



CHRONICLES OF A DRIFTER

CSA NEWSLETTER

AUGUST 13, 2013

IN YOUR BOX THIS WEEK . . .

Beans: Jade
Broccoli: Imperial
Carrots: Necoras
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

Eggplant: Globe and Japanese

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: Purplette and Walla Walla

Pepper: Green/Colored Bell or Heirloom Peppers (Jimmy Nardello or Tolli's Sweet Italian)

Hot Pepper: Jalapeno (medium hot)

These are the two smallest green peppers in your box. Use gloves when cutting up. Great for fresh salsa!

Parsley: Italian

Try in chimichurri sauce or make a parsley pesto. We will also use parsley in fresh salsa. You can freeze extra parsley by chopping, packing into ice cube trays, covering with water, then freezing. Pop out into freezer bags once frozen. Great for winter soups and stews.

Potatoes: Experimental Variety (see farm news for more info!) or 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

BLT time!

Summer Squash/Zucchini

Tomatoes: Cherry Tomatoes (Sungold, Esterina, Sweetie and Black Cherry) and Slicers/Heirlooms (New Girl, Big Beef, Pink Beauty, Persimmon, Black Prince, Jaune Flamee)

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.

PHENOLOGY AND WEATHER NOTES ON THE FARM FROM THE PAST WEEK

Rainfall: 0.6"

High Temp: 82°F

Low Temp: 55°F

Sightings: Perseid Meteor Shower. Baby toads in the field. Large flocks of blackbirds swooping into the black cherry tree in front of the house.

WEEK 9: POTATOES, TOMATOES AND ONIONS – OH MY

It was a great pleasure to have several CSA members and their families out to the farm on Saturday for the Farm Tour and Potato Dig. The weather was beautiful on Saturday and we enjoyed the conversations we had around the tour, and while digging and washing potatoes. Many hands make light work and we dug about 150 pounds of potatoes in an hour. Many of the potatoes dug made their way home with members who came to the dig but the potatoes are also in your box this week. Most, but not all of you received a new variety of potato being developed by the North Central Potato Breeding Team, a cooperative effort between Michigan State University, the University of Minnesota, North Dakota State University, and the University of Wisconsin. This group gave seed potatoes to several farms around the area to trial. If you received this variety, you will have a green slip of paper in your potato bag with a few survey questions on it. We would love for you to fill out this survey with your opinions about this new variety of potato. The potato variety does not yet have a name (okay, yes, it does but it is a long combination of letters and numbers!) so we would love to hear from you what you think this potato should be named. You can return the survey to your pick-up site or can mail it to us at the farm. We will share your opinions with the breeding team. We had a batch of these potatoes this weekend but I will not spoil your impressions with our opinion!

Much of the last week on the farm has been spent weeding, mowing down crops that are done for the season and doing field cultivation to incorporate crops. We have been trying to keep fields as clean as possible to reduce our weed bank for future years to come. The last transplants are now in the ground and we just have fall greens to seed in the coming weeks. We also spend a great deal of time harvesting during this time of year. The summer crops just keep rolling in once they start so they keep us on our toes. Field tomatoes are slow but we are starting to see the Jaune Flamee (small orange), Red Zebra, New Girl, Big Beef and Pink Beauty varieties ripening out there. The cherry tomatoes are now kicking in and we have really been enjoying the variety of flavors this year. The large field that we have kept in alfalfa for the last three years just had its second cutting and baling and very soon we will be working up portions of that field to plant in next year. We will be adding about 1.5 acres of vegetables next year and will be planting a cover crop called a fall green manure mix there this fall to add nutrients and organic matter.

The shadecloth will be going up on the greenhouse this week to prepare the way for curing onions soon. The tops of a few varieties have starting flopping over now, signaling time for onion harvest. The big onion harvest has our mouths watering for roasts and winter soups and stews to come. Not to mention caramelized onions on pizza! Speaking of pizza, *many* of the items in your box are fantastic on pizza. We had a delicious summer squash, broccoli and tomato pizza last week - a great combo of flavors. Enjoy good times in the kitchen!

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

Upcoming Events on the Farm or around the area

- **Annual Hoedown at York Farm:** Saturday, September 10, 5:00pm. Potluck, bonfire, dancing and music at our friends Andy and Irene's farm in Hutchinson. We are co-sponsoring this event with several other local farms and businesses. Bring a dish to pass and enjoy the evening!
- **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 bring the boxes back. You can also return the cherry tomato pint containers for reuse. Thank you!

HOW TO STORE YOUR PRODUCE

Your produce this week can be stored in the refrigerator (drawers or main refrigerator) in plastic bags. A few exceptions . . .

Potatoes Store 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.

Carrots Remove green tops for longer storage.

Tomatoes Remove from bag once you get home and store on the counter, shoulder side down.

RECIPES ON OUR WEBSITE

- Pesto Sandwich with Eggplant
- Wild Rice Salad with Celery and Walnuts

RECIPES FROM PAST NEWSLETTERS

- Thai Eggplant Dip: Week 7, 2012
- Eggplant Summer Squash Lasagna: Week 8, 2012
- Chicken Celery Salad: Week 8, 2013
- Eggplant Caponata Crostini: Week 8, 2013
- Simple, Good and Tasty Pasta: Week 8, 2013
- Ratatouille Sandwiches (eggplant, summer squash, peppers, and tomatoes): Week 10, 2012
- Chicken Celery Stir Fry: Week 12, 2012 (uses peppers, celery, jalapeno, onion; can add broccoli, carrots, etc)

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: 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.
- Celery: Wash thoroughly. Chop stems, place into freezer bags and freeze. Great in winter soups or stocks or in the crock pot with a roast.

Recipes

Cream of Celery Soup with Bacon

Adapted from www.thekitchn.com

- 4 strips bacon
- 1 T. butter or Earth Balance
- 5 cc (loosely packed) chopped celery, stalks and tops (if desired)
- 1 medium onion, chopped
- 2 cloves garlic, chopped
- 1 T. fresh thyme or 1 t. dried thyme
- 1 medium baking potato, peeled and cubed
- 2 c. vegetable or chicken stock
- 2 c. whole milk or non-dairy alternative
- salt and pepper

Lay the bacon in the bottom of a large stock pot or dutch oven. Cook over low heat for about 15 or 20 minutes, until crisp (cooking time will depend on how thick your bacon is). Remove and set aside on paper towels. Add butter to the pot, increase the heat slightly, and add celery, onion, garlic, and thyme. Season well with salt and pepper. Cook, stirring occasionally, until vegetables are soft, about 15 minutes.

Add the potato, stock, and milk to the pot and bring the mixture to a simmer. Cover and cook for 30 minutes, stirring occasionally to keep the milk from forming a film, until potato is very soft. Purée the soup with an immersion blender or by transferring it to a food processor or blender. Season to taste with salt (we added at least 2 or 3 more teaspoons) and pepper (about 1 teaspoon). Serve with cooked bacon crumbled on top.

Broccoli Fries

Adapted from babysavers.com

- ½ - 1 head fresh broccoli
- 1 garlic clove, peeled and thinly sliced (or 1 t. minced garlic)
- 1-2 T. olive oil
- ¼ t. salt (Kosher or sea salt, if possible)
- freshly ground black pepper
- 1 t. lemon juice
- 2 T. parmesan cheese (omit if you cannot eat cheese)

Preheat oven to 425 degrees. Cut the broccoli florets from the thick stalks, leaving an inch or two of stalk attached to the florets. Toss the rest of the stalks. Cut the remaining pieces into finger-food size pieces. Wash the florets and thoroughly dry them with paper towels. Make sure they're 100% dry. If there's moisture, the broccoli will end up steamed and tender, not browned and crisp. Put the florets in a bowl and toss them with the garlic, salt and pepper and enough olive oil to coat each piece. Arrange the broccoli on a cookie sheet in a single layer. Roast for 20 to 25 minutes, until crisp-tender and the tips of some of the florets are browned. If they start to get too brown midway through cooking, flip the broccoli with a spatula to expose some not-brown parts. Remove from the oven and immediately toss with lemon juice and Parmesan.

Carrot Walnut Scones

Adapted from noteatingoutinny.com

- 1 c. whole wheat flour
- 1 c. all-purpose flour
- 1/3 c. cold unsalted butter or Earth Balance, cut into cubes
- 3 T. sugar
- 4 t. baking powder
- 1 egg
- 1/4 c. milk or non-dairy alternative
- ½ c. shredded carrot
- 1/3 c. walnut pieces (optional, could also substitute dried currants)
- 1/2 t. cinnamon
- 1/2 t. ground ginger
- 1/4 t. nutmeg (optional)
- 1/4 t. salt

Combine the dry ingredients in a large bowl. Cut in the butter with a pastry cutter or using your fingers until butter pieces are no larger than a pea. Make a well in the center and add the egg and milk. Beat gently with a fork. Add the shredded carrot and continue stirring, scraping down some of the dry ingredients from the sides as you stir. Add the walnuts about halfway into mixing. Stir until all ingredients are incorporated.

Preheat oven to 375 degrees. Pat dough into a ball and turn onto a lightly floured surface. Press down into a round, evenly flat wheel about 1 ½ inches or so tall. Cut into eighths and sprinkle the wedge-shaped eighths with sugar if desired. Place about an inch apart on a baking sheet and bake for approximately 15-20 minutes, or until just golden.