



Dear ##[Name | First]##,

Spring is here and in full force. Kentucky's farmers are in a flurry of activity this month. Farmers in the region work overtime to beat spring's sporadic weather. They are out there prepping beds, planting, moving livestock, managing the greenhouses and high tunnels and getting ready for the main growing season in Kentucky.

Team OAK is so excited! This is a perfect time of year for local eating. Now is the moment to look up when your local farmers market starts, sign up for a CSA (community supported agriculture) program, and find out what's in season (hint: it's asparagus and almost strawberries).

In this issue, we are highlighting our OAK field day partner farm Pavel's Garden, featuring a tasty recipe for Swiss Chard Quiche, and are offering a few reasons to plant something this year. We hope you share in our delight for the unfolding of the season and remind yourself how nourishing fresh, local food can be.

Warm wishes,  
The OAK Team

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## Growing for Love of Good Food at Pavel's Garden



Photo by Pavel's Garden

Pavel Ovechkin from Pavel's Garden, and his farming partner Katie Ovechkin, have continued to push the envelope when it comes to growing an incredibly diverse range of market vegetables for their community. If you stop by their booth at a farmers market in Louisville or Cincinnati you will see all of the market favorites (i.e. salad mix, carrots, broccoli, tomatoes, onions) but also some really unique types of cabbages, asian greens, endive, radish, winter squash, and more.





Photo by Pavel's Garden of their market booth at Douglas Loop Farmers Market

They have a true excitement for what they grow and how they grow it. Pavel will tell you the flavor and quality of the vegetables all start with treating the farm as a living organism. These farmers do their best to give the soil what it needs through their organic and biodynamic practices including: adding nutrients and organic matter through on-farm compost and cover crops, resting the soil through crop rotation, and boosting the soil's immune system by avoiding conventional pesticides and using herbal sprays and biodynamic preparations.

Pavel's Garden isn't just growing food, it's nurturing a farm ecosystem to improve the soil, promote biodiversity, and increase resiliency of crops. A carrot or head of radicchio becomes more than something to eat - it's a way to nourish the people and the land.

As local food lovers, we like to think that knowing our food and our farm is the best way to support this type of farming. Pavel's Garden is an example of the attention to detail and care family farms have when it comes to growing good





Photo by Pavel's Garden of laying down wood mulch

food. Learn more about Pavel's Garden on the OAK Find-A-Farm Directory here, <https://directory.oak-ky.org/farm/pavels-garden/>.

There is no better time to drop by the farmers market to celebrate the abundance of in-season spring foods. Check out farmers markets in your area using the Edible Kentucky Magazine map [here](#).

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## Seasonal Recipes...

### Swiss Chard Quiche

Quiche is one of those kitchen sink recipes. You can make a different version depending on the season and use all types of local, organic foods to get different flavor combinations. This time we tried a ramp and swiss chard quiche. It was delicious and the substitutions were endless.



[View Recipe](#)

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## In the Garden...

**Why You Should Grow at Least One Thing this Year**





Growing a garden can seem intimidating and even if you are motivated it can be hard to find the space or time to make it happen. BUT...and this is important...we want to give you several reasons to try to grow at least one thing this year. It could be herbs in your windowsill, it could be one tomato plant in a container, it could be a small garden plot in your backyard or the community and everything in between.

When you actively grow something (a small portion of your own food or even a non-

food item) you have a deeper appreciation and understanding for the process. You can commiserate with the farmers that do this professionally and understand all the work that goes into it.

Not to mention the act of gardening can be a welcome reprieve from the screen. It also allows you to connect more deeply with your immediate surroundings. When you are tending a garden you are paying more attention to the weather and wildlife and what's going on around you. Growing plants can also be a way to spark wonder for all ages and get excited about trying new foods.

Our three main tips for getting started are: start small, make a plan, and only plant things that bring you joy or you want to eat. When in doubt ask your local farmer for advice. Now is also the perfect time of year to find transplants for sale from growers in your area.

### Explore these Kentucky Gardening Resources:

- Food In Neighborhoods Growers Guides: <https://foodinneighborhoods.org/grow/growers-guide/>
- Sustainable Berea Raised Bed Guide: <https://www.sustainableberea.org/raised-bed-guide>
- Seedleaf's Young Gardener's Activity Booklet: <https://www.seedleaf.org/educational-resources>
- Louisville Grows planting calendar: <https://louisvillegrows.org/planting-calendar/>
- Contact a master gardener or extension agent in your area.

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## Upcoming Community Events & Resources



## Lexington-Fayette County Diabetes Expo on April 29th

Join the Fayette County Diabetes Coalition for a **FREE Diabetes Expo 10 a.m.-1 p.m. Saturday, April 29**, at 1140 Harry Sykes Way at the UK Cooperative Extension office in Lexington, KY. This event will feature more than 25 vendors with cooking demonstrations (OAK will be there!), Primary Care and Education services, vision screenings, Q&A with experts, free vaccines and much more!

Admission is FREE, but there will be a prize drawing for those who pre-register by calling 859-257-5582.

[Share this Event](#)



## CSA Chef Demo: Make a Date with Your CSA on May 11th

Join OAK, KY Farm Share Coalition, and The Food Connection for a **\*VIRTUAL\* CSA Chef demo on May 11th from 12:15-1pm** to offer some best practices for your weekly veggie box. Chef Tanya will offer quick demos on best storage practices, ways to veggie prep, and what veggies to prioritize first. This virtual cooking demonstration is open to all and FREE to attend. Register using the link below for this online Zoom event.

[Register for this Virtual Event](#)

## The Main CSA Season in Kentucky begin this May!

CSA (community supported agriculture) is a food box subscription with a local farm. Many CSA programs across Kentucky start early to late May, but there is still time to sign up for a share!





Consider joining a CSA to make local food sourcing more convenient so you can access some of the freshest veggies, eggs, meats, and other farm products for a whole season. Learn more by visiting the [CSA in KY Facebook Group](#), search the OAK directory (check the CSA box), or email Katie Harvey, OAK's CSA program coordinator, a question at [katie@oak-ky.org](mailto:katie@oak-ky.org).

Visit the OAK Directory



## Healthy Foods Made Healthier

Are you looking for some easy ways to get the most nutrients out of your food? Read the article linked below written by Tami Pyles with a few suggestions from the OAK staff and other health coach experts about how to get the most out of your veggies.

Read More



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## Stay in touch:

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