2009-- Bike Momentum: "A Chain Reaction of Art and Advocacy". This is the third installation of this bike art exhibit for SLO County's Bike Month celebration in May. The Tall Bike Posse has partnered with the San Luis Obispo County Bicycle Coalition to be its' non-profit benefactor. Join this event and advocate bicycling through your art. There is no entry fee. Deadline for Art submissions is April 18th. For more info: [Tall Bike Posse Bike Art Show](#) or [tallbikeposse@yahoo.com](mailto:tallbikeposse@yahoo.com).

## Featured Veggie: Strawberries

### History

- The strawberry is a member of the rose family, with the most common varieties being a hybrid of the wild Virginia strawberry (native to North America) and a Chilean variety.
- The plant produces succulent, red, conical fruit from tiny white flowers, and sends out runners to propagate. Although the plants can last 5-6 years with careful cultivation, most farmers use them as an annual crop, replanting yearly. Crops take 8-14 months to mature. Strawberries are social plants, requiring both a male and female to produce fruit.
- The word *strawberry* comes from the Old English *strewberige*, most likely because the plant sends out runners that could be likened to pieces of straw. Although they have been around for thousands of years, they weren't actively cultivated until the Renaissance period in Europe.
- Strawberries are native to North America, and the Indians used them in many dishes. The first colonists in America shipped the native larger strawberry plants back to Europe as early as 1600.
- Another variety was also discovered in Central and South America, which the conquistadors called *futilla*. Early Americans didn't bother cultivating strawberries, since they were abundant in the wilds. Cultivation began in earnest in the early part of the 19th century, when strawberries with cream quickly became considered a luxurious dessert. New York became a strawberry hub with the advent of the railroad, shipping the crop in refrigerated railroad cars. Production spread to Arkansas, Louisiana, Florida and Tennessee. Now 75 percent of the North American crop is grown in California.

### Trivia

- Be careful with whom you share a double strawberry. It is destined that the two of you may fall in love.
- Due to the bright red colors and heart shapes, strawberries were the symbol for Venus, the Goddess of Love.
- Henry VIII's 2<sup>nd</sup> wife, Ann Boleyn, was thought to have been a witch because of her strawberry shaped birthmark on her neck.
- During medieval times, strawberries symbolized righteousness and perfection. Stonemasons applied their carved strawberry signs onto altars and at the tops of pillars in churches and cathedrals.
- If you live in Bavaria, somewhere out in the country, you might be participating in an annual spring ritual that recognizes the importance of strawberries. The farm folk make an offering to the elves that they believe will help their cows produce healthy calves and a good supply of milk. The spring offerings of little baskets filled with wild strawberries are tied to the horns of their cattle to wait for the berry-loving elves to enjoy the berries and offer their good spirits to their hosts.
- The United States honored the strawberry with a 33-cent stamp first issued on April 10, 1999. The stamp featured a cluster of bright red strawberries peeking out from their brilliant green leaves.
- Ever consider bathing in the juice of fresh strawberries? Twenty-two pounds of crushed strawberries made up the bathwater that went into the tub when Madame Talien, one of the court figures of Emperor Napoleon, took her bath. This ritual did not occur often since people did not bathe regularly during this time, mid-1700s into early-1800s.

### Nutrition

- Not only are strawberries tasty, but they are also low in calories and very nutritious.
- They are high in vitamin C, which has been shown to be a deterrent to some forms of cancer and also helps prevent oxidation of LDL or *bad* cholesterol. They are a good source of fiber.
- But, most importantly, they are one of the few sources, along with grapes and cherries, of *ellagic acid*, a compound that has been shown to prevent carcinogens from turning healthy cells into cancerous ones.

### Medicinal Uses

- During the 13th century the French cultivated strawberries to use as a medicinal herb for numerous digestive discomforts. The roots, leaves, and fruits of the Alpine Strawberry, *Fragaria Vesca*, were used as a digestive aid and skin tonic. The berry was prescribed for diarrhea and digestive upset, while the leaves and roots were supposed to relieve gout. The berry itself was rubbed on the skin to ease the pain of sunburn and to relieve blemishes. The juice of the strawberry has its own special prescription—it brightened discolored teeth. The ancient Romans were staunch believers in the curative powers of the strawberry. They believed it relieved melancholy and masked bad breath. According to the ancients, strawberries could cure inflammations, fevers, throat infections, kidney stones, gout, fainting spells, and diseases of the blood, liver, and spleen.
- John Gerard, a French herbalist, touted the value of boiled strawberry leaves as a poultice. Of the fruit, itself he says, "the ripe Strawberries quench thirst, and take away, if they be often used, the redness and he ate of the face." Patients enjoyed the medicinal fruit treatment so much they began eating them as a food, accompanied with cream or wine.

### **Selection and Storage**

- Strawberries do not ripen after they are picked; select only those with a fresh shiny look and bright red color. Refrigerate soon after purchasing the berries. **Do not wash the strawberries until shortly before ready to serve.** Berries are highly perishable, and the extra water on them causes their cells to break down more quickly. Wash the berries and pat them dry before removing the stems. This method avoids excess water entering the berries from the stem end.
- Wash and cut up only what you can consume that same day. The best way to store strawberries, if you have the space in your refrigerator, is to arrange them in a single layer on top of paper towels. Use the berries within three or four days.

### **Preparation**

**Freezing** To freeze strawberries, wash and dry them, remove the stems, and arrange them single layer on a baking sheet. Place the sheet in the freezer until the berries are solidly frozen. Then pack them into a zip-lock freezer bag and keep them frozen until ready to use.

### **Raw**

- Simply wash and eat them.
- Coarsely mash into a sauce, maintaining lots of texture, and pour the sauce over a fruit salad. Sweeten if desired.
- Slice them into a tossed green salad for a touch of spring color.
- Serve as dessert in combination with blackberries. Create a sauce by mashing a few strawberries, pour over the top.
- Combine them with soaked grains and nuts for a hearty breakfast.
- Make a strawberry smoothie with strawberries, bananas, a splash of limejuice, and a little sweetening.
- Make a savory strawberry sauce by adding crushed garlic and minced jalapeno to mashed strawberries.

### **Cooked**

- Stir them into pancake or waffle batter. As an alternative, serve them on top of your breakfast favorites.
- Cook up some strawberry jam to spread on your morning toast.
- Make a strawberry cobbler. For an elegant finish to a meal, serve some strawberries dipped in dark chocolate and some in white chocolate. Leave the stems on for added color.
- Strawberry Shortcake, an all-time favorite American dessert, is a frequent star on the sweet table when strawberries are in season from early spring through summer. This sumptuous dessert is composed of sponge cake, divided into two layers, filled with sliced, sweetened strawberries and whipped cream between the layers, and finished with a generous layer of sliced strawberries and whipped cream over the top. Strawberry Shortcake is not the creation or invention of any one person. The Native Americans Indians inspired the creation of Strawberry Shortcake by introducing the Colonists to their style of baked bread made simply of cornmeal and crushed strawberries. The Colonists then applied their English baking skills and created their own version, strawberry shortcake.

## **RECIPES** (For past CPOF CSA Newsletters, visit: <http://calpolyorgfarm.com/newsletters.shtml>)

### **Strawberry Smoothies** ([www.easy-strawberry-recipes.com](http://www.easy-strawberry-recipes.com))

2 cups fresh strawberries, stemmed and rinsed

1/2 of a 6-ounce can frozen lemonade concentrate

Sugar to taste

2 1/2 to 3 cups ice cubes

In a blender container, combine strawberries, lemonade concentrate, and sugar.

With the blender running, add ice cubes, one at a time, through the opening in the lid until the mixture is slushy. Makes 4 servings.

### Fresh Strawberry Muffins ([www.easy-strawberry-recipes.com](http://www.easy-strawberry-recipes.com))

2 1/2 cups all purpose flour  
2/3 cup sugar  
1 teaspoon baking soda  
3/4 teaspoon ground cinnamon  
1/2 teaspoon salt  
1 1/2 cup sliced fresh strawberries  
1 cup lowfat buttermilk  
1/3 cup margarine, melted  
1 1/4 teaspoon vanilla extract  
1 egg, lightly beaten  
2 egg whites, lightly beaten  
Vegetable cooking spray  
1 1/2 tablespoons sugar

Combine flour, sugar, baking soda, cinnamon and salt in a large bowl and stir well. Add fresh sliced strawberries, stir well, and make a well in the center of the mixture.  
Combine buttermilk, melted margarine, vanilla extract, egg and egg whites. Add to dry mixture stirring until just moistened.  
Divide batter evenly among 18 muffin cups sprayed oiled with cooking spray.  
Sprinkle 1 1/2 TBS sugar evenly over muffins.  
Bake at 350° for 25-30 minutes or until a wooden pick inserted in center comes out clean. Remove from pans immediately; let cool on wire rack.

### Spring Rolls ([VegetarianTimes.com](http://VegetarianTimes.com))

4 jasmine tea bags  
3 oz. arborio rice  
1 Tbs. honey  
1/2 vanilla bean or 1 1/2 tsp. vanilla extract  
2 kiwi, finely diced, 4 slices reserved  
5 **strawberries**, finely diced, 4 slices reserved  
4 spring roll wrappers

### **Vanilla Dipping Sauce**

1/3 cup light coconut milk  
1/4 cup skim milk  
2 Tbs. sugar  
1/2 tsp. cornstarch  
1/4 tsp. grated lime zest  
1/4 vanilla bean

1. Steep tea bags in 3 cups boiling water 5 minutes. Remove tea bags, and set tea aside.
2. Heat rice in large sauté pan over medium-high heat. Gradually add hot tea 1/2 cup at a time, allowing rice to absorb tea after each addition, stirring continuously. Stir in honey, and scrape vanilla seeds from pod into pan before adding last 1/2 cup tea. Cook until rice is tender, and remove from heat. Fold in kiwi and strawberries. Cool.
3. Dip 1 spring roll wrapper in bowl of cold water 15 to 20 seconds, or until softened. Carefully lay wrapper flat on work surface, and place 1 kiwi slice and 1 strawberry slice side by side in center. Spoon 2-Tbs. log of rice mixture in center of spring roll wrapper on top of fruit. Fold in sides of spring roll wrapper, and tightly roll up. Repeat with remaining wrappers, fruit, and rice. Place on large platter or baking sheet to keep rolls from touching. Chill 2 hours, or overnight.
4. To make **Vanilla Dipping Sauce**: Combine all ingredients in saucepan, and bring to a boil. Reduce heat to medium-low, and simmer 3 to 4 minutes, stirring constantly, or until thickened. Cool.
5. Serve rolls whole or cut them on diagonal between kiwi and strawberry slices. Serve with small bowls of Vanilla Dipping Sauce.

### Kale and potato soup (<http://www.easterncarolinaorganics.com/recipe.php?goto=featured>)

Serves 4 to 6

1 large yellow onion, peeled and minced fine  
1 stalk of celery  
1 large garlic clove, peeled and minced  
4 tablespoons olive oil  
6 large potatoes  
2 quarts chicken or vegetable stock  
6 ounces chorizo or similar  
2 1/2 teaspoons salt  
1/4 teaspoon pepper  
1 lb kale, stemmed and chopped

Sauté the sausage and onion and garlic in 3 T oil.  
Add potatoes and celery and sauté, until they begin to color. Add water, cover, and simmer gently for 20 minutes until potatoes are soft. Add kale and Simmer 5 minutes. Mix in remaining olive oil. May be blended if you prefer a smooth soup. Serve with dark bread.  
Can be made without sausage for a vegetarian dish.