



CHRONICLES OF A DRIFTER

CSA NEWSLETTER

AUGUST 26, 2014

IN YOUR BOX THIS WEEK . . .

Broccoli or Cauliflower

Delicious tossed with olive oil, salt, pepper and garlic and roasted in the oven.

Cantaloupe: Halona, Sarah's Choice or Maverick

Carrots: Yaya

Cilantro

Great in fresh salsa, enchiladas, fajitas, cilantro and lime dip, you name it!

Cucumber

Eggplant: Globe Italian or 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!

Garlic: Bogatyr or Music

Onions: Walla Walla or Yellow

Peppers: Hot (Jalapeno) and Sweet (Colored & Green Bell, and Italian Heirlooms)

The tiny green peppers are jalapeno which are a hot pepper, perfect for fresh salsa. If you have a long skinny red pepper in your box, this is a sweet pepper called Jimmy Nardello. It may look like a cayenne but it really is sweet - great for frying.

Potatoes: Red Norland or Superior

Salad Mix

Summer Squash and Zucchini

Nearly the end of this summer crop!

Tomatoes: Slicers/Heirlooms and Mixed Cherry

Red Zebra, Jaune Flamee, Persimmon, Big Beef, Pink Beauty, Black Velvet, Green Zebra, German Johnson, New Girl, Monica, Juliet . . . a fun mix! You have a bag of slicers, a bag of heirlooms and a pint of mixed cherry tomatoes this week.

Watermelon: Red or Yellow

Testing for ripeness is a delicate dance . . . dried first tendril on the plant, yellowing sun spot, feeling the "ribs" of the melon, and listening for just the right thump. We hope we picked you a sweet one!

PHENOLOGY AND WEATHER NOTES ON THE FARM FROM THE PAST WEEK

Rainfall: 0.2"

High Temp: 87°F

Low Temp: 59°F

Sightings: Monarch butterfly sipping sweet juices out of cracked watermelon in the field.

WEEK 11: BACK TO SCHOOL WEATHER

Thanks to the warm weather this past weekend, the tomatoes have finally come on strong. After weeks of watching green tomatoes hang on the vine, they have ripened with force. Enjoy the bounty of fresh tomatoes in this week's box.

After the hot and muggy weekend, this week is off to a crisp start. The forecast for the week is calling for cool nights and mild days. It is starting to feel a bit like fall, especially in the early mornings.

As we are teachers turned farmers, this time of year always brings with it the anxiety of going back to school. Even though we have been off of a school-based calendar for over six years, there is still an association with cooler weather and the end of summer. However, as farmers we have learned to revel in the end of summer and the start of fall. It brings a much needed slower pace to our daily farm lives and the abundance and bounty of summer vegetables is indeed a delight. Not to mention the fact that we could eat fresh salsa for three meals a day!

Returning to the back to school subject, our little drifter Abe will be starting preschool next week. It is hard for us to believe that he is old enough to be in school. It was not too long ago when we would strap him to our backs on harvest mornings or set him up with an onion to play with as we packed our boxes. Now he is telling us about all the different vegetables in the box and how to cook them. Everyone claims that kids grow up fast and we are witnessing that season by season. It continues to be a joy for us to be able to spend time with our kids on the farm. The farm is a great palette for learning and growing.

We wish everyone on the school calendar a wonderful last week of summer vacation and a happy start to the fall.

-Best wishes from your farmers,
Joan, Nick, Abe and Freya

Upcoming Events:

Sunday, September 28th, afternoon, Annual Share Member Potluck at the Farm. Join us for food, community, and play time on the farm!

MELON NOTE: Give the melons a good wash before cutting into them. We harvest the cantaloupe daily or they over ripen in an instant. If your cantaloupe is sweet-smelling it is ready to eat right now and needs to be stored in the fridge. If not sweet-smelling, let it sit on the counter a day or two to ripen before digging in.

TOMATO PINTS: We can reuse your tomato pint containers. Please return them with your CSA box - thank you!

TOMATO NOTE: Remember to remove tomatoes from the plastic bags when you get them home for longer shelf life for your tomatoes.

HOW TO STORE PRODUCE

Your produce this week can be stored in the refrigerator in plastic bags.

Separate carrots and beets roots from their tops before storing to preserve freshness. A few exceptions . . .

- Potatoes/Garlic/Onions do not need to be refrigerated. Keep in a cool, dark place. Potatoes exposed to light will turn a green color, which causes the potato to be mildly toxic.
- Eggplant should not be refrigerated. Store on the counter and use soon.
- Tomatoes Store on the counter, shoulder side down.

PRESERVING TIPS

- 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.
- Celery: Wash thoroughly. Chop stems, place into freezer bags and freeze. Great in soups or stocks or in the crock pot with a roast.
- Peppers: Core and seed. Chop to desired size and place in Ziploc freezer bags, flatten and freeze.
- Tomatoes: Wash and core tomatoes. Chop (with or without skins), place in Ziploc freezer bags, flatten and freeze. Do not overfill. Great for soups, stews, sauces or chili. For a VERY fast freezing method, wash and core tomatoes, leave whole and freeze on a cookie sheet. Once frozen, pack into Ziploc bags, label and freeze. When you pull the tomatoes out to use, simply run warm tap water over the tomatoes to remove skins.

RECIPES ON OUR WEBSITE

- Carrot Cinnamon Waffles
- Cream of Celery Soup with Bacon
- Broccoli Fries

RECIPES FROM LAST WEEK'S NEWSLETTER

- Baked Orzo with Eggplant and Mozzarella
- Ratatouille (eggplant, tomatoes, summer squash, peppers)

Fresh Salsa

Adapted from www.marthastewart.com

1/2 medium onion, chopped
1 small jalapeno pepper, stemmed, seeded (optional), and finely chopped
2 small medium-red ripe round tomatoes, chopped (more if desired)
2 to 3 T. chopped fresh cilantro leaves
2 T. freshly squeezed lime juice
Salt

Combine all ingredients. Stir until well combined; season with salt. Cover and refrigerate until ready to serve. You may use more or less jalapeno depending on your tastes for spice.

RECIPES

Eggplant Salad Toasts

Adapted from www.smittenkitchen.com

Makes about 8 toasts; double the recipe if you'd like to eat the salad straight or use it in one of the ways suggested below.

1 medium eggplant, about 3/4 pound, cut into 1/2-inch cubes
2 T. olive oil plus additional for oiling baking sheet
1/4 t. salt
Black pepper
1 t. red wine vinegar
1/4 c. crumbled feta (can omit if you cannot have cheese)
1/8 onion, finely diced (more if desired)
8 half-inch slices of baguette, brushed with olive oil
1 small clove garlic, peeled and halved

Preheat oven to 425 degrees. Lightly oil a baking sheet or roasting pan. Toss eggplant, 2 tablespoons olive oil, salt and a generous amount of black pepper together in a medium bowl until evenly coated. Spread on prepared baking sheet and roast for about 25 minutes, moving pieces around occasional so they evenly brown. For a cold salad, let the eggplant cool a bit before mixing it with red wine vinegar, feta and onion. For a warm salad where the feta glues itself to the eggplant a bit, toss the vinegar, feta and onion together when the eggplant just comes out of the oven. You'll want to eat the warm salad quickly. Broil or toast baguette slices then rub them with a garlic clove before heaping on eggplant salad.

Other Ideas:

With some extra whisked up red wine vinegar and olive oil, it could make a great farro salad. Great with a sliced hard-boiled egg or a couple slices of prosciutto. Throw in some whole wheat orzo (and maybe some capers or slivers of olives), and you've got an earnest pasta salad too.

Cumin and Cilantro Burgers

Adapted from The Hadassah Everyday Cookbook

2 lbs ground beef
1/4 c. chopped cilantro
1/4 c. onion, finely diced
2 cloves garlic, minced
1 t. cumin
1 t. chili powder

Preheat outdoor grill or skillet to medium heat. In a large bowl, combine beef, cilantro, onions, garlic, cumin, and chili powder. Mix thoroughly. Divide mixture into 6-8 portions and form into patties. Make a slight indentation in the center of each to stop the burgers from puffing up while cooking. Grill burgers until browned and crispy on both sides, about 5 minutes per side, or according to your desired doneness. Place on a toasted bun and top with any garnishes you desire.

Roasted Broccoli, Red Pepper and Onion

Adapted from relish.com

The combination of roasted broccoli, sweet pepper and onion works well as a side dish with grilled fish, poultry or meat. You can easily substitute cauliflower for broccoli in this dish.

6 c. bite-size broccoli florets with short stems
1 medium sweet pepper, cut vertically into 1/2-inch strips
1 medium onion, sliced vertically into 1/4-inch slices (about 1 cup)
4 garlic cloves, sliced
1 1/4 t. dried Italian seasoning
1/2 t. salt
1/8 t. freshly ground black pepper
3 T. olive oil
1 t. lemon juice

Heat oven to 425F. In a large bowl, combine broccoli, pepper, onion and garlic. Sprinkle with Italian seasoning, salt and pepper. Drizzle oil over top and mix with a large spoon. Transfer vegetables shallow baking pan and bake 20 minutes, mixing once, until broccoli is browned in spots and tender. Return vegetables to bowl; add lemon juice and mix gently.