

April 10, 2009

~ This is the Weekly E-letter of the [Center for Urban Education about Sustainable Agriculture](http://www.cuesa.org) ~

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This week's shopping list



Enjoy the seasonal variety of the Ferry Plaza Farmers Market.

1. Pastured eggs
2. Horseradish
3. Parsley
4. Schmaltz
5. Easter egg radishes
6. Hot cross buns
7. Candied citrus peel
8. Almonds
9. Baby rainbow chard
10. Cider-brined smoked ham

Special events & announcements

Impress your guests with tantalizing tapas ~ next class April 15

CUESA, [Dacor](#), and [Parties That Cook](#) present a series of hands-on cooking classes focusing on tapas with a California/international flair. There are 4 Wednesday night classes left this spring; each is \$45 per person and includes 2 glasses of wine from [BR Cohn Winery](#). Recipes for the next class include: Cabrales Phyllo Purses with Sherry-Raisin Dipping Sauce; Grape Leaves Stuffed with Rice, Pine Nuts and Apricots; and Crostini with Broccoli Rabe, Garlic and Shaved Pecorino.



[Preview the menu for all 4 classes and register here >](#)

Renewing America's Food Traditions with Gary Nabhan and Ashley Rood ~ April 29

Gary Paul Nabhan, writer, food and farming advocate, rural lifeways folklorist, and conservationist, may be best known for his pioneering Southwestern locavore experiment



described in *Coming Home to Eat*. His new book is a journey across our continent's 13 distinct "food nations" that details endangered foods and brings them to life with cultural histories, folk traditions, and recipes. Nabhan will speak at the Ferry Building along with sustainable agriculture advocate and contributing writer Ashley Rood. The event is \$10, runs from 6 to 8:30 pm, and ends with a tasting of heritage foods. [Buy a ticket >](#)

Toast (and nibble) the Best of the Bay ~ April 25

Mingle with market managers from New York, New Orleans, London, Barcelona, Seoul and elsewhere while enjoying the best food and drink the Bay Area



Like our produce updates? Take a look at a new [expanded version](#) that market manager Lulu Meyer writes for the 7x7 website.

What's in your bag?



Shopper: Wendy Doss

Item: Purple asparagus from Zuckerman's Farm

Wendy came down to the Tuesday market despite the April drizzle. She got there just in time to get one of the last remaining bunches of Zuckerman's purple asparagus.

Asparagus Breakfast Pudding with Green Garlic and Fontina



This recipe comes from Bibby Gignilliat of Parties that Cook.

Serves 4

INGREDIENTS

1 pound French bread, crusts removed, cut into 1-inch cubes

has to offer. This tasting event will spotlight local restaurants (Delfina, Fish and Farm, Perbacco, Bix, Greens, etc.), farmers' market vendors, wineries and breweries. It coincides with Project for Public Spaces' [7th International Public Markets Conference](#), which brings together over 200 of the world's best market operators. Tickets are \$75. [Learn more >](#)

CUESA presents two cocktail events in May

[Spring farmers' market cocktail night >](#)

CUESA and the organizers of SF Cocktail Week present an evening of farmers' market cocktails. For just \$30, guests will imbibe 2 full-sized signature drinks, taste 12 rum- and cachaça-based cocktails featuring the best spring fruit the market has to offer, and nibble on bites from local restaurants. All drinks are created by mixologists from bars and restaurants including Bourbon & Branch, Conduit, Rye, and 15 Romolo.



[Hands-on artisanal cocktail class >](#)

Learn to make 2 spring drinks with acclaimed bartender and author Scott Beattie and hear about small batch distilling from Lou Bustamante of St. George Spirits and Hangar One Vodka. Scott will personally instruct each guest on techniques including side recipes, garnishes, foams, rim sugars and salts. Drinks will feature Hangar One vodka and fresh, seasonal fruit from the Ferry Plaza Farmers Market. (The photo above is from Scott's book *Artisanal Cocktails: Drinks Inspired by the Seasons from the Bar at Cyrus*).

Brown rice is the perfect recession food

And it's about to get better: For a limited time, [Massa Organics](#) will be offering their two-pound bags of organic brown rice for only \$4 or two for just \$7.

Programs at the market

Saturday, April 11 ~ Eggstravaganza

10:00 am - Egg discovery station. Make your own mayo! (\$1 donation)

10:00 am - Natural egg dying
Boris Portnoy will create natural dyes out of market produce. The demo will be kid-friendly and participants will get 2 eggs to dye and take home. (\$2 donation)



11:00 am - Seasonal cooking demonstration

Amaryll Schwertner of Boulettes Larder will share the finer points of preparing perfect eggs.

1 tablespoon unsalted butter
 ½ medium yellow onion, minced (about ½ cup)
 1 spring leek, cleaned and chopped
 2 cloves garlic, minced (or 2 green garlic stalks, white part minced)
 1 bunch asparagus, tough ends removed, cut into 1 inch pieces
 10 ounces spinach, wilted in a dry pan, squeezed to remove water and coarsely chopped
 ¾ cup medium-dry white wine, such as Sauvignon Blanc
 6 large eggs
 2 cups heavy cream
 8 ounces Fontina cheese, grated (about 1 1/2 cups grated) or a melty cheese from Spring Hill Jersey Cheese (today we are using a combination of white cheddar and jack)
 2 teaspoons fresh thyme
 2 tablespoons parsley, chopped
 ½ teaspoon lemon zest
 1 teaspoon lemon juice
 2 ¼ teaspoons kosher salt
 Cooking spray

[See the full recipe here >](#)

[Recommend CUESA's Weekly E-letter to a friend!](#)

Curious about public transport and parking options for the market?

[Click here >](#)

11:45 am - Seasonal cooking demonstration

Aaron French of The Sunnyside Café will show two ways to make hollandaise sauce.

Tuesday, April 14 ~ Food Wise Booth

12 - 1 pm - **Sarah Henkin**, CUESA's market chef, will be giving out recipe cards and samples of a simple meal made with market ingredients. She'll also be available to offer advice on all your seasonal meal planning.

Saturday, April 18 ~ Market to Table

10:15 am - Seasonal cooking demonstration

Charles Vollmar, Epicurean Exchange

11:00 am - Seasonal cooking demonstration

Janet Fletcher, author of *Fresh from the Farmers' Market: Year-Round Recipes for the Pick of the Crop*

All programs take place in CUESA's Dacor teaching kitchen, in front of the Ferry Building on the north side.

ALBA Grows New Farmers

Editor's note: Today's feature was written by volunteer Keri Badach.

Victorino and Irma Mendoza moved to California in 1983 and worked as farm laborers for many years. As they grew older it became difficult to find jobs because farm operators were looking for younger, more robust workers. Victorino decided he wanted to start his own farming business and in November 2007, he enrolled in an organic farm production program through the Agriculture and Land-Based Training Association (ALBA).



When he graduated last April, Menodza began leasing a half acre of land through ALBA's incubator program (where as many as 16 farmers cultivate more than 50 different crops at a time) to grow a range of vegetables. He has since added an additional acre and a half to test his hand at growing organic strawberries.

Victorino was so satisfied with his experience that he suggested his wife, Irma, and two daughters, Irma (24) and Rocia (19) enroll in the ALBA program. The three women have recently gotten their own individual plots of land and, although the family members will support one another, each has a

different set of crops in mind. Victorino says his family is proud to grow healthy and nutritious food and glad to be working for themselves.

As the average age of the American farmer continues to go up, and the need for a new generation of small-scale farmers becomes clear, ALBA and other similar programs are a crucial piece of the solution. They also may help counterbalance the language and cultural barriers, shortage of resources, institutional exclusion and historical lack of government support that small-scale minority farmers have faced for generations.

Many of ALBA's graduates have gone on to run successful farms and CSAs all around the state. Ferry Plaza Farmers Market seller Maria Catalán, of [Catalán Family Farm](#), was an early graduate of the ALBA's program.

ALBA's two training and educational farms are designed as business incubators. The Rural Development Center (RDC) is located on a 110-acre organic farm between Salinas and Chualar and serves to help beginning farmers establish small farm businesses. The Farm Training and Resource Center, also known as 'Triple M Ranch', is located in northern Monterey County and demonstrates soil, water and habitat conservation to veteran farmers. The land at the ranch (195 acres in total, with 60 acres legally available for cultivation) is certified organic and provides experienced farmers with the ability to experiment with hybrid farming models and land options.



The six-month training program for new farmers is divided into five separate modules: marketing, business planning, crop planning, soil fertility, and pest, disease and weed management. The focus on sustainable practices — and on providing operating capital and access to land — goes a long way toward giving these farmers a chance at succeeding in the highly competitive world of California agriculture.

Participants lease ALBA's land at deeply discounted rates, which increase gradually each year. This fee gives farmers access to irrigation, as well as technical assistance from ALBA staff. Farmers also become eligible to purchase additional land with each passing year.

ALBA also operates a licensed produce distribution business called ALBA Organics, which offers students crucial marketing education on different sales strategies including wholesale, direct-to-retail, community supported agriculture and farmers' markets. ALBA Organics conducts crop planning with the farmers and buys their products when possible.

According to Gary Peterson, ALBA's Deputy Director, "ALBA is a great opportunity for farmers to learn by doing and start a farming career with

some assistance and guidance.” The Mendoza family couldn't agree more.

For more information about ALBA visit www.albafarmers.org/

Keri Badach is an employee of Rabobank International, a bank specializing in the food and agricultural industry, where she focuses on corporate social responsibility and sustainability. She began volunteering with CUESA last September and just recently left to return to New York.

Market update



This is the most up-to-date information about which sellers will be attending the market as of Friday. If there are no changes to a seller's status, they will not be listed. You'll find a [list of which farmers regularly attend each market here](#). Please understand that there are often last-minute changes—it's the nature of

farming!

Saturday, April 11

Out: The Apple Farm, The Peach Farm (out until tomatoes arrive), Rainbow Mountain Farms

Tuesday, April 14

In/Returning: Bella Viva Orchards, Prather Ranch Meat Company, Massa Organics

Out: The Peach Farm

Seasonality synopsis for April

Plentiful /returning this month (weather willing): Torpedo onions, chicories, cabbage, Stockton red onions, fresh goat cheese, English peas, rhubarb, basil, raspberries, squash blossoms, dandelion greens, fresh bay leaves, miners' lettuce, hot house tomatoes and cucumbers, spinach, asparagus, avocados, pastured goat, green garlic, spring onions, kumquats, nettles, broccoli, rapini greens, artichokes, baby turnips, carrots, strawberries, mizuna, radishes and radish greens, fava beans, pastured eggs, baby beets, Belgian endive

Winding down/limited supply: Brussels sprouts, tulips, citrus, lilacs, hyacinth

Farms/Vendors that may be returning this month (weather willing):

Happy Quail Farms, Balakian Farms, Lucero Organic Farms

Value Added and Vendor items not to be missed:

Tallow soap from Marin Sun Farms, Japanese maples from Rainbow Mountain, Natilla from Bodega and Yerba Santa Goat Cheese

Featured Recipes for April:

[Spring Greens Puree with Homemade Sourdough Crackers](#) from Jessica Prentice, *Wise Food Ways*

[Asparagus Salad with Charred Onion Vinaigrette, Slow Roasted Tomatoes, Burrata, Wild Arugula and Speck](#) from Jamie Lauren, Absinthe Brasserie & Bar

[Chicken with Arugula, Artichokes and Natural Pan Juice](#) from Keith Hammerich, Culinary Arts Instructor, City College San Francisco

[Cocktail ~ La Fragola](#) from Jon Gasparini, Rye

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Photo of Easter egg radishes by Jennifer Goodwin. Photo of bread pudding by Sarah Dvorak.

Email webmaster@cuesa.org with questions or comments about the E-letter. Want to sign up for the E-letter? [Click here](#). Missed an issue or want to re-read an article? [Click here](#).

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