



This Week's Word From the Farm

Week of 10/5/09

What's In Your Box ?

- Acorn Winter Squash
- Tomatoes
- Tomatillos
- Basil
- Peppers
- Eggplant
- Red Kale
- Jerusalem Artichokes
- German Butterball Potatoes – great served with butter and parsley
- Shallots
- Onions
- Parsley

A note about Jerusalem Artichokes: Jerusalem Artichokes, more aptly called sunchokes, aren't from Jerusalem and are not artichokes. These vegetables, native to the U.S., are part of the extensive root system of a tall, perennial sunflower. Eaten raw, they are crisp and refreshing like water chestnuts. Cooked, they are moist, sweet and their nutty flavor reminds some people of globe artichokes. We recommend roasting them as follows: Wash thoroughly, rub with olive oil, salt and pepper to taste. Spread on a pan and roast in a 400 degree oven for approx. 40 minutes or until tender in center when pierced.

Dear Friends,

I had the pleasure this morning of working alone in the fields. My daughter was still asleep up at the house. Jo and Vireo left at 8:00 for the Saturday market, the other interns left yesterday for a bluegrass festival in San Francisco.

I picked my way down a row of cherry tomatoes, happy with the task and enjoying the willingness of a ripe cherry tomato to be plucked, six or seven to each hand before putting them all into a basket, then back for more. Best of all, it was quiet enough to be able to hear the breeze rustling the dry leaves and the cool fall weather made it comfortable to be outside again, even without a hat.

You can't pick cherry tomatoes without paying attention to what you are doing or you risk getting a split or overripe tomato in the basket. They're thin-skinned and tender this time of year; too much water and they'll all split and spoil. All the same, minding what I was doing didn't keep me from being distracted by the sparrows working through the fields, scratching the leaf litter and, at times, flying up to perch on top of a tomato stake to let loose their beautiful song. Western Blue Birds are back in large numbers, too, and they fly about the farm in small groups, calling attention to themselves with a blue you'd expect to see on a bird in the tropical rainforest. Out there alone, my own whistling response to birdsong was involuntary.

Even on a farm as small as this, it's rare to be able to settle into a task without feeling the pressure of the next thing on the list. Even now as we near the end of the summer farm season, there's no shortage of tasks to get done and there are several things that should have been done yesterday that didn't get done. I can either try to get them done today, or add them to Monday's list. All the same, the character of the pressure

this time of year is different, less intense and without the high stakes of getting things done in the Spring and early Summer. It doesn't hurt that the backside of this season is winter, and there's the illusion of an endless string of days approaching when there'll be time enough for anything. As hard as we've worked this summer, I'm not going to kick myself too hard to break that illusion.

A morning like this one is restorative, and brings me back into relationship with this lovely place and the reasons why I set out years ago to start this farm. There's pleasure in the company of the farm that's lost when it's 100 degrees, everything needs water now, there are three field crews working that each need direction, and I still have my own list of things to get done before it gets dark. As inevitable as it is that one will get tired or worn out, it's necessary to have a morning like this one to bring back to mind that the hard work with which we've accomplished so much these past years can lead to something more than just tiredness.

What we feel is satisfaction in what we've managed and hope for the future. We're busy thinking about and planning for next season, moving in directions that we feel confident will bring our subscribers increased pleasure with the quality and quantity of produce in our shares. Although we've added shares to our CSA each past season, we needn't add more next year. Without the need for further expansion, we can settle into focusing on growing good food, fine tuning our production and continuing to fulfill our goal of creating a beautiful and lasting farm for this community.

Recipes of the Week:

Roasted Peppers and Tomatoes Baked with Herbs

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| 4 big bell peppers | 12 large basil leaves |
| 1 or 2 large tomatoes | 1 garlic clove |
| 2-3 small orange tomatoes | 3/4 tsp. sugar |
| 6 parsley sprigs | 12 Nicoise olives, pitted (optional) |

Roast the peppers on a BBQ or broiler until charred. Drop them into a bowl, cover and set aside. When cool, wipe off the blackened skin, pull out the seeds, core and cut into wide strips. Halve the tomatoes. Chop parsley, basil and garlic. Place in a bowl with 3 tablespoons olive oil and olives. Add 3/4 tsp. salt and pepper. Place tomatoes, peppers and sauce in a lightly oiled dish. Gently toss, cover and bake for 20 minutes in a 400 degree oven. Let cool before serving. Wonderful as a side dish with bread or served over pasta.

Sautéed Sweet Peppers

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| 1 lb. Nardello or other sweet peppers | 2 Tbs. chopped basil |
| 2 tbs. olive oil | 1 Tbs. balsamic vinegar |
| 1 small onion, thinly sliced | |
| 2 cloves garlic, thinly sliced | |

Heat the oil in a wide skillet, add the onion and garlic, and cook over medium heat until translucent. Add the whole peppers (if using larger peppers, cut into strips), raise the heat and sauté for 5 minutes. Season with salt and pepper to taste. Add the vinegar and cook until the peppers are glazed. Stir in the herbs. Serve warm or cold.

Baked Acorn Squash with Kale and Pear or Apple

- 2 acorn squash
- ½ Cup grated Parmesan cheese, divided
- 1 ½ Tbs. olive oil
- 1 large onion
- 4 cups coarsely chopped kale
- 1 cup vegetable or chicken stock
- ½ red bell pepper, cored, seeded and diced
- 2 cloves minced garlic
- 1 Tbs. butter
- 1 pear or apple, firm-ripe, peeled, halved, cored and cut in ½ inch pieces

Preheat oven to 375. Lightly grease a 13x9 inch pan with butter or oil. Cut the squash in half and scoop out the seeds. Place the squash, cut-side down on pan and bake until tender, 30-40 min.. Turn the squash halves over and sprinkle with ¼ cup Parmesan, salt and pepper. Bake for an additional 5 minutes. Heat the oil in a large skillet over medium-high heat. Add the onion and sauté until soft. Add the kale, stock, bell pepper and garlic. Bring to a boil, cover and cook for 5 minutes. Remove the cover and increase the heat, cook, stirring frequently, until kale is tender and the liquid evaporates, 8-10 minutes. Transfer to a bowl and set aside. Melt the butter in the skillet over medium heat. Add the pear or apple and sauté until lightly browned and tender but not mushy, 2-3 minutes. Add to the kale mixture and stir well. Spoon into the squash halves. Top with the remaining cheese and bake for 10 minutes.