

North Creek Community Farm

Newsletter 7, July 28, 2008

In the Bag

lettuce mix
new potatoes- Norland
chard
summer squash
onions
radishes
carrots
popcorn
garlic
basil
dill

Virtual Farm Tour

If we were to take a quick stroll around the farm, you would see that the broccoli that was planted a long time ago is finally forming small heads. It has taken a long time and with the continued warm, dry weather there is a chance that it will stay small and get bitter. A few have gotten bigger though and I am hopeful. Right next to the broccoli I planted a bed of lettuce mix and more beans. The beans have popped up but look as if they are coming out of a manhole cover. This crusting was a result of a very hard, brief rain last week. The lettuce mix will have trouble pushing through the hard ground. I will have to re-seed that in another part of the garden.

Further along, there are soft ball sized melons peeking out from the vines. This is a good sign that the cucumber beetles did not win out. The cucumbers themselves have inch long fruits and they should begin to show up in the bags next week. They, along with many other warm loving items are delayed this year but most will catch up.

Across the creek are the "beds". These have most of the more delicate vegetables that can't be cultivated with the horses. Almost everything here is coming along gang busters. Carrots, fennel, cabbage, basil, dill, cilantro, kale, beets and more are all getting ready to be delivered to you.

On this side too are the winter squash and pumpkins. They are still a hard thing for me to grow. I tend to stick them in the less fertile areas thinking that they will do fine. With the pressure of the cucumber beetles, they are struggling but seem on the verge of producing fruits.

Each field has such different soil. Next to the beds field but only across the driveway, the soil is much more fertile and holds more moisture. Here are the wonderful potatoes. The rain we have had in July has come at just the right time and they are flourishing. The sweet corn too is suddenly taking off. It will be awhile until it makes ears but the foundation is being laid.

The early onions are ready and the rest look great. The leeks have been mulched and the late broccoli and cabbage are roaring along. In the hoop houses, the tomatoes are magnificent. The tall towers are covered with green tomatoes. Very soon they will begin to ripen. Short of another tornado, lots of tomatoes seem like a sure thing.

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About your vegetables

Not sure much explanation is needed. Sick of greens? Freeze the chard after blanching for a winter treat. The popcorn is ready to pop. To get it off the cob, break it in half over a large bowl and carefully grind the two halves together. Some people have never done real popcorn, just microwave. Here's my method: heat a few tablespoons of oil in a **heavy** pan. Add several kernels of corn and wait until they pop, add the rest of the corn. Shake continuously until these begin to pop and then cover with a metal colander. This allows the steam to escape. If you just use a lid, it will be fine too. Continue to shake as they really start to pop. Then you can just wait. As soon as the popping slows, take it off the heat. When it is almost done, pour into a bowl. Add salt and enjoy.

The larger amount of basil is for making pesto. You can use it now or freeze it for a taste of summer this winter. I freeze it in thin enough a sheet that I can break chunks off as needed.

Please don't forget to return your bags

Balance Due

If you still owe a balance on your farm share, it is due next week. If you are not sure how much you owe, send an email and I'll let you know.

Corn Feed

Saturday, August 16 including overnight if you want.
Starting 2:00 on Saturday.

This is a fun event just to enjoy the farm and all its bounty. Come for the day or bring your tent and gear and spend the night. We will have a farm breakfast in the morning and then do some harvesting for the upcoming week.

Harvest Festival - Sept. 27

This is a great way to enjoy some of the summer bounty (as long as it isn't too hot to fire up the oven). Only 15 minutes prep time!

(From Everyday Food, Sept. 06). JoAnne and Isaac Peters

ZUCCHINI LASAGNA

You'll need:

olive oil, for baking dish

8 oz cream cheese, room temp (reduced fat ok)

15 oz part skim ricotta

coarse salt and ground pepper

2 med. zucchini, halved lengthwise, then thinly sliced crosswise

1 garlic clove, minced

2 tsp dried oregano

6 no-boil lasagna noodles

2 oz (1/2 cup) part skim mozzarella (shredded)

What to do:

Preheat oven to 425 degrees. Lightly oil 8 inch square pan and set aside. In a medium bowl, stir cream cheese and ricotta; season with salt and pepper. In another medium bowl, combine zucchini, garlic and oregano; season with salt and pepper and toss to combine.

Spread 1/3 zucchini mixture in dish; top with two lasagna noodles, then 1/3 ricotta mixture. Repeat twice, finishing with ricotta mixture. Sprinkle with mozzarella. Cover dish with aluminum foil and bake until bubbly and noodles are tender (30-35 min). Remove foil; bake another 15-20 minutes more. Let stand 10 minutes before serving. Serves 4.

Seared rainbow chard with onions

Gourmet | August 2000 with changes by Kate

Active time: 25 min Start to finish: 25 min

Makes 8 servings.

ingredients

2 (1-lb) bunches rainbow chard or red and green Swiss chard (one farm sized bunch)

2 cloves garlic minced

2 tablespoons extra-virgin olive oil

2 large onions halved lengthwise and cut crosswise into 1/4-inch-thick slices

3/4 teaspoon fine sea salt

preparation

Cut stems from chard (if leaves are large, cut out coarse portions of rib), then cut stems crosswise into 1/4-inch-thick slices. Stack chard leaves and roll into cylinders. Cut cylinders crosswise to make 1-inch-thick strips of leaves.

Heat oil in a 12-inch heavy skillet over moderately high heat until foam subsides, then sauté onions and garlic until soft, then add chard stems with sea salt and pepper to taste, stirring occasionally, until slightly soft, 3 to 5 minutes.

Add chard leaves and continue to sauté, stirring frequently, until wilted. (If greens begin to brown before they wilt, sprinkle with a few drops of water.)

Additions to this could be toasted nuts, some goat cheese at the end or sesame seeds.