



Where The Land, Food, and People Come Together!

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July 2010

Field Walk....

With the midpoint of the farming season upon us(not the CSA season though--that's not till mid-August), it is a good time to reflect how things have gone, where we stand now, and what we can look towards in the future. We began the season (what feels like eons ago now) back in mid-February with greenhouse seeding. Since then, we have started 40,000 plants (1800 of those being tomato plants!); we have transplanted or seeded into the soil 126,000 feet of vegetables (the most space goes to potatoes which we planted nearly 5000 feet of)--that's 24 miles of plants--just shy of a marathon (which is what we all feel like we have run this time of year). We have had some record breaking harvests already: almost 1000 pounds of spinach (which is 30% more than we harvested for all of 2009!!) and in one harvest on June 25th we brought in 750 pounds of zucchini and summer squash (I think our forearms are permanently scarred). It's been a great start!

The early heat in June has sped the growth of our eggplants and peppers--both of which you will receive plenty of this month. And we are harvesting small amounts of tomatoes from our greenhouse, but really waiting for our field tomatoes to kick in. The plants themselves look great with a lot of green fruit and a normal amount of early blight that is not overwhelming the plants, allowing them to continue to produce future fruit. We think and hope it will be a good tomato harvest once they start turning. They will be worth the wait!!

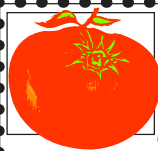
Other favorite summer fruits and veggies? The potatoes are almost ready and will be a part of the share for many weeks to come. The canteloupes are sizing up and the watermelons are sprawling and fruiting. We see lots of acorn squash, delicata, and butternuts in the field and the red onions and yellow storage onions are almost finished bulbing. By the end of this month we should be harvesting heavy amounts of most all of these crops.

Finally, we are already preparing for the Fall. The brussel sprouts were planted two weeks ago and are getting settled. All the kale, cauliflower, broccoli, and collards are growing in the greenhouse and will be planted in mid-July. Then it will be on to seeding fall spinach, salad mix, and turnips, bringing the season full circle.

We had to put a player on the disabled list: the water pump on our tractor broke and the new part probably won't arrive until late this week. Our model Kubota tractor is unusual for this area, so parts are never in stock. As a result, we are having to delay planting another round of beets, carrots, green beans and herbs. This time of year we should also be putting large areas of the field into cover crops, but that is put on hold as well. Maybe we will be able to get caught up on some handweeding: strawberries, fall leeks, sweet potatoes, and the perennial flowers and herbs come to mind.

We want to extend a special thank you to our super volunteer Sand Dugan! He has helped us with the harvest every Tuesday and Friday morning and also helped us bring in our garlic on June 29th. We harvested a smaller amount than last year--about 400 pounds. It is curing in the barn and we will start distributing it in a few weeks. We like to tease everyone with the sight and smell of garlic hanging from the rafters....hey! we have to have some fun out here!!

Enjoy the harvest, Amy, Segue, Diego, Liberty & Leslie



Tomato Festival at the farm

**Saturday, July 31st 5:30 PM
followed by a contra-dance
at the Farley Music Hall in Elsah!**



Please bring a dish celebrating the farm's produce, chairs, and tableware. We will provide the drinks.

Then join us afterwards for a great contra-dance
(live music and steps will be taught--no experience
necessary!) at the Farley Music Hall in Elsah.
\$ 5 donation for the band is appreciated.

This is our only event until the end-of-the-season harvest dinner so please mark
your calendars now and COME!!

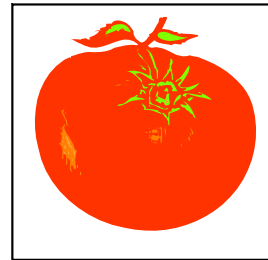
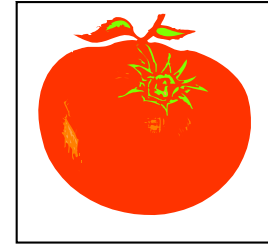
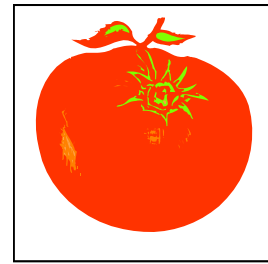


**Summer
Produce List**

- Basil
- Beans
- Beets
- Cantaloupe
- Carrots
- Cherry Tomatoes
- Cilantro
- Cucumbers
- Dill
- Edamame Soybean
- Eggplant
- Okra
- Onions
- Peppers
- Potatoes
- Summer Squash
- Tomatoes
- Watermelon

How to Store Summer Produce:

- Basil** is a warm weather crop and is very sensitive to cold temperatures. Do not refrigerate fresh basil as it will turn black very quickly. To keep just harvested basil fresh for many days, strip the lower leaves off of the stem and place the stems in a glass of water on the kitchen counter. Wrap the stripped leaves (or any leaves) in a dry paper towel and keep in an airtight container at room temperature. Make a batch of pesto if you have more than you can use.
- Zucchini, summer squash, cucumbers** respire through their skins, so they need to be refrigerated as soon as possible. Store them unwashed in a perforated plastic bag in the vegetable bin, or refrigerate them in a sealed plastic container that you've lined with a kitchen towel. They keep for a week and a half.
- Carrots and beets:** remove the leafy green tops. Refrigerate dry and unwashed in a plastic bag for two weeks or longer.
- Melons:** If the melon is a bit short of ripe, keep it at room temperature for a few days or until there is a sweet smell coming from the stem. Once the melon ripens, store it in the refrigerator.
- Tomatoes:** If your tomatoes smell fragrant and yield slightly when squeezed, they are ready to use. If not, store them for a few days at room temperature until they are ripe. Do not store in refrigerator as they lose flavor quickly.
- Edamame Soybeans:** these should be ready by the end of this month. They are simple to prepare: just boil the pods for 4-5 minutes. The pop out the beans, sprinkle with salt and enjoy like peanuts. Delicious!



Penne with Eggplant, Tomato & Basil from *Fine Cooking Fresh*

1/4 cup plus 2 T olive oil
 1 medium eggplant cut into 1/4 inch dice
 1 small onion, thinly sliced
 1/4 tsp crushed red pepper flakes
 1 1/4 lb. tomatoes, cut into 1/2 inch chunks
 3 cloves garlic, finely chopped
 1 cup chopped fresh basil
 3/4 lb. penne rigate
 1/2 cup Parmesan
 Heat 1/4 cup of the oil in skillet over high heat. Add the eggplant and a generous pinch of salt. Reduce the heat to medium and cook until the eggplant is tender and lightly brown, about 6 minutes. Transfer to a plate. Reduce heat and add remaining oil, onion, red pepper flakes, salt. Cook until onion is tender. Then add tomatoes and cook until they start to break down and form a sauce. Add the garlic. Return the eggplant to the pan, add the basil, and cook till flavors meld. Cook the penne in boiling water; drain. Put the penne in a large bowl and toss with the eggplant mixture. Sprinkle with parmesan and serve. Serves 4.

French Ratatouille from *Asparagus to Zucchini*

sliced tomatoes
 1-2 heads garlic, peeled and slivered
 zucchini, eggplant, onions, peppers, all cut into 1 1/2 inch chunks
 chopped fresh parsley
 chopped fresh basil
 olive oil

Heat oven to 300 degrees. Starting with the tomatoes, layer vegetables and herbs in baking dish, filling it very full. Drizzle 1-2 tablespoons olive oil over each layer. Cover and bake 3 hours. If soupy, uncover during last hour. Taste with liquid if you like. Makes any number of servings
 Delicious served with warm crusty bread and fresh mozzarella.

Basic Pesto: from *Vegetarian Cooking for Everyone*

1-2 cloves garlic	1/2 cup fresh parmesan cheese
salt	1/2 cup olive oil
3 T pine nuts	3 cups packed basil leaves

In a food processor, chop the garlic, salt and pine nuts. Then add the basil and olive oil. When smooth, add the cheese and process just to combine. Many freeze pesto portions in ice cube trays or in small tupperware containers. It will store well in your freezer through the winter!

Pepper & Cheese Casserole: from *The Farmer John Cookbook*

1 1/2 cups uncooked bulgar
 1 1/2 cups boiling water
 2 T butter
 1 1/2 cups chopped onion
 4 cups minced bell peppers
 1 1/2 cups sliced mushrooms
 1 1/2 T soy sauce
 1 1/2 T dry sherry
 3 tsp dried marjoram
 1/2 tsp salt
 pepper
 1 1/2 cups cottage cheese
 3/4 cup crumbled feta cheese
 4 eggs, beaten
 paprika

Preheat oven to 350. Coat a 2 quart casserole dish with butter. Put the bulgar into a saute pan and pour the boiling water over it. Cover and let stand for at least 15 minutes. Melt the butter in a medium skillet. Add the onions; saute until translucent. Add the peppers, mushrooms; continue to cook until peppers and mushrooms become tender. Remove from heat and stir in soy sauce, sherry, marjoram, salt and pepper to taste. Mix well. In a small bowl, combine the cottage cheese and feta cheese. Spread the bulgar in the casserole dish. Cover it with vegetables and then the mixed cheeses. Pour the beaten eggs over everything; let the eggs seep through the ingredients. Sprinkle with paprika. Bake, uncovered for 45 minutes.