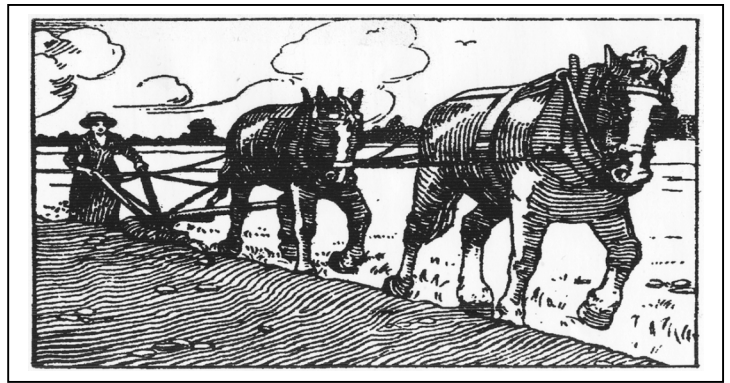


North Creek Community Farm NEWSLETTER

Week Seven

Thursday, July 31, 2014



IN THE BAG:

Lettuce Mix
Cucumbers
Beets
Bok Choy
Potatoes
Parsley
Garlic
Summer squash
Bell peppers
Broccoli

Putting food by

Every summer a miracle happens. There are vegetables to fill each week of the bag. It might appear that I plan out each week as I plant seeds in the greenhouse and then ship them on a precise schedule. Of course, experience and some planning go into it, but it is also a rhythm that the summer takes on. The gathering momentum of the season has an ancient feeling to it. Most of us have the luxury in this country to be able to eat what we want out of season. Recipes that call for asparagus and red ripe bell peppers reflect this luxury. Belonging to a CSA reminds us that the great abundance of August and September used to be accompanied by huge amounts of work to “put food by” for the coming lean times of the winter months. I make a relatively small amount of jam; a little sauerkraut and I freeze some sweet corn. I am often chagrined to find these packages in the freezer in the summer, untouched. Traditionally, these would have disappeared over the course of the winter. Spring greens would have been a treasure instead of a gourmet novelty. Farmwomen were justly proud of the gleaming rows of canned goods that assured that their families would eat well during the winter.

In *Radical Homemakers*, Shannon Hayes draws the connection between increasing consumerism and the loss of providing our own food. It is very difficult to find time to can tomatoes when both adults in a family work. Extended families played a large roll in processing the summer’s bounty. Additionally, cooking the stored food takes time and dedication. I find myself reaching for canned refried beans instead of sorting through the homegrown beans, cooking them and mashing them up.

There is a building abundance of luscious produce. Will I store some of it this year? How do we all reclaim our inner “radical homemaker?”

About the vegetables:

The cool wet weather this season means that lettuce mix has been happy, weedy but happy. Please wash the lettuce again when you get it. I am sending more beets and a recipe I got from a friend. I haven’t tried it but she swears by it.

It is unheard of to have bok choy in late July but again; there are benefits to cooler weather. Along with the broccoli and peppers, you have the makings of a great stir-fry. I have included a recipe but it is just a guideline. If you are busy there are several good sauces you can buy.

PARMESAN ROASTED BROCCOLI

Ingredients

2-3 pounds broccoli
2 garlic cloves, peeled and thinly sliced
Good olive oil
3/4 teaspoons kosher salt
1/4 teaspoon freshly ground black pepper
1 teaspoons grated lemon zest
1 tablespoons freshly squeezed lemon juice
1 1/2 tablespoons pine nuts, toasted
1/4 cup freshly grated Parmesan cheese
1 tablespoons julienned fresh basil leaves (about 12 leaves)

Directions

Preheat the oven to 425 degrees F.

Cut the broccoli florets from the thick stalks, leaving an inch or two of stalk attached to the florets, discarding the rest of the stalks. Cut the larger pieces through the base of the head with a small knife, pulling the florets apart. You should have about 4 cups of florets. Place the broccoli florets on a sheet pan large enough to hold them in a single layer. Toss the garlic on the broccoli and drizzle with 2 tablespoons olive oil. Sprinkle with the salt and pepper. Roast for 20 to 25 minutes, until crisp-tender and the tips of some of the florets are browned.

Remove the broccoli from the oven and immediately toss with 1 tablespoons olive oil, the lemon zest, lemon juice, pine nuts, Parmesan, and basil. Serve hot.

Gingery Pickled Beets

from *Food in Jars* by Marisa McClellan

Makes 3 1-pint jars

2 lbs beets
2 c apple cider vinegar
2 TB pickling salt
1 c sugar
1 cinnamon stick
1 2-inch piece fresh ginger, peeled and thinly sliced

Scrub the beets, removing the greens and long roots. Place the beets in a pot and cover with water. Simmer over medium heat until the beets are just tender, about 30 to 45 minutes depending on the size of your beets. Drain and rinse with cold water. When the beets are cool enough to handle, rub the skins off with your fingers. (Wear plastic gloves or resealable plastic bags on your hands if you're averse to pink-stained skin.) Trim the unwieldy ends, cut the beets into wedges, and set aside.

Prepare a boiling water bath and 4 regular-mouth 1-pint jars according to standard canning process. Place the lids in a small saucepan, cover them with water, and simmer over very low heat.

Combine the vinegar, 2 c water, salt, sugar, cinnamon stick, and ginger slices in a pot and bring the brine to a boil.

Meanwhile, pack the beet wedges into the sterilized jars. Slowly pour the hot brine over the beets in each jar, making sure to include 2 to 3 ginger slices in each jar and leaving 1/2 inch headspace. Gently tap the jars on a towel-lined countertop to help loosen any bubbles before using a wooden chopstick to dislodge any remaining bubbles. Check the headspace again and add more brine if necessary.

Wipe the rims, apply the lids and rings and process in a boiling water bath for 10 minutes. Let these pickles cure for at least 1 week before eating.

Disappearing Zucchini Orzo from Kris Hogquist

3/4 LB PKG ORZO PASTA

(Multicolored is fun)

Bring 6 cups water or chicken stock to a boil and add pasta.

Cook 8 to 12 minutes

1 CHOPPED ONION

GARLIC TO TASTE

3 LARGE ZUCCHINI

OLIVE OIL FOR SAUTÉ

Use a cheese grater or mandoline to shred zucchini, sauté briefly with chopped onion and garlic until lightly golden.

THYME

OREGANO

1/4 CUP GRATED PARMESAN OR ANY HARD

YELLOW CHEESE

Add spices to zucchini mixture, stir thoroughly, and then remove mixture from heat.

Combine with cheese and cooked orzo, salt to taste, serve cool or at room temperature.