



# CHRONICLES OF A DRIFTER

## CSA NEWSLETTER

AUGUST 28, 2012

### IN YOUR BOX THIS WEEK . . .

**Beans:** Provider

**Cantaloupe:** Halona, Athena or Sarah's Choice

The last of the cantaloupe for the season.

**Cabbage:** Famosa Savoy

Try this sautéed in a little olive oil or butter to bring out the flavor. You could also add thinly sliced onion and garlic and season lightly with salt or a splash of lemon juice. We also like to sauté this with onion, garlic, cumin seed, and curry spices, then serve with fried ground beef or pork.

**Carrots:** Cosmic Purple, Yellowstone, and Negovia  
Great for baking and especially nice for roasting. Try grating to add color and richness to a salad.

**Celery:** Tango

This celery is very different than what you will find in the grocery store. It is less watery and has more flavor. This celery is great for use in soups, chopped fine in casseroles or tomato sauces, and is delicious in the cabbage rolls recipe in this newsletter.

**Cilantro:** Santo

**Cucumber:** Marketmore or General Lee

**Eggplant:** Listada, Pingtung, Nadia, or Black Beauty

**Garlic:** Persian Star

**Onions:** Cortland or Copra

**Peppers:** Green/Colored Bell or Sweet Italian

These are easily chopped up and frozen for use in soups, stir fries, frittatas, chilis, etc. in the winter. Simply chop and place in Ziploc bags to freeze.

**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.

**Salad Mix:** Encore or Allstar

**Scallions:** Parade

Use in the Asian Cabbage Rolls recipe.

**Summer Squash:** Dunja, Zephyr, Raven, or Success

The last of the summer squash for the season.

**Thyme**

**Cherry Tomatoes**

**Slicing Tomatoes:** New Girl, Medford, Pink Beauty, Big Beef, San Marzano, Jaune Flamee, Amish Paste, Green Zebra 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 12: NEW GROUND AND NEW ARRIVAL

Our high tunnel arrived bright and early at 6:30am last Wednesday morning with exclamations from Abe, "Wow . . . truck!". A gentleman from Iowa drove all of the high tunnel parts to the farm in the back of his pick-up and, even after a long drive, he was chipper and happy to help us unload the parts and give some good advice about putting the tunnel up. Currently, the high tunnel consists of many piles of heavy duty pipe and fittings, but within the next month, the structure will be in place. This 24x48 structure, covered with plastic, will allow us to extend our greens season and will also be a growing location for a few crops that like it warm, for example tomatoes and peppers. Nick plowed and disced the new ground for the high tunnel on Sunday so we are really looking forward to getting this construction project underway. He also plowed and disced two new fields to expand production for next year. This is one of those big check marks off the to-do list that make us realize how soon the season will be coming to a close.

After several delicious shared meals and potlucks with friends and family over the past couple of weeks, we have really been reflecting on the sharing of food and how important that has become to our immediate family and our community of friends. There is a joy and beauty in making food to be shared, and even more beauty in sitting down to enjoy that food in good company. We make an effort to be mindful in the kitchen as we prepare and eat our food, not just eating but tasting, not just filling up but enjoying. We are blessed to have abundance this season and are ever mindful of those who do not. There are days, and today is one of them, where it seems miraculous that several tons of food come from a few pounds of seed, 2.5 acres of land, water and air. Enjoy the alchemy of these elements!

### SOME EVENTS TO MARK ON YOUR CALENDAR:

#### September 15<sup>th</sup>, Hoedown at York Farm

Our friends Andy and Irene, who own York Farm in Hutchinson, are hosting a hoe down to celebrate the end of the season. 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 29<sup>th</sup>, 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.

**Number 6:** Feast on Joan's delicious ginger carrot soup.

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

### PHENOLOGY AND WEATHER NOTES ON THE FARM FROM THE PAST WEEK

Rainfall: 0.2"

High Temp: 91°F

Low Temp: 59°F

Sightings: Sumac leaves turning red.

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

## 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: Do not refrigerate.

## RECIPES TO CHECK OUT

- Cous Cous Salad in the Week 11 Newsletter
- Stir-Fried Greens Beans with Cumin in the Week 11 Newsletter

### Chicken Celery Stir Fry

Adapted from Living magazine

- 1 lb. boneless, skinless chicken breast
- 1 egg white
- 1 T. cornstarch
- 1 t. salt
- ¼ t. ground black pepper
- 2 to 3 T. vegetable oil
- 6-8 stalks celery, thinly sliced on the diagonal (about 4 cups)
- 3-inch piece of fresh ginger, peeled and thinly slivered lengthwise
- 1 jalapeno pepper (ribs and seeds removed, for less heat, if desired)
- 3 T. rice vinegar
- 1 T. sesame or olive oil
- 1 T. sugar
- 2-3 scallions, cut in 3-inch lengths

Cut chicken into thin strips, 2 1/2 to 3 inches long. In a medium bowl, whisk together egg white, cornstarch, salt and pepper until smooth. Add chicken strips, and toss to coat. Heat 1 T. oil in a large skillet over medium-high heat. Add half of coated chicken strips to skillet; cook, turning once, until golden, about 5 minutes. Transfer to a plate. Add more oil to skillet, and brown remaining chicken in same manner.

Add celery, ginger, and jalapeno to remaining oil in skillet (add additional oil, if necessary); cook, tossing, until celery is crisp-tender, 4 to 5 minutes.

Stir vinegar, sesame oil, and sugar in with vegetables. Add scallions and cooked chicken; toss, until combined and heated through, 1 to 2 minutes. Serve immediately.

You could also add additional vegetables such as bell peppers, broccoli, carrots sliced into thin matchsticks, or cabbage for additional color and flavor at the same time as you add the celery.

## RECIPES

### Asian Cabbage Rolls with Spicy Meat Filling

*Our friends Laura and Adam shared this recipe with us and it is delicious. We made these cabbage rolls this weekend and they were well worth the time in the kitchen - don't be overwhelmed by the length of the recipe! Next time we make these rolls, we would add very, very finely diced carrot. You could also grate the carrot.*

- 1 head savoy cabbage
- 1 t. salt
- ½ lb. raw ground meat (pork, turkey, Italian sausage, or beef)
- ½ c. cooked brown rice (we added a little more)
- 1 egg, beaten
- ¼ lb. shiitake mushrooms, finely chopped (you could substitute a diced summer squash)
- 3 stalks celery, chopped finely
- 1 t. toasted sesame oil (we used garlic olive oil)
- 2 T. soy, tamari and/or fish sauce
- One 1-inch piece fresh ginger, peeled and grated (we used ½-1 t. powdered ginger)
- 3 cloves garlic, finely minced
- Freshly ground black pepper
- 1 c. cilantro, chopped
- 2-3 scallions, chopped (could also use 1/3 c. chopped onion)

### SAUCE:

- 2 T. soy sauce
- 2 T. rice vinegar (or apple cider vinegar)
- ½ c. low-sodium chicken, beef or veggie broth
- 1 t. toasted sesame oil (we used garlic olive oil)
- ½ t. sugar
- ½ to 1 tsp. sriracha or other hot chili sauce (optional)

Preheat the oven to 400°F. Grease a 9 x 13 baking dish. Remove 8 large outer leaves from the head of cabbage, wash and dry. Core the remaining cabbage and chop it very fine (we only used about 3/4 of the head of cabbage). Sprinkle it with the salt and set aside in a colander. In a large bowl, mix the ground meat, mushrooms (or summer squash), celery, beaten egg, oil, soy/fish sauce, ginger, garlic, and black pepper. Stir in the scallions/onion and cilantro. Press and drain any remaining water off the salted cabbage and stir the cabbage in as well.

Lay a prepared cabbage leaf down with the stem end facing you. Place about ⅓ cup meat in the middle of the cabbage leaf in a tube shape. Chop off the excess stem on the bottom with a knife. Fold the stem end up over the meat, the sides over the stem end and the top of the leaf over that to make a bundle. Place the bundle, seam side down, in the baking dishes. Repeat with the rest of the cabbage leaves and meat mixture, placing two rows of bundles in the baking dish. We had leftover meat mixture that we pressed into a greased casserole dish, drizzled with some of the sauce and baked along with the cabbage rolls.

To make the sauce, whisk together all the ingredients in a small bowl and pour it over the cabbage rolls. Cover rolls with foil. Bake for 40-45 minutes, or until an instant-read thermometer inserted into a roll at the center of a dish registers 160° F. Serve drizzled with the pan juices.

### Roasted Eggplant Soup

Adapted from the Smitten Kitchen blog

- 3 medium tomatoes, halved
- 1 large eggplant, halved lengthwise
- 1 small onion, halved
- 4 garlic cloves, peeled
- 2 T. olive oil
- 1-2 T. balsamic vinegar
- 1 T. chopped fresh thyme or 1 t. dried
- 4 c. chicken stock or vegetable broth
- 1/4 c. heavy cream (you can add more to taste, or skip this entirely)
- 3/4 c. crumbled goat cheese or feta cheese

Preheat oven to 400°F. Arrange tomatoes, eggplant, onion and garlic on a large baking sheet, or two smaller ones. Brush or drizzle vegetables with oil and balsamic vinegar then roast them for 20 minutes, cut side up. Remove the garlic cloves. Return the pans to the oven for another 25 minutes, until the remaining vegetables are tender and brown in spots. Remove from oven and scoop eggplant from skin into a heavy, large saucepan or soup pot. Add the rest of the vegetables, the thyme and the chicken or vegetable stock and bring to a boil, then reduce to a simmer. Cook until onion is very tender, about 45 minutes (mine took longer).

Working in batches, puree soup in blender until it is as smooth as you'd like it to be. (Or, if you have an immersion blender, you can blend the soup in the pot.) Back in the pot, add the cream and bring the soup back to a simmer. Season with salt and pepper. Serve in bowls, sprinkled with goat or feta cheese.

A spicier riff: If you like to play with spices, this soup has a lot of potential. Trying using 1-2 teaspoons ground cumin, 1 teaspoon ground coriander and a pinch of red pepper flakes added in with the broth. You could also finish the soup with a squeeze of lemon juice.