

Heavy Things

From John

As we march into September we are still waiting for things to calm down as we are still super busy. The harvest is keeping Lidia about as busy as can be. We were blessed to have some members come out on Sunday to help out with the onion harvest. In just 4 hours we had all of the onions pulled out of the ground, topped and in the greenhouse where they will stay for about the next two weeks to cure. Together we brought I about 1200 pounds of onions so we hope you love onions because you can expect to be well stocked by the end of the season. The good thing about these onions is that after curing you can keep your extras around for use for just about the whole winter or longer with proper storage. The extra help for the harvest made a huge difference, on our own it would have taken days to get the harvest done. If you missed the onion harvest don't worry, you can come out this Sunday, September 5th from 9am-1pm to help get as many potatoes harvested as we can. This will be a much bigger harvest than the onions so we would love all the help we can get. Plus we will have a potluck lunch afterwards that's open to all of our members. We hope you can come and see where all your veggies come from! If you plan of coming please just shoot us an email at farmers@fbt.ag and let know how many people will be coming so we can be sure to have enough seating for everyone. This week we also pulled in the winter squash. This has been one of the biggest disappointments of the season which has us a little down. We have gotten used to booming harvests of winter squash leaving us with far too much left over at the end of the season. This is partly because like the onions after harvest they need several weeks in the greenhouse to cure fully so that they are ready for long term storage. We would generally harvest them in mid-September and start delivering them in late September or early October. The problem was that it only gave us about four weeks to get rid of all the squash so this year we tried to do

ON DECK

Peppers, tomatoes and eggplant will continue as will potatoes, garlic and onions. We may see beets and turnips return. Greens will start making a comeback as we start picking kale or Swiss chard again plus head lettuce and salad greens will be in supply.

something a little different. We moved back the production schedule about three weeks hoping to give us six or seven weeks to deliver the squash. Despite starting our great it proved disastrous. This is because we have almost unbelievable infestations from squash bugs. We had them at the other farm in similar numbers and there is basically nothing we can do organically to control them. They usually find the zucchini and summer squash pretty early but they hold up pretty well so long as we keep them well fertilized. Spraying the bugs is generally counterproductive because the only things you are likely to kill are the pollinators that are necessary for getting a crop. We do use floating row cover (thin white blanket) to keep them covered as long as possible but when they flower you must uncover them in order to allow the pollinators in and then it's a foot race between getting a crop and having the squash bugs kill the plant. In the past we have been able to use the zucchini and summer squash as a trap crop. This worked because right when we would have to uncover the winter squash the summer squash and zucchini would be finished. With the summer squash harvest done we would keep the plants alive as a place to allow the squash bugs to live. Without flowers or fruit we could spray the plants to knock down the nymphs which is still more or less futile with anything we are allowed to use under organic practices. However the propane flame-weeder seemed quite effective. Actually walking up and down the rows of old summer squash and zucchini and burning the bugs to death by the thousands. This would buy us about the three weeks we needed to allow the winter squash crop to get up and growing strong before the bugs would inevitably find their way on to them as well. The problem with our experiment was that it eliminated that window to use the summer squash as a trap crop after we were done harvesting from

it. This meant that we had to uncover the winter squash while still harvesting the summer squash and zucchini eliminating the chance to control the bugs. They almost immediately found the winter squash and the big beautiful plants started to head downhill quickly as the squash bugs started feasting and injecting their toxic saliva into the plants. While the experiment looked good on paper it is not something we will try again. The end result is a yield decrease of about 75% with some varieties wiped out altogether. We don't tolerate failure very well and we know that our many squash fanatics will be sorely disappointed this season. On the bright side you won't have to worry about firing up the oven to roast a great big squash when it is still 80 degrees outside



After killing the plant they attack the fruit.

News and Notes

- Sunday September 8th we will have another work party from 9am-1pm focusing on the potato harvest. Afterwards there will be a Potluck from 1pm-4pm. The potluck is open to everyone whether you harvest potatoes or not. So make your prize dish and head down to the farm.
- Please RSVP to farmers@fbt.ag if you plan on attending either workday and/or by Friday so we know if we need to rent chairs and tables.
- For all events, parking will be near the brown shed at 5875 290th St W, Northfield, MN 55057
- We still have some chickens available for delivery starting later this month. Visit <http://fazendaboaterra.com/store/pasture-raised-chicken> for more information and reserve your birds.

Featured Item

We are swimming in roma/paste tomatoes this season. It may still be a little too hot to can right now, but as it starts to cool off a little bit you won't want to miss the chance to put some of these away for the winter. Paste tomatoes are drier than other varieties making them ideal for making paste and sauces not to mention drying if you have access to a dehydrator. We love canning them but don't seem to have the time and it seems a little too warm yet. Not to worry, just toss any tomato in a freezer bag and freeze them. When you have time to can later, just thaw them out and their skins will peel right off making them that much easier to process. This will be our method for putting up all of our tomatoes, sauces and salsa when we have a little more time to dedicate to it later on this fall. Romas are easily frozen by halving them, placing them on a cookie sheet and freezing overnight. When frozen put the halves in a freezer bag and you are all done

Recipe of the Week

Slow Roasted Roma Tomatoes

Ingredients

- 7 roma tomatoes
- 2 Tbsp. olive oil
- ½ tsp. good sea salt
- 1 bulb garlic, broken into cloves, unpeeled

Instructions

1. Preheat oven to 225F.
2. Slice tomatoes in half lengthwise.
3. Lay cut side up on parchment-lined baking sheets.
4. Brush with olive oil and sprinkle with sea salt.
5. Place garlic cloves in between tomato halves.
6. Roast for 4 hours.
7. Eat immediately or store in refrigerator with extra olive oil drizzled on top. Can use in pasta, to top chicken or beef, or just for snacking!