



Notes From the Pea Patch

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Farmer's Notebook

Holy cow! Those were packed share boxes last week. I watched a member collect her share items at the farm. It took her three trips to collect the share box, bag of corn, fruit bag, eggs and chicken. Of course mid-August is the time for full shares - and full harvest days.

With the planting done, and weeding mostly under control, now we can devote our energy to harvesting the bounty of our fields. Early in the season, we usually have time on harvest days to do some weeding or other task between picking and packing shares. Not in August though. Last Monday we were out picking at 7:15 a.m. and did not finish packing shares until 3:00 p.m.

In addition to regular harvest days, there are storage crops to begin getting in from the field. In July we pulled the garlic and hung it up to dry. Last week we dug half our potatoes, boxed them, and packed them in the cooler. This week we need to get the onions out of the field - over 2,000 of them. Like the garlic, these get laid in the shed loft to dry.

The other end of this harvesting frenzy is preserving the excess for winter. Tomato sauce, pickles, salsa verde, frozen beans, frozen corn, canned peaches, peach jam, blueberry jam, dried oregano, dried thyme and dried tomatoes are some of the items we have "put up" over the past few weeks. As with most years, the hottest part of the summer coincided with the bulk of our preserving, making for many hot, sticky evenings.

But like summer itself, this harvest bounty is fleeting. Summer crops like squash and beans are already starting to wind down. Soon kale and leeks will replace corn and tomatoes. So make sure to enjoy these summer crops while they're here, and pack away the excess for a special treat next January. ~ *Eric*

This Week's Harvest

our best guess for what will be in this week's share boxes - subject to change at packing time:

sweet corn, tomatoes, lettuce, cucumbers, summer squash, red onions, sweet basil and parsley in vegetable share boxes. Fruit shares this week will be watermelon from our own fields.



sweet peppers - virtually all bell peppers start out green before maturing to a rainbow of other colors. We picked the first few red peppers last week and expect more to start ripening every day. As they do, shares will include green, purple, red, yellow and chocolate colors, both traditional blocky bell shaped and longer tapered Corno de Toro varieties. Store peppers in fridge to use within several days. Excellent as crudité, grilled, or in tomato sauces or salads. Extra peppers are easy to freeze for winter use. Simply wash, dice or cut into strips, and pack into freezer bags (peppers do not require blanching).

also... basil ~ cucumbers ~ lettuce ~ parsley ~ red cabbage ~ red onions ~ summer squash ~ sweet corn ~ tomatoes

Fruit Shares: Watermelon from our own fields. Not the easiest crop to grow in northern climates! We grow a variety called Sweet Favorite that is specifically selected for production in cooler northern zones. Classic oblong shape with dark green striped skin, red juicy flesh and black seeds. We don't grow seedless watermelon because the seed is much more expensive, it requires hotter temperatures than we can provide and you can't have seed-spitting contests. Enjoy! *Organically grown (non-certified).*

Coming Attractions

beets ~ garlic ~ kale



Recipes of the Week: Some Less Ambitious Summer Dishes

After last week's tamale recipe, I figured I should focus on some more every day plates for this week. Simple preparations are just as delicious, especially when you hit that cooking fatigue.

Pico de Gallo

Literally "beak of the rooster" (also called salsa fresca) this is a simple uncooked fresh red salsa.

- 3 medium tomatoes
- 1-2 small sweet peppers
- 1 onion
- 1 clove garlic
- 1 small hot pepper (or more to taste)
- small bunch of chopped fresh cilantro or parsley
- kosher salt
- juice of half a fresh lime

Dice tomato, sweet pepper, and onion into very small, even pieces. Mince garlic and hot pepper. Gently mix together all ingredients. Sprinkle with kosher salt and add a generous squeeze of fresh lime. Mix again. (I stop here for a chunkier salsa; Eric removes about a cup of the mix, purees it and adds it back). Whichever way you go, this salsa is best eaten the same day without refrigeration. Freeze extra for winter use.

Spicy Corn Quesadillas

With a side of black beans and rice, this recipe from The Moosewood Restaurant Cooks at Home, makes a filling meal.

- 1-2 tbs vegetable oil
- 1 medium onion, diced
- 2 cloves garlic, minced
- 1 medium to large carrot grated (~ ½ cup)
- 1 hot pepper of your choice, minced (optional)
- 1 small tomato, seeded and diced
- 3 cups fresh corn kernels (~ 6 ears)
- 2 tsp ground cumin
- 1 tsp ground coriander
- 2 tsp chopped fresh cilantro (optional)

- 1 ½ cups grated cheese (try Pepper Jack!)
- salt and freshly ground black pepper
- 8 tortillas (8-10" size)

Heat oil in a large skillet. Add onions and garlic and sauté about 5 minutes. Stir in grated carrot and sauté another 2 minutes. Add chile, corn, tomato, cumin, coriander and cilantro. Cover and cook 3-4 minutes, stirring often. Add salt and pepper to taste. Remove from heat. Stir cheese into vegetables, cover and let stand a few minutes until the cheese begins to melt.

Scrape skillet clean and add a little more oil. Spread 1/8th of filling onto a tortilla. Cover with a second tortilla. Place into heated skillet and cook about 2-3 minutes on each side. You can keep quesadillas warm on a rack in a 200°F oven while others are cooking.

Eric's Essential Tabouli

This one has been in Eric's repertoire since college days, which at that time relied heavily on the Moosewood Cookbook. We've made a few small adaptations since, but it remains a delicious and easy summer standard.

- 1 cup dry bulgur wheat
- 1 ½ cups boiling water
- 1-2 tsp salt
- juice of 1 large lemon (~1/4 cup)
- 1/4 cup extra virgin olive oil
- 1 clove garlic, crushed
- 2-4 tbs fresh mint leaves, minced (optional)
- 1 bunch fresh parsley, chopped (mandatory)
- 2 red tomatoes, seeded and diced
- 1 cucumber, peeled, seeded and diced

Combine bulgur with salt in a bowl. Pour boiling water over the grain and cover bowl. Let sit ~20 minutes, until bulgur is softened but chewy. Drain any excess water.

Whisk together lemon juice, olive oil, garlic and mint; season with salt and pepper to taste. Toss dressing with bulgur, add parsley and combine well. Refrigerate for 2-3 hours. Shortly before serving, stir in tomatoes and cucumbers.