



THE VEGGIE VOICE

Village Acres Farm Summer CSA • August 11, 2009 • Distribution 13 of 25
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“A life without love is like a year without summer.” - Swedish Proverb

Farm Note • a word from Farmer Roy:

Reaching the half-way mark in the summer delivery gives us some needed confidence that we might make it through another successful season. Crazy how winter-hatched plans (dreams?) for a perfect growing season get way-laid, and by the middle of August we begin to ask ourselves how we got into this mess of too many weeds, disease pressures, rodents and far more work than we anticipated.

Every season brings unique challenges, often related to weather – and this year, weeks of excess rain, then drought, then weeks of rain, and another drought have made this season especially tough. The effect: gleefully growing weeds protected from their enemies (us farmers) by their muddy root zone for weeks. Then, as drought arrives, farmers go to war with hand and hoe, and before half into the battle must turn to irrigating, while continuing to harvest, and to seed or transplant more crops, and to trellis, or mulch, or cut down spent plants to prepare for other crops. In this battle we win some and also lose some. Winnings include good harvests of asparagus, rhubarb, garlic and onions so far, while we lost some plantings of melons, carrots, beans; others (peas, strawberries) did poorly or are ripening later than normal, or have special disease challenges (such as early and/or late blight on potatoes and tomatoes). So, dealing with all this (my apprentices and co-workers will be glad to know) I am as grumpy as I will get, and as daylight shortens I will get more sleep and things will calm down. At least that’s my summer-hatched plan (dream?).

Produce and Cooking Notes

Sweet Corn: This summer treat is best eaten ASAP. Drop husked corn into boiling water for 4-7 minutes and serve with butter and salt. Or grill it – pull husks down (but don’t remove them), remove silk and soak corn in water for 20 min. Rub butter, minced garlic and a little salt on the ears, pull husks over to cover and grill 10-15 min., turning often. You’re getting corn from our Amish neighbor, David Swarey, who uses organic methods, though he is not certified; and also some Village Acres’ “seconds” sweet corn, which is smaller and not completely filled out.

Eggplant: Our bountiful harvest continues. See our website for *Baba Ghanouj*, a traditional Middle Eastern dish. Also, see the two eggplant recipes in Veggie Voice #11.

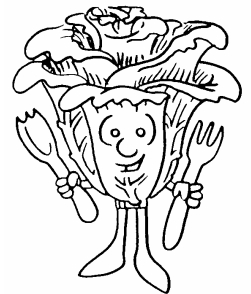
Sungold Tomatoes: Sort these little gems right away, eating the dark orange ones first (or adding to a summer sauté, fresh salsa or veggie bake) and leaving the greener ones to ripen on your counter. Wash before eating.

Tomatoes: You’re getting a few Standard red slicer tomatoes and a bright yellow blocky Valencia tomato. When ripe, they should be slightly soft and smell like a tomato! Store on newspaper on your counter.

Green Beans: Snip off stem ends before cooking. Steam or simmer in boiling water for 5-10 minutes. Watch carefully for beans to brighten in color and become tender, but not soft or mushy.

Peppers: Some of the peppers have a yellowish tint – these are Sunray peppers that were purposely harvested early to help keep the plants from falling over. In the coming weeks, you’ll be getting an assortment of colored peppers, as they turn red, orange and yellow. “Try the famous roasted pepper: Place bell pepper under broiler, above hot coals, or over open flame. Toast it, turning often, until the skin is blackened evenly. Place pepper in a brown bag, close, and allow to steam 10-15 minutes. Skin will peel off easily with the aid of a paring knife.” (*From Asparagus to Zucchini*, p. 118)

New Red Potatoes: “New” isn’t a variety, it just means they’re fresh from the ground, with



IN THE BOX

Sweet Corn
Eggplant
Sungold Tomatoes
Tomatoes
Green Beans
Peppers
Potatoes
Lettuce
Onions
Basil
Rosemary
Choice (C): Kale or
Fennel
C: Watermelons or
Cantaloupes or
Raspberries
C: Cilantro or Parsley

thin skins and higher moisture and sugar content than stored potatoes. Great for potato salad or home fries, they're best just boiled with the skins on. These are from David Swarey.

Fresh White Onions: These sweet onions are full of flavor and juice, so keep refrigerated and use them soon – they're not intended for storage.

Rosemary: The herb of choice for roasted potatoes, rosemary is also good minced in quiche or as a pizza or focaccia topping. A sprig (taken out before eating) infuses soup stock or a jar of olive oil with excellent flavor. If you can't use it right away, hang it in your kitchen to dry or strip off the leaves and stow them in the freezer in a small plastic bag.

Choice: Kale or Fennel: Wash leaves, remove stems and cut into slivers, then sauté with a bit of olive oil until tender, adding water if necessary to prevent sticking. Put the sautéed greens on pizza, on quesadillas, in quiche or omelets, in pasta salad – or eat them alone with a splash of vinegar. The fennel (choice) is the white bulb, the tops have been removed. See last week's Veggie Voice for fennel cooking tips.

Choice: Watermelon or Cantaloupe or Raspberries: Harvesting watermelons is fun! Under the guise of calibrating our harvest cues (yellow spot and brown tendril), we tend to break into a melon or two to make sure we're harvesting juicy/sweet melons. Every one we've cut open so far has been flavorful and sweet – hope yours are too, but it's hard to tell from the outside. Here's our melon policy: if you get a dud, let us know, and we'll bring you a free extra one the next week. **Raspberries:** If the berries make it home, rinse gently and eat within two days – on cereal or a scoop of ice cream.

Community News

Winter CSA Signup: Winter shares run biweekly from November until May. Next Tuesday, August 18, we'll have a signup sheet at distribution (no computer or internet connection required) for those interested in signing up early. On August 20 (or shortly thereafter), we'll open to new winter members; before then, you can guarantee a spot with a \$100 deposit up to the full amount. The cost is \$350 for State College and Burnham, and \$310 for farm pick-up.

Blue Rooster Farm – We return to Cincinnati next week for a post-surgery check-up and tube removal ,(yeah!!) so I am not taking orders for August 18. I'll be back in touch for the August 25th distribution. Thanks, Julie

Recipes

Potatoes and Green Beans with Rosemary

–from *Rolling Prairie Cookbook*

- 1 pound new potatoes
- 1 pound fresh green beans
- 2 tbsp. lemon juice
- 2 tbsp. olive oil
- 1-2 sprigs rosemary, stems removed and leaves finely minced
- 1 garlic clove, minced
- ½ tsp. salt
- pepper to taste

Wash, but don't peel potatoes. Leave small potatoes whole and cut larger ones in half. Boil or steam until just tender. While potatoes are cooking, cut or snap beans in half and lightly steam. Arrange with potatoes on a platter and mix remaining ingredients into a dressing. Drizzle over potatoes and beans.

Mexican Pepper Casserole (*original recipe calls for 6-8 peppers*) - from *The New Moosewood Cookbook*

- 1 tbsp. olive oil
- 2 c. sliced onion
- 5-6 bell peppers, thinly sliced
- 4-5 cloves garlic
- 1 tsp. salt

Edited by Patrick Smith, CSA Manager

Village Acres Farm is owned and operated by Roy & Hope Brubaker

Events to Remember

Aug 18: 14th Distribution, Fresh Chickens Available, and Winter '09-'10 CSA Signup Begins

Oct 24: Fall Harvest & Auction Festival

- 1½ tsp. cumin
- 1 tsp. dry mustard
- 1 tsp. dry coriander, optional
- black pepper and cayenne, to taste
- 2 tbsp. flour
- 2-3 eggs
- 2 c. yogurt and/or sour cream
- a handful of freshly minced cilantro, optional
- 2 c. sliced jack or cheddar cheese
- paprika, for the top

Lightly grease a 10-inch square pan. Preheat oven to 375. Saute onions 5-8 min. until they soften. Add peppers, salt, cumin, coriander, mustard, pepper and cayenne. Saute another 8-10 min., then sprinkle in the flour. Cook and stir another 5 min, or until the peppers are very tender. Transfer to the baking pan. Beat together eggs, yogurt and sour cream. Stir in the minced cilantro. Pour this custard over the peppers. Top with slices of cheese and dust with paprika. Bake uncovered for 40-45 min. until firm in the center and bubbly around the edges. Serve hot with rice and beans and/or warmed tortillas.