



CHRONICLES OF A DRIFTER

CSA NEWSLETTER

JULY 30, 2013

IN YOUR BOX THIS WEEK . . .

Beans: Provider

Amelia recommends trying these beans out with a lemon tahini dressing or sauce - delicious!

Beets: Red Ace

Beets are richly nutritious and very versatile. They can be boiled, roasted, sautéed, or used in soups or even baked goods. We even slice them raw, very thinly and tuck them into sandwiches.

Broccoli: Imperial

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

Carrots: Napoli, Mokum or Yaya**Cabbage: Super Red**

This is a gorgeous cabbage for cold salads or slaws.

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.

Eggplant: Nadia, Listada, Traviata or Pingtung Long

Eggplant must be cooked before being eaten. We love to slice and sauté eggplant with garlic, salt and pepper then serve on a sandwich with pesto and tomato. It is also a nice addition to marinara sauce - dice and sauté in oil, garlic and salt then add to your marinara. Great in lasagna!

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.

Kale: Green Curly**Onions: Walla Walla and Purplette**

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

Potatoes: Baby Red Norland**Summer Squash/Zucchini: Zephyr, Raven, Elite, Multipik, or Success****Thyme**

Great in salads, soups and breads. We love thyme on chicken and beef or with a side dish of roasted or sautéed summer squash.

Tomatoes: Mixed Cherry Tomatoes OR Slicers

The tomatoes are just starting to ripen. They are coming in a little slowly due to the chilly weather.

WEEK 7: CONVERSATIONS IN THE POTATO FIELD

"Where's my bucket?"

"Right here. Are you ready to dig potatoes?"

"Yes! Woah, that's a BIG one. Oh! MORE potatoes. That's a *red* one!"

"Can you put those gently in your bucket?"

"Yup, put them in SO gentle so they don't bang. Woah mama, that's a funky trunky one! (New expression - we've never heard that one before.) Are we gonna eat these potatoes?"

"Yes, for dinner."

"Good, Abey *likes* potatoes because Abey likes the *taste* of them. And Abey likes the *color* of them. Those are *red* potatoes. Is papa digging?"

"Yes, he is."

"Good job Papa!"

A glimpse into how exciting vegetable farming can be. Are you intrigued? Come on out to the farm on Saturday, August 10th to join us for a farm tour and potato dig. You are not required to dig potatoes, but you are very welcome to join us and get your hands in the dirt. We will be digging a new variety of potato being developed and trialed by the U of M. The U gave seed potatoes to CSA farmers to trial and have their share members try out. Whether or not you dig potatoes, you are welcome to take some home and chime in on their flavor! We will also be giving informal farm tours and a snack will be provided. Give us a call or email if you plan to come so that we can plan for snacks. After visiting the farm, you could swing down to the Garlic Festival in Hutchinson for lunch and to visit all of their great vendors and displays.

The last week of weather had us questioning our calendar. It felt more like September than the end of July and we had to remind ourselves to put on a hoodie when going out to feed the pigs and chickens in the early morning. The cool temps were a nice break for the farmers, though it did slow down the ripening of some of the summer crops, especially tomatoes. This week is looking a little warmer so there should be more tomatoes in your box in the coming weeks. This week will just be a taste of either cherry tomatoes, slicer tomatoes from the high tunnel, or some early-maturing tomatoes in the field. There are lots of beautiful peppers in the high tunnel and field and they should also be ripening soon as well.

The garlic harvest will be underway this week. Soon, these flavorful and fragrant bulbs will be in your boxes. They need a couple of weeks to cure in our packshed so that they hold well in storage. Looking forward to roasted garlic soon! We will be offering pesto shares after the garlic has had the opportunity to cure so keep your eyes open for that opportunity. This is a fun time of year as the storage crops slowly make their way in. The big onion harvest will be just around the corner as well. If you would like to have a hand in that harvest, let us know. This is a favorite crop to harvest and we always enjoy company as we bring in these beautiful roots. And . . . the hens are finally laying! Let us know if you are interested in having eggs delivered along with your share - this is a first come, first served opportunity.

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

Upcoming Events on the Farm or around the area

- **Share Member Farm Tour:** Saturday, August 10 at 10:00am. Help dig potatoes (though not required!), 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!

PHENOLOGY AND WEATHER NOTES ON THE FARM FROM THE PAST WEEK

Rainfall: 0.43"

High Temp: 80°F

Low Temp: 48°F

Sightings: Swamp milkweed in the wet areas of the farm.

A few red ripe raspberries and currants on our new perennial plantings! Ruby-throated hummingbird feeding on the hosta flowers.

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!

Potatoes do not need to be kept in the fridge but should be stored in a cool, dry, dark place. Keep out of the light as their skins will green if exposed to light, making the spuds mildly toxic.

RECIPES ON OUR WEBSITE

- Summer Squash Chocolate Chip Cookies
- Pesto Sandwich with Eggplant

RECIPES FROM PAST NEWSLETTERS

- Braised Pork and Fennel Meatballs: Week 14, 2012
- Fennel Orange Muffins: Week 15, 2012
- Grandpa Fritz; Freezer/Refrigerator Pickles: Week 6, 2013
- Italian Antipasto Salad with Fennel: Week 6, 2013
- Double Dark Chocolate Beet Muffins: Week 4, 2012
- Thai Eggplant Dip: Week 7, 2012
- Eggplant Summer Squash Lasagna: Week 8, 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

The Skinny on Beets

Beets are usually either adored or held at a distance. If you did not grow up with beets in your palate they may be an acquired taste. I (Joan) was completely turned on to them when gardening with my aunt at her farm. She would just boil the beets, slice them up, and serve with butter. They are also delicious boiled, sliced and served with a splash of vinegar, salt and pepper. [How to boil beets . . .](#) Cut off the greens leaving about one inch attached. Don't cut anything off the root end. Gently scrub the beets being careful not to cut the skin. In a medium saucepan, cover beets with water, bring to a gentle boil and cook, covered, 30-45 minutes until tender. Add more water as needed while they cook. Drain and let sit until cool enough to handle. You can cool them in cold water. The tops should pull off easily or they can be cut off. The skins will slip right off.

Grilled Eggplant and Olive Pizza

Adapted from Gourmet, August 2009 via Smitten Kitchen

- 1 garlic clove, minced
- 1/3 c. extra-virgin olive oil
- 1 eggplant, cut into 3/4-inch-thick rounds
- 1 pound store-bought pizza or homemade pizza dough at room temperature
- 5 ounces sliced provolone, cut into short thin matchsticks (could substitute any grated cheese of your choice)
- Handful pitted green or black olives, coarsely chopped (1/3 c.)
- 1/4 c. chopped flat-leaf parsley (could also use basil)

To make this pizza on a grill, or in a grill pan: Stir together garlic and oil. Brush some of garlic oil on both sides of eggplant and season with 3/4 teaspoon salt and 1/2 teaspoon pepper. Grill over direct medium heat, covered, turning once, until tender, 6 to 8 minutes total. Cut into roughly one-inch pieces and set aside. Stretch dough into about a 12- by 10-inch rectangle (or into the shape of your grill pan, which in my case, was square) on a large baking sheet or your counter and lightly brush with garlic oil. Oil grill rack, then put dough, oiled side down, on grill. Brush top with more garlic oil. Grill, covered, until underside is golden-brown, about 2 to 3 minutes.

Using tongs, return crust, grilled side up, to baking sheet. Scatter eggplant, cheese, olives, and parsley (whoops, forgot mine) over crust. Slide pizza from sheet onto grill and grill, covered, until underside is golden-brown and cheese is melted, about 3 to 5 minutes. (If you're using an oven-safe grill pan, you can slide the pan into a preheated 500 degree oven at this point, as we did, which gets the toppings that much more blistered.) Season to taste with salt, pepper and a red pepper flakes.

To make this pizza in the oven: You can either fry or roast the eggplant slices, brushed with garlic oil, until tender. Prepare the pizza as you would any other, rolling or stretching out the dough, mounding on the toppings and sliding it onto a baking sheet or pizza stone in an oven that has been preheated to its top temperature. It will be ready in about 10-15 minutes.

Colcannon with a Twist

This is traditionally made with cabbage but you can use broccoli or kale as a tasty twist.

- 1 1/2 lb. potatoes
- 3 c. broccoli, separated into small florets OR 1 bunch kale, stemmed and coarsely chopped
- 1- 1 1/2 c. onion, chopped
- 1/4 c. milk or non-dairy alternative
- 2 T. butter or Earth balance
- 3/4 c. grated cheese (optional if you can't do dairy)
- Salt and pepper

Boil potatoes in water until tender. Drain, reserving cooking water. Boil broccoli/kale and onion in the potato water for about 3-4 minutes. Drain vegetables. Mash potatoes with milk and butter. Season with salt and pepper. Stir broccoli/kale and onion into potatoes, then add cheese and mix again. Reserve some cheese to sprinkle on top. Spread potatoes into a greased casserole, sprinkle on remaining cheese. Heat casserole through in a 350 degree oven until cheese on top is slightly brown.

Sweet and Sour Red Cabbage

Adapted from Bon Appetit

- 2 T. vegetable oil
- 1/2 onion, sliced
- 1/2 apple, peeled, cored, chopped
- 3-4 cups thinly sliced red cabbage
- 1/4 c. apple cider vinegar
- 1/8 - 1/4 c. sugar
- 1/4 t. celery seed
- 1/4 diced, cooked bacon
- Salt and pepper

Heat oil in heavy large saucepan over medium-high heat. Add onion and apple; saute until golden, about 7 minutes. Add cabbage, vinegar, sugar and celery seed and cook until cabbage is crisp-tender and liquid is reduced to a glaze, about 10 minutes. Mix in bacon. Season with salt & pepper.