



# CHRONICLES OF A DRIFTER

## CSA NEWSLETTER      OCTOBER 8, 2013

### IN YOUR BOX THIS WEEK . . .

**Beets:** Red or Golden

**Broccoli:** Imperial

These broccoli heads have loved this fall weather!

**Brussels Sprouts:** Diablo, Nautic or Igor

To use, snap sprouts off the stalk, trim the end and remove any limp leaves. They are actually delicious simply blanched for about 5 minutes, tossed with olive oil, salt, pepper and a little balsamic vinegar. We also love to roast Brussels sprouts.

**Carrots:** Dragon, Nectar and/or Yellowstone

Great in beef barley soup with chopped kale.

**Celeriac:** Prinz or Mars

The flavor of celeriac (or celery root) is much like mild celery and it bakes and cooks up much like a potato. To prepare celeriac, slice off the crown and peel with a sharp knife. Peeled celeriac darkens when exposed to air so peel just before using. It can be eaten raw in slender sticks or grated in a salad and is also a substitution for potatoes in recipes. We like to mix some celeriac in mashed potatoes or potato au gratin. It is a hearty addition to soups and stews.

**Garlic:** Music, Bogatyr or Persian Star

**Kale:** Green Curly

**Leeks**

Leeks are the longer, slender, milder-flavored cousin to onions. Use all of the leek except for the tough upper green leaf. Sliced leeks are great as a pizza topper along with oregano. We had leeks this weekend in a quiche with kale, red pepper, garlic, and pork sausage.

**Onions:** Red and Yellow

**Pepper:** Colored Bell and Red Roaster

Peppers are nearing their end soon. Take advantage of these sweet veggies and make fajitas, burritos, enchiladas, you name it!

**Potatoes:** Superior

Try mashed with roasted garlic, a little sour cream if desired, butter or Earth Balance, salt and pepper.

**Pie Pumpkin**

Great in baked goods like pumpkin bread, cookies, or muffins.

**Salad Mix**

**Thyme**

**Tomato**

Very likely the last tomato of the season!

**Winter Squash:** Butternut (tan colored), Carnival (multi-colored acorn squash) and Delicata (long, striped squash)

The delicata squash have a shorter shelf life than the acorns, so eat those a little sooner. The butternut squash will store for the longest time.

### WEEK 17: WINDING DOWN WITH A BEAUTIFUL FALL

Please remember to return share boxes to your pick-up site. You are welcome to bring bags to transfer produce into so you do not have to remember your box next time. We will make a last run to pick-up sites at the end of the month to pick up these last share boxes. Returning your boxes makes for a significant savings of resources for the farm - thank you!

For Week A Half Share members, this is your last week of vegetable deliveries for the season unless you sign up for an Autumn Share! Full Shares, you will have one more week of deliveries next week. We have enjoyed providing you with produce this year and hope you have had fun experimenting with new recipes and vegetables. We are happy that so many of you made it out to the farm for a visit during the season and hope you can join us again next year as share members. As mentioned at our Fall Potluck, our connection with our members is one of the reasons we choose to farm. We truly enjoy getting to know your families and love to know who is receiving the produce that is lovingly raised at our farm.

Though it makes harvest days a bit more muddy and slower than usual, we have appreciated the moisture we received over the weekend. For the last two years we have gone into the winter with very dry soils, making fall tillage a challenge and fall cover crops less than ideal. Though we hope for a nice dry spell to finish off our root crop harvest and do fall farm cleanup (many T-posts and tomato plants to pull up and a fair share of irrigation to bring in!), we cannot complain.

### Season Wrap-up and Looking Ahead to Next Year

It is hard to believe, but October is here and the end of this year's CSA season is soon near. Several share members have asked about signing up again for a CSA membership next year. We will be putting our 2014 CSA Registration Forms out to current CSA members at the end of 2013 as we give current members the first opportunity to sign up for next season. Stay tuned!

### Additional Autumn Share

On October 31<sup>st</sup> we will be delivering a one-time Autumn Share for approximately \$55 that will be filled with storage vegetables like winter squash, onions, carrots, leeks and beets along with dried herb and gourds. Most of these vegetables will be able to hold until Thanksgiving (and beyond) if you would like to use them for your holiday table. We will also include several of our favorite autumn recipes and dishes we love for Thanksgiving. There are a limited number of Autumn Shares available and will be offered on a first come-first served basis. Please let us know if you are interested and we will put your family on the list. [Litchfield, Sartell and St. Cloud Autumn Shares will all be delivered to your regular pick-up site on Thursday, October 31<sup>st</sup>.](#)

### Oh Sweet Honey

Our friend Carol keeps bees on the farm and she has just extracted the honey! She is making this honey available to our share members on a first come-first served basis. Honey comes packaged in a pint container (1.5 pounds) for \$8.50. This is a unique opportunity to taste local honey right from your farm! We will deliver this honey with one of your share boxes so there is no additional trip needed on your part.

*\*\*Several share members have asked about payment for additional items such as eggs, honey, apples, etc. At the end of the season, we will send out statements to share members with a balance on their account so you do not need to worry about paying for each individual item as they come. Also, for both the honey and apples, you can make checks payable to Prairie Drifter Farm.*

-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: 1.15"

High Temp: 75°F

Low Temp: 42°F

Sightings: Large flocks of blackbirds swooping over the farm. Mushrooming of all kinds popping up around the yard and fields. Ripe wild grapes!

### Upcoming Event

Atina Diffley, author of Turn Here Sweet Corn: Organic Farming Works, will speak at the Willmar Public Library on Sat., Nov. 16 at 10 a.m. The event is co-sponsored by the library and the Willmar Community-Owned Grocery (COG).

Diffley won the 2013 Minnesota Book Award for her memoir, which tells the dramatic success story of a sophisticated organic family farm through the voice of a female farmer whose connection to the land is born deeply of knowing it, working it, living and suffering by it. This is a fantastic book and Atina is a dynamic speaker so this is an event well worth your time!

## PRODUCE TIPS

**Potatoes/Garlic:** Do not refrigerate. Store in a cool place out of sunlight.

**Pie Pumpkin/Winter Squash:** Will store at room temperature for at least a month. Store for several months in a dry and cool location (50-55 degrees). You can bake winter squash and pie pumpkins easily by slicing in half, scooping out seeds and placing cut side down, oiled, on a cookie sheet or cake pan. *To make pumpkin puree, simply blend cooked pumpkin flesh after scooping out of skin.*

**Brussels Sprouts:** Brussels sprouts contain a substance that produces sulfur when heated. In small amounts, this creates a nice peppery character and flavor. Overcooking, however, can create an unpleasant odor and taste. This is probably why brussels sprouts have gotten such a bad rap in the vegetable world. It is best to cook brussels sprouts briefly; steaming or sautéing works best. Brussels sprouts are especially nice sautéed with butter or salted olive oil. Brussels sprouts are best used within a week or two. After that time, their odor increases. They do, however, freeze very well. Blanch sprouts for 3-5 minutes, rinse well in cold water to stop cooking, drain, let dry, and pack into airtight containers or Ziploc freezer bags.

## RECIPES FROM PAST NEWSLETTERS

- Smashed Celeriac: Week 16, 2013
- Roasted Celeriac with Red Onions, Mushrooms and Sage: Week 16, 2013
- Minestrone Soup: Week 16, 2013
- Pasta with Chicken and Brussels Sprouts: Week 18, 2012
- Butternut Squash and Cabbage Galette: Week 18, 2012
- Squash Soup: Week 16, 2012

### Pumpkin Bread

1 1/2 c. flour  
1/2 t. of salt  
1/2 c. sugar, plus a little more  
1 t. baking soda  
1 c. pumpkin purée  
1/2 c. olive oil (can use half butter)  
2 eggs, beaten  
1/4 c. water  
1/2 t. nutmeg  
1/2 t. cinnamon  
1/2 t. allspice  
1/2 c. chopped walnuts (optional)  
Preheat oven to 350° F. Blend together the flour, salt, sugar, and baking soda. Mix the pumpkin, oil, eggs, 1/4 cup of water, and spices together, then combine with the dry ingredients, but do not mix too thoroughly. Stir in the nuts if using. Pour into a well greased 9x5x3 inch loaf pan. Bake 50-60 minutes until a toothpick poked in the very center of the loaf comes out clean. Turn out of the pan and let cool on a rack.

## Recipes

### Butternut Squash, Leek, and Potato Soup with Crunchy Kale

Adapted from Real Food magazine

1 butternut squash, halved and seeded  
Up to 1 bunch kale  
3 t. olive oil, divided  
1 medium leek, trimmed, washed and chopped (you could also substitute onion)  
4 c. vegetable or chicken broth  
3 small potatoes, peeled and diced  
1 medium apple, peeled, cored and chopped  
1/2 t. ground cinnamon  
Salt and pepper

Preheat oven to 400 degrees. Place the squash cut side down in a baking dish; add a thin film of water and cover the pan with foil. Roast until squash is tender when pierced, about 30 minutes. Peel off the skin and cut squash into 1/4 - 1/2 inch cubes. Set aside. While the oven is on, make the crispy kale. Pull the kale leaves from the tough stems. Cut leaves into thin slivers. Place in a baking pan and drizzle with 1 T. olive oil. Toss to coat and spread in an even layer. Sprinkle lightly with a pinch of salt. Roast 15 minutes or until crisp. Set aside.

In a soup pot, heat the remaining 2 T. oil. Add the leek and cook, stirring, until softened, about 5 minutes. Add the broth, potatoes, apple, cinnamon, and 1/2 t. salt. Cover and cook 15 minutes until potatoes are tender. Add half of the roasted squash. Puree the soup in the food processor or blender until smooth and return to the pot, or use an immersion blender and puree in pot. Add salt and pepper to taste. Add the remaining squash to the pureed soup and reheat, covered, until the roasted squash is heated through. Ladle soup into bowls. Float a cluster of kale in each bowl.

### Celeriac Fries

Adapted from [deliciouslyella.com](http://deliciouslyella.com)

*We had these with butternut squash soup and glazed carrots - yum!*

2 celeriac  
Fresh rosemary, chopped (can also use dried rosemary)  
2 teaspoons of dried or fresh mixed herbs (thyme, oregano, etc)  
A sprinkling of chill flakes (optional)  
Salt to taste  
Olive oil

Start by pre-heating the oven to 375 degrees. Then peel the celeriac - cut off both ends and then peel with a chef knife. Once you've got down to the nice white layer of celeriac chop the wedges, cutting to your desired thickness.

Put the wedges in a pan of cold water and bring them to the boil. Once the water has been bubbling nicely for 5-10, remove the pan from the heat, drain the wedges and then place them on a baking tray. Cover the celeriac with olive oil, dried herbs and rosemary, chili flakes (if using), and salt before roasting them for about 45 minutes, until the outside of the wedges are beginning to crisp and the inside has become perfectly squishy and tender. Take them out half way through and flip them. Once the edges have started to turn a lovely golden brown you know you're good to go!

### Golden-Crusted Brussels Sprouts

Adapted from "101 Cookbooks" website

*Great with soup and bread; this dish converted two non-sprout eaters to enjoy the tasty buds!*

16-24 small brussels sprouts  
1 T. olive oil, plus more for rubbing  
Salt and pepper  
1/4 c. grated cheese of your choice (optional, you could also add caramelized onions for sweetness)

Wash the brussels sprouts well. Trim the stem ends and remove any raggedy outer leaves. Cut in half and toss in a bowl with olive oil. Heat 1 T. olive oil in a skillet over medium heat. Don't overheat the skillet, or the outsides of the brussels sprouts will cook too quickly. Place the sprouts in the pan flat side down (single-layer), sprinkle with a couple pinches of salt, cover, and cook for roughly 5 minutes; the bottoms of the sprouts should only show a hint of browning. Cut into or taste one of the sprouts to gauge whether they're tender throughout. If not, cover and cook for a few more minutes. Once just tender, uncover, turn up the heat, and cook until the flat sides are deep brown and caramelized. Use a metal spatula to toss them once or twice to get some browning on the rounded side. Season with more salt, pepper, and grated cheese. You could also try adding toasted walnuts or hazelnuts to this dish.