

THE BUSY BEE

www.fazendaboaterra.com

FAZENDA BOA TERRA

952-469-2278

Transitions

By John

Seasonal eating is all about transitions. At some points in the season they are very subtle though they can sometimes be quite abrupt. It is one of the greatest challenges of the CSA farmer to manage seasonal transitions as smoothly as possible. We spend weeks and weeks in the winter putting together a production plan for the season. Even though we have just two little acres, our plan is over one hundred pages. It details each greenhouse seeding, field seeding and planting date and well as a harvest and distribution schedule. We do this planning knowing full well that it will prove to be full of holes when we put it into action. This is inevitable unless you know of any telepathic farmers, or at least ones with really good psychics. Our head lettuce bolted last week and though we salvaged enough for you, we had very little for the farmers market. While we know heat waves happen its impossible to know exactly when to expect them when we sit down in December and January. But we do know that heat sensitive crops such as leafy greens will likely go down at some point in July and August. This is why we do things like start our summer crops in the greenhouse in the early spring. In the field they are planted into plastic mulch to help keep them warm and give us control of the moisture and fertility in the root zone. We also keep them covered under what amount to a little greenhouse in the field until they begin to push it off. This is a lot of extra work but it has allowed us to have crops like tomatoes, peppers and eggplant in your shares when the legs give out on other crops. It also allows us to manage the real climatic transition from spring to summer and from summer to fall. You may have already forgotten about your turnips and radishes as we transitioned them into beets and carrots

WHATS ON DECK

We will keep the summer crops; tomatoes, peppers and eggplant coming. If the weather stays reasonable we will get our salad greens back on line. Sweet corn will be back alongside the green beans. Beets will take a likely hiatus but we will have more carrots.

and the scallions yielded to onions. We also try to back off on the greens for a while as well. Not only because they are more difficult to grow in the heat but also because we know that in the early weeks you get lots and lots on greens and we don't want members to start to get overloaded with the same things every week. Obviously our members have diverse palettes; some may want Swiss chard every week while for others, once is enough. The best we can do is make the best judgment we can to create bountiful yet varied shares. Without intent to be supercilious I can say that we are really proud of the shares we have put together this year. This being our first year as independent farmers there were a lot of unknowns. Our experience having a hand in putting together over 100,000 individual share boxes over the past six or seven years has been critical in our understanding of the challenges and rewards of CSA farming. But the real test is what happens when you are the ones juggling all the balls at the end of the day. I can say we continue to learn new lessons each day and being on our own quickly makes you realize what your shortcomings are as a manager and businessperson. It also proves to reveal strengths you didn't know you had. We have had failures this year (sorry you didn't get any peas or spinach and the seemingly empty promises about green beans) but we think the failures have been outdone by our successes. You can rest assured that we will continue to strive ceaselessly to bring you simply delightful shares each week, we think the best is yet to come.

Featured Item

You get to choose this week. It is a real wild card coming out of the heat. It could be sweet corn, or cherry tomatoes, green beans or the pleasant surprise we have been stringing you along with over the past few weeks. We are sort of watching the teakettle waiting to see what will be ready. We won't likely know for sure until Thursday morning if any or all of these things will be ready for harvest. Either way, this item is best enjoyed in your favorite recipe and can be kept fresh by keeping it on your mantle piece or some other location where you can show it of to your friends and neighbors



Surprise, hope you like'em!!

News and Notes

- July is the month that you win or lose the battle to the weeds. Our battle for the year will drag on into August. Thanks to the volunteers that have been out to the farm over past several weeks we still have a chance.
- A big victory this week was finally getting our cooler up and running. We are happy to be out of GOE's cooler while we were still welcome there. We will also save a lot of time and fuel each week with our own storage right here.
- We will be butchering our first chickens in about 4 weeks. If you are interested in some of the finest chicken you ever had let us know and we will get you an order form.

Recipe of the Week

Summer Ratatouille

1 med. eggplant
2 med. zucchini
2 med. yellow summer squash
1 green pepper
2 tomatoes
1 sm. onion, chopped
1 c. salad dressing (French, Italian, or sweet 'n sour)
1 lg. carrot, grated
2 tbsp. vegetable oil
1/2 tsp. salt or to taste
1 tsp. dry basil, optional

1. Cut green pepper into thin strips. Put green pepper and onion into skillet and sauté over low heat, about 5 minutes.
2. Peel eggplant and cut into 1-inch cubes
3. Slice zucchini and squash into 1/4-inch slices.
4. Cut tomatoes into thin wedges.
5. Add grated carrot, tomatoes and eggplant to skillet, simmering about 5 minutes.
6. Add zucchini, squash, dressing and salt to taste.

Stir well, cover and simmer 30 minutes or until vegetables are tender. Serve hot, or chill and serve cold.



We Love Summer