

Dear members,

June 29<sup>th</sup> 2011

**Welcome to Beets!** Just a sampling of baby beets until they turn into grown-ups. My favorite way to prepare is to cut off the bulbs, wash, (no peeling) then steam them. Note they will not take long like those tough store-bought ones. About 10 minutes is all. Cool, then slip off the skin if you want, or leave it on. I slice them into a container and eat them cold. Why are our beets so sweet without that "muddy flavor?" Growing in cool weather helps, also our soils which are very high in micro-nutrients, as well as the variety (Red Ace, for you home gardeners). The leaves can be used separately, or you can steam them right along with the bulb part.

Other than the flavor, the wonderful thing about beets is their health aspects. Beets will lower blood pressure, decrease bad cholesterol, and detox and act as a mild diuretic in the body. If you Google "Beets Health", you will get a lot of info, and will look more fondly on this humble vegetable. (I'm not sure if the gold beets are as good for you.....)

Hope everyone is enjoying the **Gailon** – if you are wrestling around with cooking it, take a leap and eat it raw. Same with the **bokchoy**. The bigger leaves on both can be cut up small in a salad, but the rest, well, try cutting it into chunks (the stems) along with a favorite salad dressing or healthy dip such a hummus, for a complete meal. Kids love it – the Gailon stems are sweeter than the buds. Kids love it.

**In the fields:** look for summer squash soon – possibly next week if the bees are active and we don't get much rain (which slows blossoming and bee activity) We are waiting for the carrots to get bigger (if we pick them all too soon, we will never have regular size carrots). Once the "outdoor" ones start producing (the early ones are in hoop houses), then we will have a mostly constant supply for the rest of the season. We plant 1,500 row feet of carrots every week - lots of weeding and thinning!

Bugs (and other pests): this year we have had a terrible time with wire worm. See the picture below. They were borrowing into the stems of our tomato plants as soon as we transplanted them outdoors in the hoophouses. Remedy? An old-time organic grower trick – we cut up potatoes, stuck a piece on the end of a



stake, and buried one by each tomato. The wire worms like the potatoe better, and will imbed themselves into it, where we can capture them. Change bait every three days for 5 weeks. Very time consuming for 300 plants! Non-organic methods are to fumigate the soil with pesticides which kills all soil life. Bad, Bad! But cheap, cheap.

More later-

