



Fair Share Farm CSA Newsletter

IN THE SHARE week 15

Full:

Peace watermelon (yellow-fleshed)

Tomatoes

Red onions

Carrots

Eggplant

Summer squash or cucumbers

Sweet peppers or okra

Cherry tomatoes or potatoes

Basil, thyme or summer savory or dried herbs

Partial:

Peace watermelon (yellow-fleshed)

Tomatoes

Red onions

Carrots

Eggplant or spicy pimento peppers

Basil, thyme or summer savory or dried herbs

Next week: More melons, tomatoes, squash, salsa, eggplant, peppers, okra and onions. Potatoes and garlic return. Arugula perhaps.

—hot and dry—

These dog days of summer just call out for a juicy icebox melon. The farm crew has taken to eating them as a mid-morning snack straight out of the field, but cold from the icebox tastes even better. Hope you enjoy yours!

The crops would like such a cool, thirst-quenching themselves. The hot weather quickly returned after a brief Sunday respite and still no rain. Since the beginning of July, the farm has received about an inch of rain and none lately. Our drip irrigation system waters deeply at the plant's roots, putting the water where it is needed most. However, in many places large cracks (half inch to an inch) have appeared only a foot away. These cracks suck moisture out of the soil and damage plant roots caught in the

middle. We are hoping the weather breaks soon bringing the soaking rain and cooler temperatures that often arrive around the end of August.

The heat causes its own problems in the plant world. Two weeks of 95+ degree days and warm nights have halted fruit set on some of the crops. Peppers, tomatoes, cucumbers and squash aren't producing much right now and have few small fruits. Our June



CSA Harvesting—week 13:

If you are coming out to harvest this week, here's what's waiting for you...

Harvesting: basil, thyme, cherry tomatoes.

Other chores: weed strawberries, potato harvest.

CALENDAR

August 29: Wednesday pick-up

farm workers: Pat Horner, Jolynne Martinez

K.C. distribution team: Lorne Carroll & Jean Stoverink, Tim McCoy

September 1 Labor Day: Saturday pick-up

farm workers: Chris & Rick Veach (Liberty delivery), Tim Nord and Patrick Tuohey

planting of heat-resistant tomato varieties have begun producing and are looking good. Heat-tolerant newbies, Solarset and Sunmaster, fill out a bed with our favorite, the Golden Girl. The larger of the red and golden varieties in your shares are from this planting.

In preparation for the MU Extension tour tomorrow, we were lucky to have two of the best horticultural specialists in the area on our farm today. Tom Fowler and Lala Kumar walked the fields with us sharing their knowledge as we studied the crops. We thumped on and sampled the Peace watermelons, learned about lace bugs on the eggplant, considered the moisture levels in the fall brassica beds, and generally had an informative visit with them. We spent quite a bit of time checking out our newly installed shade fabric on the lettuces. The shade cloth we purchased for the greenhouse last year is finding a new use out in the fields, protecting our new transplants from the scorching sun. If it works, we have hopes of extending this idea to large sections of the crops next season.

Everybody talks about the weather, but no one does anything about it.

-Mark Twain

Your Share Items

Peace Watermelon

We have had a struggle this year with our cucurbit crops, which include melons. We were later in planting most melons as our first plantings were swiped by the voles. Our taste testing has been showing this first variety to come on, called **Peace**, is a real treat. The Fedco seed catalog says it best...*It has that kind of drizzle-down-your chin juiciness that thoroughly satisfies on a hot humid late summer day.*

And did I mention that the flesh of this watermelon is yellow? Well don't think you are getting anything less than a red watermelon as far as taste. We hope you like this variety, as it has done well during a tough part of the growing season.

Red Onions

We are trialing new red onions seed varieties this year. The red onion variety that we have had the most luck with in the past, known as **Mars**, is no longer available from our main seed supplier Fedco.

The seed company that produces Mars (Semini's) was bought by Monsanto in 2005. Fedco felt that this new corporate concentration, coupled with Monsanto's advocacy for genetically modified seeds, and other factors, meant that Semini's seed line should be dropped from the catalog. We honored their actions and, while Mars seeds are available elsewhere, are looking to find a new, reliable red onion (or onions) for the future.

Our three varieties for this year, **Red Wind, Red Bull and Rosa di Milano**, have all produced nice onions, though some have cured better than others. They were harvested and laid out in the upper barn earlier by the CSA this month, and cleaned last Saturday by the CSA harvest crew.

Recipes

Eggplant and Vegetables with Lentils and Sorghum (*adapted from Food & Wine, July 2004*)

The original recipe is a stew/lasagna, and calls for 2/3 cups olive oil, and pomegranate molasses. It's been modified to cook on your stovetop in half the time. Brown sugar, molasses, or sorghum are all good sweeteners for this dish.

We prepared this recipe, along with some lamb shoulder steaks from Parker Farms. We browned the lamb in 2 tbsp olive oil, took them out of the skillet, cooked the vegetables and lentils, and then added them back in once things were boiling.

Ingredients:

- ◇ 2 tbsp olive oil
- ◇ 2 long or 1 large round eggplant
- ◇ 1 large onion
- ◇ 2 medium sweet or hot peppers
- ◇ 4 garlic cloves
- ◇ 2 medium tomatoes

- ◇ 3 tbsp sorghum
- ◇ 1 tsp salt

Method:

- ◇ In a small saucepan cover the lentils with 2 inches of water and bring to a boil. Reduce the heat to moderate and simmer until tender, about 15 minutes.
- ◇ Clean the vegetables and chop into a medium dice.
- ◇ Sauté the onions in a large skillet over medium high heat until translucent, 1 to 2 minutes.
- ◇ Add the eggplant, onion, peppers, garlic and tomatoes. Stir and cook 3 minutes more.
- ◇ Add the lentils and their cooking water and cook over medium high heat for 5 minutes, add the sorghum, and cook for 20 to 25 minutes more, or until eggplant is tender.
- ◇ Serve over rice. Garnish with parsley.

