

Catching Up

From John

It's a little hard to believe that we are already at week number six of the CSA and already well into the summer. The past month has come and gone in what seems like one hot minute. There has been a lot happening here at the farm over the past few weeks and we are feeling pretty good about how the farm is looking and feeling right now. Even the couple of things we might construe as negatives seems good and has brought us some relief. Having my sister here for a couple weeks and helping Lidia in the field really made a big difference at the farm. I really wish she could have stayed a while longer than she did. It was really nice to have some energy of youthful exuberance fill the house for a while. And also to have someone who frankly doesn't really care about farming around. Lidia and I never really turn off. On car rides, at the co-op at the dinner table and everywhere in between farming is always the topic of conversation. That isn't necessarily a bad thing but it was nice to have someone help change the subject and give us a little help at turning off at the end of the day. We miss her and all the help she gave.

Over the past few weeks we have come really close to getting the weeds under control. There is still a lot of work to be done and we are considering hiring a weeding crew for a few days that can help us really finish the job. Most of the transplanted crops are looking really good and generally weed free. Our crops in plastic mulch are looking good and we feel that by weeks end we should have the weeds between the mulch rows under control. Though these weeds don't compete with the crops for water and nutrients, they do get in the way of harvesting and most importantly they lack any aesthetic appeal. Lidia and I like a tidy farm and a clean farm is a happy and productive farm. We do though have one field that we lost to the weeds. It was one of the earlier fields and we lost it pretty early on but kept trying to salvage it. We have finally decided to throw in the towel on it. It just wasn't realistic to expect Lidia to keep up with it with limited help and to save it we would fall too far behind on

ON DECK

We should see beans, broccoli, onions, scallions or garlic, some greens and cabbage. Cucumbers, zucchini and summer squash will remain bountiful and with some luck we will get into our first peppers, eggplant and maybe even some new potatoes!

other fields. We have decided to turn it under and focus our energy on other fields that will be far more productive. If you are wondering what happened to your spring beets and purple carrots, this would be the explanation. Don't fret too much though, we have many more to come later on in the year and those crops are looking really nice. We are bummed about turning the field in, but at the same time it was causing a lot of anxiety and it feels nice to just move past it, clean it up and focus on better things to come. This happens with CSA farms, which is why we plant so many times each year. There is invariably be some failures along the way but there is always a chance to make up for it. We have been really pleased with the lack of pest pressure this year. We did of course have the issue with the cutworms earlier but beyond that things really seem to be under control. The crops that made it through the cutworms and hail have recovered and are growing vigorously. We were able to replace many of the plants we lost and while behind schedule they are growing and will produce well. The potatoes have suffered minimal Colorado potato beetle damage and are looking great. Our first potato harvest was amazing and it shocked us how gorgeous the early potatoes are. We always have issues with squash bugs but we seem to be keeping them at bay and we will keep our summer squash and zucchini watered and fertilized to keep it alive. This will keep them producing. When we are done harvesting from them, they make a great trap crop which will help obscure our winter squash well into its growth cycle helping us ensure a good winter squash yield (I should also mention the winter squash plants are quite stunning right now). The fall brassicas (kale, cabbage cauliflower, and broccoli) are looking really nice also. They are healthy and weed free at the moment. The peppers and eggplant are running a little slow because of the cutworm and storm damage but they

are making up for lost time and they will be in very soon. The same goes for the tomatoes; they have lots of flowers and small green fruit. They are all staked and trellised which is a big job but will guarantee good yields.

It will be a long week getting things cleaned up. And perhaps the biggest job is just trying to keep water on everything as we furiously move around pipe and fill the water truck through this very hot and dry weather. By the end of the week this will look like a very different farm than it did a few weeks ago and what we see is great promise for the summer's duration and on into fall.



Red Norland Potatoes

Kohlrabi Tips

Peel and slice, eat. Dip in Ranch Dressing, if desired

Chop into matchstick size piece and add to any fresh tossed salad

Shred and add to coleslaw

Roasted: Chop into large piece, toss in olive oil, parmesan cheese, salt and pepper; roast at 400 degrees for 20-25 minutes. Add garlic for extra flavor.

News and Notes

- We left your potatoes dirty for good reason. Fresh potatoes have very delicate skins and will be damaged badly during washing. They were quite clean already straight out of the field so we opted to leave them that way so you can lightly clean them before use leaving the skin intact should you prefer to use it.

Featured Item

This week we feature kohlrabi. It is in the brassica family and most closely related to cabbage, being bred for stalk girth rather than head/leaf formation. It is an incredibly hardy plant able to be grown just about anywhere. With a very mild flavor with hints of cabbage it can be eaten raw in salads when grated or chopped finely or it can be cooked in any number of ways. It is a good keeper, kept in a sealed bag in your fridge it should stay fresh for several weeks.

Recipe of the Week

Potato-Kohlrabi Puree

Ingredients

- 1-2 cups potatoes of your choice, washed well and cut in 1-inch dice (peels optional)
- 1 cup kohlrabi bulb(s), trimmed and cut in 1-inch dice
- 3/4 cup onion (any kind), chopped
- 2 tablespoons extra-virgin olive oil
- 1/4 cup cream, milk, or veggie stock
- 2-3 tablespoons of butter (optional)
- Salt and pepper to taste

Preparation

- To trim kohlrabi bulbs, remove fibrous outer layer, stems, and leaves.
- Bring a saucepan of lightly salted water to a boil, and add potato and kohlrabi chunks.
- Reduce heat and simmer until tender, about 15 minutes.
- Meanwhile, heat olive oil in a skillet. Add onion and sauté over medium-low heat until softened, about 3-5 minutes. Remove from heat.
- Drain potato and kohlrabi chunks and place in a food processor.
- Add cream, milk, or stock, and butter, if using.
- Purée until smooth, adding more or less liquid to achieve desired consistency. Salt and pepper to taste.
- Transfer purée to a saucepan and reheat over low heat, stirring, 2 minutes.
- Serve warm with a drizzle of olive oil on top.