



Notes From the Pea Patch

Foxtail Community Farm ~ Vol. 11, No. 27 ~ September 12, 2016

Farmer's Notebook

Then, sometimes quite suddenly, a fresh wind blows and the summer is over. The days are shorter. September is here.

*~ Alice & Martin Provenson,
The Year at Maple Hill Farm*

A lot of people count fall as their favorite season. Objectively, it's easy to understand why: brilliant blue skies, gorgeous foliage, pleasant cooler but sunny days, crisp evenings. A return to the familiar rhythms of the school year. I like these things, too, but I don't give up summer easily.

I think the first few weeks of September are designed to help people like me make the transition from summer to fall – kind of like the adolescent years for parents. One moment the sun is beating down hot enough to strip down to a tank top, the next a cool breeze is blowing little red maple leaves across the yard.

In the fields we are also harvesting a mix of summer and fall crops. Tomatoes, sweet and hot peppers and snap beans hold strong from our summer bounty. Collards, beets, potatoes and the first few winter squash herald the arrival of fall crops. Some nights it's hard to decide if we should fire up the grill or haul out the stew pot. Ice cream cones or warm apple pie? It's nice to have these choices for at least a few more weeks.

On the farm, fall brings a downward shift in the intensity of work that is welcome after the fervor of spring and summer. Weeding is done, as is most of our preserving. Another couple of weeks to enjoy the final waves of fresh summer vegetables and then we will turn our energy to hauling in the storage crops for the winter ahead.

The culmination of the year is our Harvest Home Festival, which will be October 1st and 2nd this year. Mark your calendars to ensure you don't miss this favorite day of the season! ~ *Rachel*

This Week's Harvest

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



collard greens - a nutritious green with thick, slightly bitter non-heading edible leaves. High in Vitamin C, fiber and many nutrients. A staple of Southern U.S. cooking, collards are traditionally cooked with salt pork onions, plenty of salt and a little vinegar. Refrigerate in a plastic bag for several days.

lemon grass - native to the Philippines, this thick-stemmed grass has a heavenly aroma and punchy lemon flavor. A staple ingredient in southeast Asian cooking. Refrigerate in a paper bag in the crisper. Slice or mince the stem to release its flavor for [curries](#), [soups](#), [teas](#) or [noodle salads](#). Extra can be dried and crushed for tea.



poblano peppers - large dark green peppers with mild to medium heat originating from Puebla, Mexico. Used green, they are the essential ingredient for [chile rellenos](#). Ripened to red on the vine and dried, they become *ancho* peppers. Store in fridge.



also... beets ~ onions ~ purple potatoes ~ snap beans (*lg shares*) ~ spaghetti squash (*Thurs shares*) ~ peppers ~ tomatoes

Fruit Shares: Concord Grapes from Heller's Vineyard (Germantown). The musky fragrance and rich flavor of this old-fashioned variety are unparalleled. Delicious to eat out of hand (just swallow or spit out the seeds!), or make your own [grape juice](#) or [grape jam](#). Refrigerate in a vented plastic bag; wash before eating. *Conventionally grown.*



Coming Attractions

delicata squash ~ edamame ~ bartlett pears



Recipe of the Week: Quick Focaccia with Concord Grapes

*This is a lazy version of **schacciata con l'uva**, the traditional Tuscan flatbread studded with grapes. While I have plenty of patience for bread baking (I've been making nearly all our family's bread for the past year), I've come to love my "cheat" approach to focaccia and peasant bread because it doesn't require planning ahead more than a couple hours. Besides, removing the seeds from a cup of grapes is work enough for this!*

- 1 cup of concord grapes, halved and seeded
- 4 cups all-purpose flour
- 2 cups warm water (about 120°F)
- 2 tsp yeast
- 2 tsp sugar
- 2 tsp kosher salt
- ~2 tbs butter, softened at room temperature
- extra virgin olive oil
- a few sprigs fresh rosemary, or a few pinches of dried
- coarse sea salt and natural/raw sugar for sprinkling

Carefully cut grapes in half and gently scrape out the seeds. This will be a little tedious. Try not to maul them. Do enough to have a heaping cup of grape halves.

In a mixing bowl combine yeast, sugar and warm water. Let sit a few minutes to "proof" the yeast (you should see bubbling). Mix together flour and salt. Stir into yeast mixture. You'll have a fairly sticky dough. Cover bowl with plastic wrap and let sit in a warm place for 1 hour. Batter should rise by approximately double and will be fairly wet.

Liberally grease your choice of pans with the softened butter. It's a lot more butter than you'd typically grease with, don't be shy. The size of your pans depends on how thick/ thin you want your bread. A 9x13" baking dish is about right, smaller dimensions will yield a thicker bread. It's just a matter of preference, try one of each to see what you like.

With your hands or a large spoon, divide the dough roughly in half and scrape each half into one of your prepared pans. Use your fingers to spread the dough out to the edges. Let rise uncovered about 30 minutes. While dough is on second rise, pre-heat oven to 425°F.

Poke indentations all over the top of the dough in each pan (I like to use a wooden chopstick for this, or your finger works fine). Gently press about half the grapes into the surface of each bread. Drizzle some extra virgin olive oil over the top. Sprinkle liberally with rosemary, coarse sea salt and a bit of coarse raw sugar.

Bake bread for 15 minutes. Reduce heat to 375°F, rotate pans and bake another 12-15 minutes. You want the top to be a little bit browned but not too much.

Remove from oven. Let cool a few minutes, then lift breads from pan (they should come easily if you greased your pan enough) and let cool on a rack. Cut into slices.

Foxtail Community Farm 2016 HARVEST HOME FESTIVAL!

Saturday October 1st &
Sunday October 2nd
11 am - 4 pm



www.foxtailcommunityfarm.com