



CHRONICLES OF A DRIFTER

CSA NEWSLETTER

AUGUST 23, 2012

IN YOUR BOX THIS WEEK . . .

Beans: Provider

Cantaloupe: Halona, Athena or Sarah's Choice

These are winding down for the season.

Carrots: Cosmic Purple, Yellowstone, and Negovia

Great for baking and especially nice for roasting. Try grating to add color and richness to a salad.

Cilantro: Santo

Cucumber: Marketmore or General Lee

Dill: Bouquet

Great in colorful potato salad or in egg salad.

Eggplant: Listada, Pingtung, Nadia, or Black Beauty

Garlic: Persian Star

Onions: Cortland or Copra

After a couple of weeks in the greenhouse, these onions will be cured, but for right now they are fresh and should be stored in the refrigerator.

Peppers: Green/Colored Bell or Sweet Italian

The small slender peppers look like hot peppers, but they are a sweet Italian heirloom variety called Jimmy Nardello brought to the U.S. by an Italian immigrant in the 1880's.

Hot Pepper: Jalapeno

This is the small green pepper in your box (medium hot). Try this in fresh tomato salsa or salsa verde. Some folks are sensitive to the heat in jalapenos so you might want to wear gloves when cutting these up.

Potatoes: Red Norland and Adirondack Blue

These blue potatoes are rich with iron, vitamin C and antioxidants. We love potatoes roasted in the oven. Cube, toss in olive oil and season with salt, and pepper. Spread on a baking pan. Roast in a 400 degree oven until tender and browned (turn occasionally).

Salad Mix: Encore or Allstar

Scallions: Parade

Enough for you to try out the couscous salad in the recipe section.

Summer Squash: Dunja, Zephyr, Raven, or Success

Tomatillos: Toma Verde

Tomatillos are the tomato-like green fruit in papery husks. To use, remove the husk and wash well to remove the stickiness.

Cherry Tomatoes

Slicing Tomatoes: New Girl, Medford, Pink Beauty, Big Beef, San Marzano, Jaune Flamee, Amish Paste, or Brandywine

This is a good time to make fresh salsa. We usually chop up tomato, peppers, onions, some jalapeno, garlic, salt and pepper and let it sit a bit to let the flavors marry. The fresh cilantro this week would be a nice addition.

Watermelon: Starlight (Red), Sunshine (Yellow) or Blacktail Mountain (Red)

WEEK 11: EVERYTHING IS TWO WEEKS EARLY

Last week really reminded us of September on the farm. Like we have been saying all season, it seems like everything is two weeks early this year. The harvest mornings were cool with mist hanging over the fields, and we exchanged baseball caps for stocking hats in the early morning. The summer crops like tomatoes and peppers ripen much more slowly in this weather but the farmers sure like the temperature break.

On Saturday, we hosted a beginning farmer troubleshooting field day (Managing Pests, Disease and Weeds on a Diversified Vegetable farm) put on by the Land Stewardship Project. Thaddeus, our crop specialist, led the field day and he is a veritable wealth of information about the topic. He spends a lot of time visiting farms from small to large around the state and we are happy to have his knowledge as we establish our crops on this new land. There was a great turnout for the field day which turned out to be perfect weather. Pest, disease, and weed management is a topic that we and every farmer are faced with every year. With different weather, weed and pest cycles, every year is a learning year.

The past week has been rich with family on the farm. All of Abe's grandparents were here this week, as was Joan's sister so Abe was in his glory. They like to lend a hand around the farm so we got a few more projects done, like cleaning and sorting garlic and some much-needed mowing.

Every week, more crops come out of the ground, and every week, Nick seeds additional cover crops to help suppress weeds, add fertility and organic matter, and help prevent soil erosion.

SOME EVENTS TO MARK ON YOUR CALENDAR:

September 15th, Hoedown at York Farm

Our friends Andy and Irene, who own York Farm in Hutchinson, are hosting a hoe down to celebrate putting our "hoes down". There will be a potluck, barn dance with square dance calling by Shake These Bones and guests, a bonfire and community. This is a Zero Waste event so bring your own plates and utensils! RSVP to let Irene know if you are coming to help them plan out numbers for the event. Email: igenelin@gmail.com or Irene's cell: 612-968-6498

September 29th, Share Member Potluck at the Farm!

Top Ten Share Member Potluck Countdown (more to come each week):

Number 10: For those that don't know, learn the Viking lawn game Kubb. For those that do know, bring your baton tossing arm and play.

Number 9: Guess the correct weight of the giant summer squash and win a Prairie Drifter prize!

Number 8: Feed the happy chickens. Make a fowl best friend by flinging tomatoes over the fence.

Number 7: Go on a pumpkin-finding mission in the pumpkin patch.

-Best wishes from your farmers,
Joan, Nick, and Abe

Additional shares available during the next few weeks:
Pesto Share, Greens Share, Storage Tomato Share

PHENOLOGY AND WEATHER NOTES ON THE FARM FROM THE PAST WEEK

Rainfall: 0"

High Temp: 84°F

Low Temp: 48°F

Sightings: Pheasants in the parsnips and raccoons on the deck - woah, they were both a surprise!

HOW TO STORE YOUR PRODUCE

All of your produce this week can be stored in the refrigerator in plastic bags, except for those noted below. If you have room in your vegetable drawers, that's great. If not, they will be fine in the main refrigerator. Some additional info . . .

Eggplant: Does not like refrigeration. Store in a dark, cool place and use within a couple of days. Eggplant can NOT be eaten raw - you must cook before eating.

Tomatoes: Do not refrigerate. Best to take out of the plastic bag.

Garlic/Potatoes: Do not refrigerate.

Tomatillos: Store in a cool place for several days. Can store in the refrigerator for 2-3 weeks.

PRESERVING TIPS

• **Tomatoes:** If you don't want to use all of your tomatoes now, chop them up, place in Ziploc freezer bags, flatten and freeze. You can also peel them first by dropping in boiling water until they split, then dropping in cold water and skinning. Do not overfill bags or they will be a little more challenging to use later. Great for soups, sauces or chili.

RECIPES TO CHECK OUT

- Baba Ganouj (Eggplant Dip or Spread) from the Week 10 newsletter
- Ratatouille (Great combo of eggplant, tomatoes and summer squash) from the Week 10 newsletter

Watermelon Lemonade

Adapted from the Smitten Kitchen blog *We learned about this recipe from our friends at Loon Organics. Makes enough to fill two glasses with ice cubes. Easily doubled, tripled or quadrupled - yum!*

- ¼ c. fresh-squeezed lemon juice
- ½ c. fresh watermelon puree, strained through a coarse strainer to remove seeds
- 3 T. simple syrup (see instructions below)
- ¾ c. cold water and/or sparkling water

Stir it all together and serve over ice. Garnish it with a thin watermelon or lemon wedge, if you're feeling fancy.

Make your own simple syrup: Simmer one part water with one part sugar (I did a cup of each and ended up with more than I needed for a quadruple batch) until sugar has dissolved. Let cool. Or, you can simmer one part sugar with half as much water and once it has dissolved, add the second half of the water, cold, which cools the mixture down faster.

RECIPES

Cous Cous Salad

This is a favorite recipe of ours from Nick's mom. It is simple and very fresh tasting.

- 1 box couscous (10 oz. or about 1 ½ cups bulk couscous)
- 6 oz. marinate artichoke hearts, drain and reserve liquid
- 3 scallions, sliced
- 1 15 oz. can garbanzo beans
- 1 cucumber, cut in small chunks (you can peel and seed the cucumbers if desired)
- 1 c. cherry tomatoes, halved or quartered
- ¼ c. chopped fresh herb of your choice (parsley, basil, dill, cilantro, etc)
- 1 roasted chicken breast, cut into small pieces
- 1 lemon, juiced
- ½ c. olive oil
- Salt and pepper to taste
- Feta cheese (optional)

Cook couscous (if using bulk couscous, the ratio is 1 c. couscous to 1 ¼ c. water). Bring water to a boil, stir in couscous, take off the heat, let couscous absorb water for about 5 minutes. Add artichokes, scallions, garbanzo beans, cucumber, chicken, and fresh herbs. Combine lemon juice and artichoke heart liquid. Whisk in olive oil. Add to couscous. Season with salt and pepper. Add feta cheese if using. Chill.

Salsa Verde

Adapted from www.simplyrecipes.com

We love this salsa with chips, on burritos, with sautéed eggplant, on pork . . . really the combinations are limitless. You can either roast or boil the tomatillos before making the salsa.

- 1 lb. (about 8) tomatillos, papery husks removed and tomatillos rinsed well
- 1/3 c. chopped white onion
- 1/4 c. cilantro leaves
- 2 t. fresh lemon or lime juice
- 1/8 t. sugar
- 1 jalapeño pepper, stemmed, seeded and chopped
- Salt to taste
- 1-2 garlic cloves, minced (if desired)

Roasting method: Cut in half and place cut side down on a foil-lined baking sheet. Place under a broiler for about 5-7 minutes to lightly blacken the skin.

Boiling method: Place tomatillos in a saucepan, cover with water. Bring to a boil and simmer for 5 minutes. Remove tomatillos with a slotted spoon.

Place tomatillos, lime or lemon juice, onions, cilantro, chili peppers, sugar in a food processor (or blender) and pulse until all ingredients are finely chopped and mixed. Season to taste with salt.

Stir-Fried Green Beans with Cumin

Adapted from "Indian Home Cooking"

- 1 lb. green beans, ends trimmed
- 2 T. canola oil
- 1 t. cumin seeds
- 2-inch piece fresh ginger, peeled and finely grated (could substitute ginger powder)
- ¾ t. salt, or to taste
- 1T. fresh lime or lemon juice
- 1/8 t. cayenne pepper (optional)

Bring a pot of water to boil. Add beans, return to a boil and cook 2 minutes. Drain the beans and cool under cold running water and drain again. Combine the oil and cumin. Cook in a skillet over medium heat about 1 minutes, stirring constantly. Add the ginger and cook, stirring, 1 minute. Add the beans and stir to coat with the oil and spices. Sprinkle with the salt and stir. Cover, turn the heat down very low and cook, stirring three or four times, until the beans are tender and lightly browned, 10-15 minutes. Add the lime or lemon juice and sprinkle with cayenne if using. Serve hot.

Kathie's Zucchini Muffins

Adapted from www.myrecipes.com

These are a favorite weekend breakfast in our house. We make these muffins with zucchini, yellow summer squash, multi-colored carrots or beets.

- 1 2/3 c. flour (white and/or wheat)
- ¼ c. white or brown sugar
- 1 t. ground cinnamon
- 1 ¼ t. baking powder
- ½ t. baking soda
- ¼ t. salt
- 1 1/3 c. shredded zucchini, drained
- ½ c. milk or non-dairy alternative
- 2 T. canola oil
- 2 T. honey
- 1 egg

Combine flour, sugar, cinnamon, baking powder, baking soda, and salt. Combine oil, honey, egg and milk. Add dry to wet ingredients. Stir in zucchini. Do not overmix. Fill muffin tins about 2/3 full. Bake at 400 degrees for 15-20 minutes.