This Week on the Farm

This week on the farm has been very productive. The summer program is ending soon and some of the youth are working in a small group to present The Supa Fresh Youth Farm at the Portland State University Summer Work’s Reverse Networking Fair. We look forward to seeing you soon, enjoy your CSA!

Food For Thought: 5 Ways Plants Can Communicate

Plants may seem passive but they actually communicate in several different ways. Plants can’t run away so they have to adapt and use other strategies to stay alive. They have evolved to use chemicals to send signals to other plants and animals. Here are five ways plants use chemical signals to communicate.

1. Plants can call for help — When you breathe in fresh grass or flowers, you actually smelling the plant’s distress signal. This how the plant cries for help. The scent of the distress signal attacks insects that will eat the pests currently feeding on the plant. For example, wild tobacco emits a chemical that lures predatory insects to them, driving the pests away.

2. Plants can eavesdrop—48 studies show that when wounded by a hornworm, sagebrush secretes defensive proteins that prevents the insects from digesting protein and stunt its growth. This signal also tells other plants to strengthen their own defenses further fortifying their environment. Plants use signals to respond to another plant’s distress call and proactively strengthens their own defenses while their neighbors are being harmed.

3. Plants can defend themselves—Plants compete for sunlight they can push out competition by releasing chemicals in the soil to absorb nutrients harming and killing other plants around it.

4. Plants can recognize their own siblings—Plants can sense what is growing around them, they compete other plants for resources but will support their own kin.

5. Plants can communicate with mammals—Plants can attract mammals, for example, the carnivorous pitcher plant attracts bats and tricks their echolocation to get them to come roost on them. The bat benefits from having somewhere to roost and the plant gains essential nutrients from the bat guano.

Source: http://mentalfloss.com/article/66302/5-ways-plants-communicate

Bell peppers—Try baking cheesy stuffed peppers, add rice or quinoa.
Cabbage— Wrap over goat cheese and quinoa
Carrots— Glaze them in butter and white or rose wine, throw in mixed herbs and a pinch of salt
Cucumbers— Try making a killer Tzatziki sauce! With sour cream, greek yogurt, minced garlic, and extra virgin olive oil
Edible flowers— Toss in your salad or add to a stew
Mixed herb bunches—basal, mint
Mixed Kale bunches— make a delicious frittata!
Swiss Chard—Try in our 2 new recipes of the week!
Summer Squash— stuff with sausage, goat cheese, and bell pepper. Bake in olive oil
Tomatoes— roast Tomato, olive oil, basal, and mozzarella to make a delicious snack, add toast / meat to make a sandwich or stir into a pasta!

Farmer Profile:
Sepehr / Farm Crew Member
Sepehr started working here at Supa Fresh in June, he was in the batch of new youth we got for this summer. His duties are everything from planting, harvesting, and running farm stands and farmers markets. Working here has helped Seth save up money and also gain valuable work experience. Sepehr plans on attending college, his goal is to attain a degree in business.
Vegetarian Chard Lentil Soup, Lebanese-Style

Ingredients
- 8 cups water
- 1 cup large brown lentils, rinsed
- 4 cups thinly sliced Swiss chard
- 4 large potatoes, cut into cubes
- 1 cup freshly squeezed lemon juice
- 6 cloves garlic, crushed (or more to taste)
- 1 tablespoon salt, or to taste
- 1/2 cup olive oil

Directions
1. Bring water to a boil in a large pot. Cook lentils in boiling water until they start to soften, 8 to 10 minutes. Add chard; continue cooking until wilted, about 5 minutes.
2. Add potatoes to the boiling water, reduce heat to medium-low, cover the pot, and cook until the potatoes are completely cooked, about 12 minutes. Mix lemon juice, crushed garlic, and salt together in a bowl; add to the pot. Continue to cook at a simmer another 5 minutes. Stir olive oil into the mixture. Increase heat to high and cook another 1 to 2 minutes.

Source: http://allrecipes.com/recipe/234775/chard-lentil-soup-lebanese-style/?internalSource=recipe%20hub&referringContentType=search%20results&clickId=cardslot%2031

Roast Turkey and Winter Vegetable Chowder

Ingredients
- 3 slices bacon, diced
- 1 large yellow onion, cut into 1/2-inch dice
- 1 large stalk celery, cut into 1/2-inch dice
- 2 large red boiling potatoes, peeled and cut into 1/2-inch dice
- 1 small butternut squash, peeled, halved lengthwise, seeded, and cut into 1/2-inch dice
- 7 cups homemade turkey stock or canned low-sodium chicken broth
- 1 zucchini, cut into 1/2-inch dice
- 2 cups chopped de-ribbed Swiss chard leaves
- 2 cups (1/2-inch dice) cooked turkey
- 1 tablespoon minced fresh sage
- 1 tablespoon minced fresh thyme
- Salt
- Freshly ground pepper

Directions
1. Cook bacon in 5-quart stockpot or Dutch oven over medium heat until browned, 5 minutes. Remove with slotted spoon to plate. Set aside. Pour off all but 2 tablespoons bacon fat and return pot to medium heat. Add onion and celery. Sauté until vegetables are soft but not browned, 3 to 5 minutes.
2. Add potatoes, squash and turkey stock or broth. Bring to boil, reduce heat to a simmer. Partially cover pot, and cook until potatoes are tender, about 15 minutes. Add zucchini, Swiss chard, turkey, sage, thyme and reserved bacon. Cook 5 minutes longer. Add salt and pepper to taste. Ladle soup into warm bowls.

Source: http://recipes.latimes.com/recipe-roast-turkey-and-winter-vegetable-chowder/