

Buckhill Farm CSA

Newsletter

~~ Farming for a Healthy Community ~~

September 2 - 12, 2015

Cup Half Full



As I sit to write this newsletter the thermometer reads 95 degrees but it certainly felt more like 100 when I was standing in the middle of the field earlier today. We continue to roll with the punches and enjoy the upside of this dry hot weather. While our springs run dry, sweat drips from our brow, and pond levels get extremely low we rejoice at our ability to efficiently weed our crops. Being able to dig

a weed up and not have to worry about it getting watered right back in makes it worth turning pumps on and flipping valves for irrigation at odd hours of the night. In the end I wouldn't mind if my cup were completely full, but we'll take what we can get.

Crop Update

We have a number of crops in the ground that enjoy the heat and others that are not the least bit happy. Regardless of temps every single crop would greatly benefit from a good old fashioned day long soaker.

The tomatoes continue to produce well and we are now picking from our final two successions. After a thorough scouting there was no late blight to be found... Yahoo!

Peppers are doing well, but we are definitely over our peak yield time. The cooler nights and shorter days will slow them down a little, but we expect to see both peppers and tomatoes around for a few more weeks.

Our chard has met its demise, as the grasshoppers have settled in for the long haul. We covered the chard, but they still managed to get underneath.

Arugula and other Asian greens will be harvested this week. Lettuce mix and spinach have all germinated and are looking good.

Our first planting of broccoli is starting to show signs of heat stress as are some of our fall lettuce varieties. We continue to water in an effort to keep the root zone cool, but we are expecting lower yields from our first succession. No fear though, as we have two more successions to follow.

Winter Squash

You know fall is truly upon us when you start getting winter squash in your share. We planted several different types this season. I would like to take time to describe each variety to you, so when you take it out of your bag or basket and set it on your kitchen counter, you can resist the urge to simply use it as autumn decor.

Winter squash is very healthy and can be extremely tasty, so use it wisely. Squash can be difficult to cut through, so we suggest putting it in the microwave for a few seconds to soften it up before you try and cut it in half.

The first winter squash which you have already received is Delicata. It is typically five to eight inches long and is a pale yellow color. It may be little, but it packs great flavor and is known by many as the sweet potato squash. Cut them in half and brush the inside with butter and brown sugar. Place skin side down and bake at 400 degrees for 30-40 minutes. The skin is edible.

Butternut is always a favorite. It has pale color and looks a little like a gourd. There are so many things you can do with Butternut. You can peel and seed the squash, cut it up, and roast it in a pan. You can purée it and make it into a soup. Or you can slice it in half, remove the seeds, butter the cut sides, then place them face up in a baking dish that contains half an inch of water -- bake at 400 degrees for 30-40 minutes. Removing the dish from the oven must be done very carefully -- this small amount of water is boiling hot!

The Sweet Dumpling is white with stripes of green, yellow and orange running laterally. Carnival is a striped acorn variety that is green and larger in size than the Sweet Dumpling. Cook just like the Delicata.

Spaghetti Squash looks a lot like a yellow football. It might look intimidating but it is very simple to cook. Cut it in half, scoop out seeds, prick the skin with a fork, and bake like the above listed squash. Using a large fork, scrape the flesh out into a bowl. Toss with 1/2 cup of Parmesan cheese, 3 tablespoons butter, 1 tablespoon fresh basil, and 1/4 teaspoon salt. You can also simply use the flesh as a substitute for pasta and put Marinara sauce on top.

Kabocha Squash is my favorite. It is reddish orange and weighs about 3-4 pounds. You can roast it like the Delicata and add a little nutmeg. It can be used as a substitute for pumpkin meat for pumpkin pies, or where a recipe calls for sweet potatoes.

As always, if you have any questions regarding any of the winter squash we grow, please don't hesitate to ask a farmer.

Recipe Corner

Celeriac Soup

Adapted from *Your Organic Kitchen* by Jesse Ziff Cool

Ingredients

2 Tbsp. Butter
1 Onion, medium, finely chopped
4 Cups Chicken or Vegetable Broth
1 Potato, large, chopped
1 Celeriac, large, peeled and chopped
1 Tbsp. Chopped Fresh Thyme or ½ tsp. Dried Thyme
1 Cup Heavy Cream
½ Cup Dry White Wine (optional)
1 Apple, finely chopped
1 Cup Shredded Cheddar Cheese
Sea Salt and Freshly Ground Black Pepper

In a large pot, over medium-high heat, melt the butter and cook the onion until soft. Add the wine, if using, and cook a few minutes longer. Add the broth, potato, celeriac, and thyme. Bring to a boil over high heat. Reduce the heat to medium-low and simmer for 1 hour, or until the vegetables are soft. (I have also made this soup in a hurry and just boiled the roots in the broth until tender, which takes less than half the time.)

Puree soup. Add the cream and stir until just blended. Stir in the apple and season with salt and pepper to taste. Top bowls of the soup with the cheddar cheese. (You can also serve the soup as is and offer the apple and grated cheese on the table to top the soup. It looks very pretty on top and I like the slight crunch of the apple.) Serves 6.

This soup makes great leftovers. You may have to add a bit more broth or water when reheating, and be sure to reheat gently so as not to overcook the cream. This hearty soup is excellent served with a salad and crusty bread.

Upcoming Events

Mark Your Calendar for the Annual Harvest Party – Saturday, October 17th

