

Pinehold Gardens *Field Notes*

Vol. 25, Week 5

August 7, 2019

In This Week's Box

(Only weekly members)

- Barese Swiss chard
- Cucumbers, green and/or white
- Kohlrabi
- Onion, Expression
- Cherry tomatoes or slicers
- Basil

Next Weeks Box?

(Everyone gets a box)

- Onion
- Kale, Toscano
- Tomatoes
- Cucumber
- Beans?

A DAY IN THE LIFE

Years ago there were pairs of people and animals living here. David and I, Peaches and Sweet Pea our Ossabow Island pigs, Cara and Claire our Golden Retrievers, Big Guy and Silvio our roosters, Sam and Tucker our cats, plus a flock of about 40 hens.

Except for David and I, those critters have all died. Currently, two cats, Morley and Cooper, probably dropped off here by people who thought a farm needed cats, have found a home here and we still do have a small flock of hens.

The chickens are the most difficult animal for us to keep. They prevent us from going away over night as they need to be closed up in the coop every night to protect them from predators. One can easily find a dog or cat sitter, but finding a chicken sitter who will let them out at sunrise and get them in at sunset is not so easy. And even if they are closed up in a coop, smart raccoons will open windows and doors. This past week we lost four hens and our beautiful young rooster Louie to two raccoons, who we managed to trap and relocate many miles away.

FIELD NOTES

The wonderful steady rain of 1.2 inches that fell on Tuesday night will really help our crops grow. It had been over two weeks since we had received any rain and most things were either growing slowly or had come to a stand still despite our 24/7 irrigation efforts as there is nothing like good old fashioned rain. Our weeds are very healthy.

BOX NOTES

The box contents are still rather light for this time of year as most of the crops that we are harvesting are still not crops that were planted in the field. For example in this week's box, the chard, cucumbers, tomatoes and basil were harvested from our hoopouses. The onion was planted in the mud in May and amazingly grew despite the weather and weedy conditions. Besides the onions, fennel and Bright Light Swiss chard, the kohlrabi is one of the few field crops that we have harvested. It was planted in June.

We made a concerted effort this year to grow enough cherry and grape tomatoes in our permanent and temporary hoopouses to make sure everyone would get at least one delivery of them. After this week we have met our goal. The GREEN cherry tomatoes are ripe. They are part of the Sun series of cherry tomatoes and are called Sun Green.

The Expression onion is a milder onion which is good for eating raw or cooking.

The Swiss chard is the same chard that you received in the first box of the season. Many people mistook it for Pac Choi. It

is a milder tasting chard which can be used in recipes that call for spinach. Hot weather is not conducive to growing spinach and the spinach we had planted bolted and went to seed almost as soon as we transplanted it. We will try our best to grow a fall crop of spinach.

The hoopouse cucumber is not the same variety that we have grown for the past half dozen or so years. Tasty Jade was discontinued and replaced by a variety that is not as prolific, susceptible to disease and bug damage and is a lot more seedy. I will be inquiring as to what happened to mine and others favorite cucumber. The white cucumber is a variety I heard about at a winter conference. Let me know what you think of it. Many think it is the tastiest cucumber.

STORAGE NOTES

Kohlrabi - Remove the leaves and it will keep for months in the refrigerator in a plastic bag.



Fun on the farm. Barefoot and dirty. Does life get any better than this for 3-year-old Piper? She thinks not.

Art and Farming

Artists have a keen sense for focusing on the essence of a complex subject. It is born with a gut feeling, we suspect, a vaguely formed image and sense of something almost tangible there.

Good art should grab us, hold us, and compel us to ask why or how or what else or what next. Artists have done this forever and everywhere, but especially where the rest of us have refused to look.

Farming is part art but it is also part science and part business. Science and business, however, with their emphasis on technological fixes and their surety in approach, have dominated agriculture of late. And the practice of farming that includes art, that embraces the complexity of something even if it's not well understood, is losing ground.

What farmers can learn from artists is to recognize that gut feeling and embrace the mystery. Good farming, like good art, is as much about the creating, the method, as it is in the created or the outcome. We think too often farmers are swayed by the confidence of the engineer and fooled by the simple short-term gain. Good art and farming, however, reach well beyond the bounds of economic reckoning, and are too big to push through the calculator to the bottom line. Lasting art is never the result of expediency nor should a lasting farm be.

This world is in a sorry state of nearsightedness. Farming is for certain. We need good farms and good farmers more than ever. While good farmers may be the best teachers, it's artists that may be the farmers most important ally. Farmers may not need science less in this climate changing, hungry world, but we will need artists more.



Painting by friend, artist, member Becky Brown

Swiss Chard and Sausage Pasta

- 2 Tbs. olive oil
- 1/2 lb. spicy sausage, sliced
- 1 bunch green onions, thinly sliced
- 1/2 lb. Swiss chard, cut into shreds
- 1/2 tsp. dried oregano or 1 tsp. fresh, minced
- 1 cup chicken or vegetable stock
- 3 oz. feta cheese, crumbled (or your favorite crumbly cheese)
- 1/2 cup kalamata olives, pitted and halved (or black olives)
- 1/2 lb. freshly cooked pasta
- 1/4 cup chopped fresh parsley

In a medium skillet, heat the oil. Saute the sausage until the raw color disappears. Remove and reserve. In same skillet, cook onion and chard until wilted. Add oregano and stock and bring to boil. Stir in cheese, and olives, and reserved sausage and heat through. Toss with pasta and sprinkle with parsley.

Swiss Chard Tortino

From Margaret Kozlowski

- 1-2 bunches Swiss chard
- 4 Tbs. olive oil
- 1 medium onion, finely chopped
- 1/4 cup mushrooms, sliced
- 2 garlic cloves, finely chopped
- 3 large eggs, lightly beaten
- 1/4 cup freshly grated Parmesan cheese
- 6 Tbs. bread crumbs
- 1 Tbs. Italian parsley
- Salt and pepper to taste, unsalted butter

Preheat the oven to 375 degrees. Separate the leaves from the stem and chop both. Place the stems in a large braising pan and cook in the water that clings to the leaves, adding the leaves after a few minutes. When the chard is tender, about 5 minutes, drain and press out excess water.

Saute onion until soft. Add the mushrooms and garlic and cook 3-4 minutes. Add the chard and cook for about 5 min.

Transfer chard mixture to a bowl, add eggs, grated cheese, 2 tablespoons of breadcrumbs and mix.

Butter a baking dish, add the mixture, sprinkle top with remaining bread crumbs and bake for 30 min. or until golden brown.





The kohlrabi in today's box is tender, sweet and juicy with only a hint of the cabbage taste. While it can be cooked and mashed like potatoes, we encourage you to try it raw. Peel the thick skins off and trim the bottom root end. Then slice it up or eat it like an apple. Yum.

Food Tips: Kohlrabi

by Pinehold member Jackie Jones, MS RDN

Kohlrabi, also called a German turnip, is the same family as cabbage, broccoli, cauliflower, kale and Brussels sprouts, known to the farmers as the brassica family. Most say that it tastes like a turnip or a bit like broccoli stems, but a bit milder and slightly sweeter. Kohlrabi can be eaten cooked, for example in a stir-fry, or raw, as in a salad or slaw. The tough outer layers are typically removed prior to using for cooking or eating raw.

Kohlrabi is very low in saturated fat and cholesterol. It is also a good source of fiber, vitamin C, and potassium.

Shredded Kohlrabi with Parmesan

From *Vegetables Everyday* by Jack Bishop

- 2-3 kohlrabi bulbs
- 2 Tbs. unsalted butter
- 1/4 cup grated Parmesan cheese
- 1 Tbs. minced fresh parsley

Peel kohlrabi and cut the bulbs so they will fit in the feed tube of a processor. Shred using the coarse shredding blade. Melt butter and add the shredded kohlrabi and cook over medium heat, stirring often, until tender, about 8 min. Sprinkle with cheese, salt and pepper. Toss and cook just until the cheese melts, about 1 min. Garnish with parsley.

Quick Tomato Pasta



- 1 Tbs. olive oil
- 1 pint cherry tomatoes, halved
- 3 medium garlic cloves, minced
- Basil leaves, cut into thin strips
- Salt and pepper
- Pasta of your choice, cooked al dente (We like penne.)
- Parmesan

Heat oil and add garlic and stir for a minute or less. Add cherry tomatoes and saute until tomatoes just start to break down. Remove from the heat. Add pasta, basil and cheese. Toss and serve.

