



August 17, 2005

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Fair Share Farm CSA Newsletter

This Week's Share:

Full Share:

Tomatoes— 2 items worth or as much as you can carry!

Sweet or Red onions

Cherry tomatoes or salsa fixin's or Poblano peppers

Colorful carrots

Eggplant or okra

Sweet peppers or beans

Basil or shallots

Partial Share:

Tomatoes— 2 items worth or as much as you can carry!

Sweet or Red onions

Sweet peppers

Colorful carrots

Basil or shallots

Next week: beans, tomatoes, potatoes, and garlic.

Calendar

August 24th— Distribution, Wednesdays

August 27th — Distribution, Saturday

It seems to be a pattern, every time I talk about the weather it changes. Last week the topic was how hot and dry it was. The forecasters are predicting the obvious that this fair weather will not last for long. That's just fine because the short cool & wet snap gave our seedlings in the fields a great start, more than we can normally wish for in August.

Now that the plants have been given some time to get established, the return to normal temperatures will get the plants growing. Fall crops begin their lives with firm deadlines. They need to grow now in order to produce before the October 15th first average frost date or they'll die never achieving their full potential. Growing fall crops requires us to back calculate from the frost date to the current time considering the plants "days to maturity". One must also figure in the shortening day lengths which slow down plant growth considerably as the daylight decreases. These cloudy cool days have given the plants (and us) just the breather we all needed to take us through the rest of summer.

Summer is still in full swing at the farm, regardless of this crisp fall weather we have been having. We harvested 400 pounds of tomatoes

today (Tuesday) and will probably bring in another 300-400 pounds on Friday. The heirloom tomatoes are at their peak producing huge volumes of heavy fruit. We also have plenty of Romas even as we continue to make sauce, ketchup, barbeque sauce, oven-dried tomatoes, salsa, and anything else that contains tomatoes. The hybrid tomatoes are still going strong although their quality and size is starting to diminish. The cherries have also slowed down a bit as the plants have been growing since March 5th.

We are now spending two days per week in addition to CSA farm mornings just on harvesting and packing. That leaves us two days and perhaps part of an afternoon to complete all of the other planting, weeding, etc. that needs to be done. The tomato harvest is taking up a lot of our time, yet we can't not harvest all those luscious fruits. This week we are giving you the option to take as many tomatoes as you want. This will not only hopefully spread the wealth of the tomatoes to the members, but will serve as an informal survey into exactly how many tomatoes you want. So, take your fill while leaving some for those who arrive after you. There is plenty for everyone.

As farmers, we often see the

benefits of selling to a CSA in our terms: cash upfront, a community of support, and insurance against crop failure. But we also believe in the benefits you receive as members. In addition to receiving the freshest, sustainably-grown produce, you also receive the benefits of a bumper crop. As we fine tune our plantings to the CSA membership we hope to level out the hills and valleys of the veggio availability—reducing the losses as well as the burden of too much. In the meantime, enjoy this banner tomato year and put some up for another day.

Grass-fed Beef & Farm-fresh Eggs

Just a reminder that Medicine Creek Farm delivers beef orders every first Saturday of the month. Send them your orders at: dptrsn@grm.net

Also, Jean Hain's eggs are still available, with a limit to 2-3 dozen/family. Send orders to: jeanszoo@worldnet.att.net

In both cases, you will receive your order at your next pick-up. Members that pick-up at the Crossroads market are encouraged to support the local farmers and businesses that provide these items.

Recipes

Don't Try This At Home

I like to collect old cookbooks (the older the better) to see how time, not just culture, defined people's cooking habits. *Miss Parola's Kitchen Companion*, dated 1887 is just such a book. Stewed Carrots is an example of how it was common in the Victorian Age to cook your vegetables to mush. Perhaps it was as much a dental issue as one of taste. This recipe is actually an example of how to remove from your food as much of its nutritional value as possible.

Stewed Carrots

Pare and slice enough carrots to make three pints. And cut them into cubes about half an inch square. Put these into a stew-pan containing two quarts of boiling water, and cook for an hour; then drain off all the water, and add a heaping teaspoonful of sugar, two tablespoonfuls of butter, half a teaspoonful of salt, and a little pepper, and half a pint of stock. Cook rapidly until the stock has almost boiled away.

Honey Glazed Carrots and Shallots (adapted from *Gourmet*, September 2003)

We think that you will like this recipe better. It makes quite a nice looking dish if you use this week's selection of red, yellow and orange carrots.

- ◇ 1 lb carrots, cut diagonally into 3/4-inch-thick pieces
- ◇ 2 heads of shallots, peeled and trimmed, keeping root ends intact
- ◇ 2 tablespoons unsalted butter, cut into bits
- ◇ 3/4 teaspoon salt
- ◇ 1 1/2 cups water
- ◇ 1 cup chicken broth
- ◇ 1/3 cup white Port (optional)
- ◇ 1/3 cup mild honey
- ◇ 2 teaspoons chopped fresh dill (optional)
- ◇ 2 teaspoons chopped fresh chives (optional)
- ◇ 1/4 teaspoon black pepper

Spread carrots and shallots evenly in a 12-inch heavy skillet, then dot with butter and sprinkle with salt. Whisk together water, broth, Port, and honey and pour over vegetables. Cover skillet with a lid (or tightly with foil) and simmer over moderate heat until vegetables are tender when pierced with a paring knife, about 20 minutes. Transfer vegetables with a slotted spoon to a bowl and boil liquid over moderately high heat, uncovered, until syrupy and reduced to about 3 tablespoons, about 15 minutes. Return vegetables to skillet and gently stir to coat with glaze. Sprinkle with dill and chives (if using) and pepper. Makes 6

servings.

Chiles Rellenos (adapted from *Cooks.com*)

This is a new dish for us, and we're glad we finally have tried it.

- ◇ 5 peppers (Poblano or Red Marconi)
- ◇ 2 tbsp. flour mixed with 1/2 tsp. salt and 1/4 tsp. white pepper
- ◇ 1/4 to 1/2 lb. Monterey Jack or cheddar cheese
- ◇ 1/4 cup vegetable oil

Roast the poblanos in the broiler or on a grill until the skins soften up (about 10 minutes). There is no need to skin the peppers. Pull out the stem and wash out the seeds.

Fill peppers with a chunk of cheese. If the pepper falls apart, simply wrap the cheese with the pepper. Separate the eggs which are at room temperature. Beat the egg whites until stiff. Fold in the beaten egg yolks gently.

Heat the oil while rolling the peppers in the flour mixture. Put stuffed chilies in the egg mixture and scoop them out of the mixture with some of the mixture surrounding the chilies.

Fry at medium temperature for about 10 minutes or until golden brown. Drain quickly on paper towels and serve immediately with a bowl of salsa.

Your Share Items

Colorful Carrots

We hope as your CSA we will be able to keep you with a regular supply of carrots for most of the season. To change things up a little, we are trying out some unusual varieties. They are the hit of the farmer's market circuits and are You will be getting a yellow variety (*Yellowstone, Kinibi*) and a red variety (*Cosmic Purple*) in your bunch this week. We have been snacking on them and are very happy with their taste and texture. Let us know what you think. The purple carrots are interesting, in that they have a purple skin, orange flesh and a yellow core.

Poblano Peppers

We decided to grow Poblano peppers (aka Ancho when dried), because they have a spicy taste (not too hot), and a great flavor to go along with it. They are just coming on, and hope to have them as a choice for several weeks. They are great roasted, and are a key ingredient in Chile Rellenos and mole sauce

NEW TOMATO PRICES

In a jesture of pure capitalism, we are lowering our bulk fprices on tomatoes. The book says that if you have a surplus you should lower your price to drive up sales and lower inventory! When you're sitting on a barn of tomatoes, that sounds like a good idea.

Hybrid tomatoes—\$1.25/lb

Paste tomatoes—\$1.50/lb

Heirloom tomatoes—\$2.00/lb

We give a 20 discount for orders over \$25.00

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