



# CHRONICLES OF A DRIFTER

## CSA NEWSLETTER

### AUGUST 8, 2013

#### IN YOUR BOX THIS WEEK . . .

**Basil:** Genovese

**Beans:** Tavera

This is a French filet bean, slender and tender!

**Beets:** Red Ace or Merlin

Beets are richly nutritious and very versatile. They can be boiled, roasted, sautéed, or used in soups or even baked goods.

**Broccoli or Cauliflower**

**Carrots:** Napoli, Mokum or Yaya

**Celery:** Tango

You will find this celery to be very different than what you find in the store. Most store-bought celery is grown in cool valleys in California with a lot of irrigation and even temperatures. Celery is also one of the vegetables grown with the most pesticides (up to 60 pesticide residues have been detected by the USDA!) and here we use none. The celery grown in this region is darker, smaller, and a little more intense in flavor so it is most appropriate for cooking. We love this celery in stir fry, soup, chili, egg salad and for making vegetable stock.

**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.

**Dill**

**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 nice in marinara sauce - dice and sauté in oil, garlic and salt then add to your marinara. Great in lasagna!

**Onions:** Cipollini

"Cipollini" literally means "little onion" in Italian.

These small, flat onions are fantastic for roasting or caramelizing!

**Pepper:** Green/Colored Bell or Heirloom Peppers

(Jimmy Nardello or Tolly's Sweet Italian)

All peppers in the box this week are sweet peppers!

**Potatoes:** Baby Red Norland

These baby new potatoes have a young, tender skin and do not store as long as other potatoes, so use relatively soon. Oh so good with a little butter and served up with steamed beans and glazed carrots.

**Salad Mix**

**Summer Squash/Zucchini**

**Tomatoes:** Mixed Cherry Tomatoes and Slicers

The tomatoes are just starting to ripen. They are coming in a little slowly due to the chilly weather. This week you have a little sample of the mix of cherry tomatoes as well as a few slicers.

#### WEEK 8: CREATING HABITAT

You might just be tired of this topic by now, but pollinators absolutely fascinate us! We had our visit from the Xerces Society last week Friday as they are writing a Pollinator Conservation Plan for the farm this year. This plan will help us manage our acreage to be friendly to a wide range of pollinators, especially bees. We spent about three hours with Sarah who did the site visit, and she taught us a great deal about the beneficial species of plants already on our farm as well as others that would do well here to attract pollinators. As mentioned in earlier newsletters, pollinators are critical to the production of many of our crops so we have great reasons to make them welcome on the farm. Sarah's visit made us dream of all of the fantastic practices we can put into place over the next 5-10 years, not only to attract and feed pollinators, but also to feed ourselves and beautify the landscape. One of the goals of our plantings are to provide forage for pollinators from spring through the fall. This is easy in the summer when so many crops, flowers, shrubs and trees are blooming, but a little more challenging in the spring and fall. We are hoping to incorporate more fruit trees and shrubs which provide some great early forage as well as adding to the mix of early flowering plants in our native grass/forb plantings.

One great tidbit we learned is that bees prefer dense plantings of flowers such that they can feed in one place all day rather than flying from single flower to single flower. They are especially interested in lupine, echinacea, bee balm, swamp milkweed, and liatris so we are looking forward to incorporating dense plantings of those flowers around the farm next year. Unbeknownst to us, Abe was creating great bee habitat by piling sticks around our yard. Apparently, bees enjoy nesting in snags and brush piles so Abe is doing his part to make the pollinators happy as well. Sarah was fairly amused by his multitude of stick piles! He and his Grandma JoAnn spend many an hour grooming the lawn to look for sticks.

We were able to harvest all of our garlic last week and it is now hanging in the packshed to cure. You will be seeing garlic in your later boxes this year. We do not have the quantity we have had in past years due to the poor garlic crop last year. A garlic disease swept through the Midwest last year due a pest that came north with the unseasonable weather so we had to start fresh with newly ordered seed garlic rather than depending on saving our own seed last year. We will be building up our crop over the next year or two. The garlic harvest marks a turn of seasons for us. Soon to come will be our big onion harvest, then before you know it winter squash and the final haul of potatoes. Though the summer crops are just starting to gear up due to the cool temperatures and we are just into the early days of August, seeing the garlic hanging in the packshed does start to smack of the coming of fall.

-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. You can also return the cherry tomato pint containers for reuse. Thank you!

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

Rainfall: 1.2"

High Temp: 80°F

Low Temp: 53°F

Sightings: A chorus of cicadas throughout the day. One little baby leopard frog outside of the greenhouse - we have not seen nearly as many frogs around the farm this year as in past years and were glad to see this one!

## 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. Karen, one of our work shares, recommends putting the basil stems in a jar of water on the counter and lightly covering with a plastic bag to keep fresh.

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.

Eggplant should not be refrigerated. Store on the counter and use soon.

## RECIPES ON OUR WEBSITE

- Summer Squash Chocolate Chip Cookies
- Pesto Sandwich with Eggplant

## RECIPES FROM PAST NEWSLETTERS

- Grilled Eggplant and Olive Pizza: Week 7, 2013
- Double Dark Chocolate Beet Muffins: Week 4, 2012
- Thai Eggplant Dip: Week 7, 2012
- Eggplant Summer Squash Lasagna: Week 8, 2012
- The Skinny on Beets: Week 8, 2013

## PRESERVING TIPS

- 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/Cauliflower: 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

### Chicken Celery Salad

Adapted from Persian-recipes.com

- 2 chicken breasts
- 4 celery sticks, chopped thinly
- 1/2 c. finely chopped walnuts
- 1/3 c. olive oil (adjust amount to your liking)
- 1/2 c. mayo (adjust amount to your liking, could substitute with plain yogurt or sour cream)
- Salt and pepper to taste
- 1/8 t. or more turmeric (optional, adds a beautiful yellow color)
- 1 small onion

#### Directions:

Boil the chicken in a pot just covered with water. Add a chopped up onion, salt, pepper, and if desired some turmeric to the water. Allow the chicken to cook thoroughly. Once the chicken is cooked remove it from the water and place it aside until it cools down. When it is cooled down shred the chicken up and add to a bowl.

Add the chopped up celery, finely chopped walnuts, olive oil, and mayo to the shredded chicken and mix the contents. If you want to add more salt and/or pepper this would be the time to do so. Refrigerate for a few hours before serving. Serve with bread or eat plain. Fantastic in a pita.

### Simple, Good and Tasty Pasta

With the first tomatoes upon us and basil beautiful and aromatic, we have been loving a simple blend of fresh pasta. Cook your favorite pasta according to directions (we are particular to spaghetti or linguini for this dish). Quarter and thinly slice one or two summer squash or zucchini and sauté in olive oil with a quarter cup of chopped onion until just tender. Season with pizza seasoning and salt. Spritz with a bit of fresh lemon juice. Chop a couple of tomatoes into small chunks. Chop a bunch of basil. Serve pasta in bowls, top with tomatoes, basil, a drizzle of olive oil, sautéed summer squash, garlic salt and grated cheese of your choice. This is fast, fresh, and delicious! You could also add sautéed eggplant to this dish.

### Eggplant Caponata Crostini

- 2 T. olive oil, plus more for grilling
- 1 large onion, finely chopped
- 2 T. golden raisins
- 2 T. pine nuts
- 2 garlic cloves, thinly sliced
- 1/4 to 1/2 t. crushed red-pepper flakes
- 1/2 c. tomato paste
- 1 t. unsweetened cocoa powder
- 2 T. sugar, plus more if needed
- 1 small eggplant, cut into 1/2-inch cubes
- 1/3 c. white-wine vinegar
- Coarse salt
- 8 1/4-inch-thick diagonal slices baguette
- Fresh basil leaves, for garnish

In a 5-quart Dutch oven or pot, heat oil over medium-high. Add onion, raisins, pine nuts, garlic, and red-pepper flakes; cook stirring occasionally, until onion has softened, 4 to 6 minutes. Add tomato paste, cocoa powder, and sugar; cook, stirring, until tomato paste is fragrant, 2 to 3 minutes. Add eggplant, vinegar, and 1/3 cup water. Cover and cook, stirring occasionally, until eggplant is tender and mixture is thick, 7 to 10 minutes. Season with salt and more sugar (up to 1 tablespoon), as desired. Preheat a grill pan over medium-high heat. Brush both sides bread with olive oil. Grill, turning once, until toasted and grill marks appear, about 2 minutes per side. Alternatively, you could broil bread in the oven. Top grilled bread with caponata; garnish with basil leaves. Caponata can be refrigerated up to 5 days in an airtight container; let cool completely before storing.

### Lemon Dill Yogurt Sauce

Adapted from MarthaStewart.com

- 1 c. plain soy or regular yogurt
- 2-3 T. chopped fresh dill
- 2 t. lemon zest
- 1 T. olive oil

Combine ingredients and whisk well. This is a gorgeous sauce to add to lightly steamed filet beans over a bed of boiled potatoes or rice. Pairs very well with fish or grilled chicken.