



CHRONICLES OF A DRIFTER

CSA NEWSLETTER

JULY 23, 2013

IN YOUR BOX THIS WEEK . . .

Basil: Genovese

Basil is a tasty and versatile herb that is delicious in fresh salads, on sandwiches, BLTs, or in sauces or pastas. We included a recipe for pesto which would go well with the baked summer squash recipe.

Beans: Yellow Wax

Yellow wax beans can be used just like green beans. They have a nice, mild and slightly sweet flavor.

Broccoli: Belstar (paler green) or Imperial

We have really been enjoying broccoli in stir fries as well as steaming lightly and adding to burritos or in omelettes.

Carrots: Mokum, Napoli or Yaya**Cauliflower: Absolute or Fremont****Chinese Cabbage: Bilko**

This is a nice mild variety of cabbage that can be eaten fresh (tacos, burritos, cold salads) or cooked (stir fries, in soups, see cabbage roll recipe). Nick made a tasty stir fry last week of ground beef (you could also use eggs) with rice, broccoli, Chinese cabbage and garlic that was fast and delicious.

Cucumber: Dasher II or Marketmore

We have included cucumbers in most lunches and dinners, peeling and thinly slicing, adding to salads or just dipping in dressing. If you have a hard time with the skin, simply peel.

Fennel: Orion

Fennel is the vegetable with a white bulb and green fronds that has a light flavor of anise. The entire vegetable is edible. You can thinly slice the bulb and/or fronds and add to salads, sandwiches or egg salad. We really enjoy fennel with marinara sauces and it adds a very delicious touch to meatballs as well.

Kohlrabi: Winner

Kohlrabi is the slightly space-age looking vegetable in your box. Our favorite way to eat it is to trim off the greens, peel the bulb, slice the bulb thinly and eat raw. It is great dipped in a dressing, guacamole, hummus or just sprinkled with salt.

Lettuce: Green Star or Concept**Onions: Walla Walla and Purplette**

These are early, fresh onions that you can use in any recipe that calls for onion.

Parsley: Italian

Summer Squash/Zucchini: Zephyr, Raven, Elite, Multipik, or Success

WEEK 6: BUZZ BUZZ

What a nice break from the heat these last few days have been. Though we would welcome more rain, we are happy for the quarter inch we received on Saturday night. It helped the small-seeded crops come out of the 90-plus degree heat from last week. The heat did help spur on a lot of plant growth and fruit maturity. We have spotted some of the first ripe cherry tomatoes and eggplant in the field as well as a few slicer tomatoes in the high tunnel. There is not enough yet to include in the boxes but they are not too far off.

We took a family walk out to the southern edge of our farm on Sunday morning to look for wild raspberries. There were not many, perhaps only a quarter cup total, but bringing a two-year old on this adventure made us feel as if we had scored several quarts. Abe was excited for each and every berry and reminded us that the quality time was a much greater reward than the quantity of berries.

Our walk led us by the five bee hives that our friend Carol keeps at the farm on the southern edge of our fields. She has added supers on for honey and the bees were very active in and out of the hives. This is a win-win for both of us as our crops and landscape provide flowers for Carol's bees and Carol's bees help to pollinate our crops such as summer squash, cucumbers, peppers, winter squash, tomatoes, eggplant, and the list goes on. We also have some areas in a buckwheat cover crop which provides another dinner plate for the bees to enjoy. We are grateful for every single pollinator on the farm as this is what allows us to provide you with some many of our favorite summer and fall crops. Around the country, there has been an alarming loss of honey bees from one season to the next in the past several years. Multiple causes are suspected but habitat loss, pesticides, fungicides, viruses and parasites are a few of the known causes. This loss does not just mean a loss of honey but also the crops they pollinate including fruits, nuts and many of veggies mentioned above. With that in mind, we do what we can to create habitat for the pollinators on the farm and avoid pesticide use, in keeping with organic standards as well as our own desires.

And speaking of flowers, you are welcome to come to the farm to pick flowers if you are in the area or are out for a visit. We have some lovely zinnias, sunflowers, bachelor buttons, larkspur, celosia and sunflowers blooming so come on out and pick if you would like a splash of color in your home. We also have a small herb garden on the left side of the driveway as you drive into the farm where you can pick your own thyme, parsley, sage, savory, mint, and nasturtiums.

We wrote about having our organic certification inspection last Friday. All went well with our inspection and we were happy to have the opportunity to go over our records and walk fields with our inspector as well. Enjoy these days as July wraps up - hard to believe that August is just around the corner!

-Best wishes from your farmers,
Joan, Nick, Abe and the littlest Drifter-to-be

PHENOLOGY AND WEATHER NOTES ON THE FARM FROM THE PAST WEEK

Rainfall: 0.23"

High Temp: 94°F

Low Temp: 61°F

Sightings: Wild raspberries ripening in the grove. Tiny, few, but so flavorful.

Upcoming Events on the Farm or around the area

- **Share Member Farm Tour:** Saturday morning, August 10. Help dig potatoes, meet other share members, and enjoy a tour of the farm.
- **Share Member Potluck:** Sunday afternoon, September 22. More details as the event comes closer.

Please remember to return your CSA boxes to your pick-up site. You may also choose to bring bags to transfer your produce into at your pick-up site so you do not have to remember to bring the boxes back. Thank you!

HOW TO STORE YOUR PRODUCE

Your produce this week can be stored in the refrigerator in plastic bags. If you have room in your vegetable drawers, that's great. If not, they will be fine in the main refrigerator. A few exceptions . . .

Basil will brown in the fridge as it does not like being cold. Keep in a cool spot out of the sun on your counter with the bag vented but use soon for the best flavor!

RECIPES ON OUR WEBSITE

- Kohlrabi Fries
- Summer Squash Chocolate Chip Cookies

RECIPES FROM PAST NEWSLETTERS

- Chicken, Broccoli and Snap Pea Stir Fry (omit peas, add beans or any other veggie you desire!): Week 5, 2013
- Baked Summer Squash: Week 5, 2013
- Basic Pesto: Week 5, 2013
- Spicy and Sweet Chinese Cabbage: Week 4, 2013 (can also use savoy cabbage)
- Braised Pork and Fennel Meatballs: Week 14, 2012
- Fennel Orange Muffins: Week 15, 2012

PRESERVING TIPS

- Snap Beans: To freeze, trim ends, wash well, and cut beans into 2-4 inch lengths. Blanch in boiling water for 3 minutes. Cool. Drain. Pack beans into freezer bags or boxes. Seal, label with the year and freeze.
- Broccoli: Wash and remove leaves. Separate heads into convenient-size sections. You can also freeze small stem pieces. Wash well. Blanch in boiling water for 3-4 minutes. Cool, drain, and pack into freezer bags. Seal, label and freeze.
- Zucchini/Summer Squash: Grate, drain and pack into freezer bags to use for winter muffins, breads, waffles and pancakes. Some of our favorite recipes call for about 2 cups of grated summer squash so we put that into quart freezer bags and just pull out a bag when we want to bake.

Recipes

Asian Stuffed Chinese Cabbage Rolls

Adapted from aggieskitchen.com

- 1 lb ground beef, turkey or pork
 - 2 carrots, shredded
 - 1 c. cooked brown rice or quinoa
 - 3-4 garlic cloves, minced
 - 2 T. fresh ginger, minced (could use 1-2 t. dried ginger if you cannot find fresh ginger)
 - 1 small onion, minced
 - 3 T. soy sauce
 - 2 T. sesame oil (can substitute olive oil)
 - 2 t. rice vinegar
 - 1 t. chili or chili-garlic sauce (optional)
 - Salt and pepper, to taste
 - Leaves from 1 large of Chinese cabbage (you may substitute savoy cabbage)
- We like to add some additional chopped Chinese cabbage to the filling of our cabbage rolls.

Preheat oven to 400 degrees. Prepare filling by gently combining uncooked beef (or turkey), shredded carrots, cooked rice (or quinoa), garlic, ginger, onion, soy sauce, sesame oil, chili sauce and a pinch of salt and black pepper in a large mixing bowl. To make your leaves easy to roll, use a rolling pin to flatten to make leaves more pliable. If you find that your leaves are on the smaller side, use two to roll, overlapping both ends to make one big leaf. Spoon your filling into each leaf. Carefully roll each leaf tightly and place side by side in a large baking dish. Pour 1 cup of water over stuffed cabbage rolls and cover with aluminum foil. Bake in preheated oven for about 30-35 minutes or until completely cooked through. Serve with juices from baking dish and additional chili sauce.

Grandpa Fritz's Freezer/Refrigerator Pickles

This is from our friend Irene at York Farm in Hutchinson and this week seemed like a very appropriate time to include this recipe. We made several pint jars of these to freeze last year and tend to forget about them until early the next summer when our freezer has emptied out. Abe and I really enjoy them and can go through a pint a week. If you freeze them, simply take out of the freezer and place in the fridge one day before you plan to eat them.

- 7 c. of peeled or not peeled cucumbers, sliced very thinly (we have preferred the peeled version for freezer pickles)
- 1 c. of onions, sliced thinly
- 1 T. salt

Stir these items together. Let them stand for 2 hours on the counter, or overnight in the fridge. In a separate bowl, mix together 2 cups of sugar, 1 cup of vinegar (lemon juice is another variation) and dill or dill weed (optional). Drain the cucumbers. Pack into jars and pour liquid over them to 1/2 inch from the top. Leave a little extra room if you plan to freeze. Label and refrigerate for one week before tasting, or place into the freezer and enjoy within one year.

Italian Antipasto Salad with Fennel

Adapted from www.culinaryhill.com

- 1 head lettuce
- 1 large fennel bulb, sliced (see preparation note below)
- 1 c. grape or cherry tomatoes, halved
- ½ c. pitted Kalamata olives, halved
- ½ c. chopped pepperoni slices
- ¼ c. sun-dried tomatoes packed in oil, drained
- 10 fresh basil leaves, sliced
- Freshly ground black pepper
- Red Wine vinaigrette (recipe below)

In a large bowl, combine lettuce, fennel, tomatoes, olives, pepperoni, sun-dried tomatoes, and basil. Season to taste with black pepper. Top with red wine vinaigrette and toss until evenly coated.

Red Wine Vinaigrette:

- ¼ c. olive oil
- ¼ c. red wine vinegar
- 1 T. Dijon mustard
- 1 tsp. dried oregano
- 1 tsp. kosher salt

Combine all ingredients in a small jar with a tight-fitting lid and shake to combine. Or, combine in a small bowl and whisk together. Pour over salad and toss until evenly coated.

To prepare fennel:

Slice off the stems immediately above the bulb. Use a few fronds to top off the salad. Reserve remaining stems or fronds for salads, sandwiches or use thinly sliced in egg or tuna salad. Slice off the bottom of the bulb. Remove the outermost layer of the bulb (tends to be tough). Slice or chop the remaining bulb as desired, removing any tough parts.