

Pinehold Gardens *Field Notes*

Vol. 22 Week 6

August 10, 2016

In This Box

- Red & orange tomatoes
- Calypso celery
- Salsa bag: Pony Express tomatoes and HOT peppers
- Italian Red garlic
- Zoey onion
- Simon's Gardens corn
- Muir lettuce

Next Week?

- Cabbage
- Potatoes
- Carrots
- Beets
- Beans
- Tomatoes
- Onion

A DAY IN THE LIFE

Last week I spoke about our relationships with chefs. But how do we decide what to sell to the chefs? When we had just a few restaurant accounts we used to just follow the simple procedure of planting double of what was needed for the CSA boxes and if there was extra after disease, insect, animal and weather damage it could be sold at the farmers market or offered to the restaurants.

For quite a few years now I have been meeting with the chefs during the winter and now plant a few speciality crops for the chefs. After successfully growing them for a season or two, some of those crops such as fennel and escarole eventually end up in the CSA boxes giving our members something new to try. But the opposite also happens with some of the high value, especially labor intensive crops, such as beans, carrots and hoophouse tomatoes which are rarely offered to the chefs and are mainly distributed to the CSA boxes. And then there is this year, where requested items such as Asian greens have just been impossible to grow because of the high level of insect pressure.

FIELD NOTES

No rain. No lie. On my delivery route last Wednesday I got 20 blocks away from Pinehold and it was pouring but none at Pinehold. Members I met at the West Allis dropsite told me they had just gotten over an inch of rain. No rain Thursday evening either when



There is no other way to harvest fresh sweet corn but to hand pick it and toss it into a bin as the tractor slowly makes its way down the rows. Here our employee and friend, Heather is with the owner's son, Jordan. Not shown is Ken and David to the right of tractor. The drought has been good and bad for the corn: it enhanced its flavor but some of the cobs are less developed.

shows ended early at State Fair because of the rain. I would cry Uncle, but we don't do that around here. And we always say, you can always add water, but you can't take it away. In 2010 we received almost 11 inches of rain in July and we lost potatoes, carrots, tomatoes and beans from the oversaturated ground.

We added a few Roma tomatoes from a small early planting. The upick tomatoes are still probably a month away from harvest

It is a great onion year as we planted them early and they were well weeded and watered during the critical first two months of growing. And the dry weather is great for drying down the necks of the onions so they will store for a long time. An onion is a staple in cooking, and there should be one in every upcoming box. We are about half way through the harvest and we are curing them in our transplant house.

We have always left beets in the field for most of the summer and just harvest them as we need them. We have limited cooler space and while the beets do continue to grow, many of the restaurant accounts like to use the larger beets. Last week we found a five pound beet in the field. I kiddingly asked our friend Ken if beets are related to pigweed, as that weed is growing at the rate of about a foot a week..

But guess what, they are related and belong to the family Amaranthaceae. Don't worry. You will not find a five pound beet in your box.

BOX NOTES

The salsa bag includes paste or Roma tomatoes and a variety of HOT peppers. The yellow ones are Hungarian and are the mildest. There is also the traditional Jalapeno with its usual Jalapeno taste and heat. The large green one is a mildly hot poblano (called Ancho when dried), the traditional chile rellenos pepper. Also in the box is onion and garlic. The only thing missing is cilantro, that is if you are a fan, and many are not.

The peppers you don't use can be frozen whole or chopped in a freezer bag, no blanching required. If frozen whole just chop off what you need while the pepper is still frozen.

I came across an idea this winter about freezing all the ingredients for chili together in one freezer bag. So you could place some chopped onion, garlic and hot peppers along with whole tomatoes in a bag and just add it to some beans and spices and you have chili.

The lettuce definitely did not get enough water and has a slight bitter taste. Soaking in cold water will lessen the bitterness.

Jalapeno Cornbread Muffins

from member Tracy Hannemann

1 cup all-purpose flour	1/2 cup sugar
1 cup yellow cornmeal	2 large eggs
1/2 tsp baking soda	1 tablespoon honey
1/2 tsp salt	2 jalapenos, seeded and diced
1 cup buttermilk	1/4 cup shredded cheddar cheese
1/2 cup unsalted butter, melted	

Preheat oven to 375 degrees F. Lightly coat a 12-cup muffin tin with nonstick spray; set aside.

Combine flour, cornmeal, baking soda and salt. Measuring cup or another bowl, whisk together buttermilk, butter, sugar, eggs and honey. Pour mixture over dry ingredients and stir using a rubber spatula just until moist. Add jalapenos and cheese, and gently toss to combine.



Scoop the batter evenly into the muffin tray. Place into oven and bake for 15-17 minutes, or until a tester inserted in the center comes out clean.

Remove from oven and cool on a wire rack.

I reduced the sugar in half and reduced the butter by three tbsps. and the muffins were still delicious! Tracy :)

Tomato Love

Tomato recipe suggestions
from *The New York Times*

The New York Times on Wednesday, August 10, provided some simple and delicious sounding recipes for tomatoes. Because they are simple and allow for your own variations, we are providing the basic idea of these recipes below for you to amend as you see fit. The times is paring the salty anchovy with the tomatoes, a classic Italian match where the salty fish pairs well with the acidic, sweet tomato.



Charred Tomatoes with Egg, Anchovies and Bread Crumbs: Toss grilled or roasted thick tomato slices with crotons, anchovy fillets and hard boiled eggs and top with a vinaigrette.

Tomato Tart with Fresh Mozzarella and Anchovies: Top a tart dough garlic and olive oil, distribute tomato slices, onion slices, mozzarella, Nicoise olives and capers and bake at 425 degrees until the tart dough starts to brown and cheese melts.

Celery

Most the celery you buy in the store is a variety called Pascal and is grown in California. It is relatively tender, due to blanching techniques, compared to Pinehold's Calypso variety most years but also rather tasteless. Domesticated celery is related to a wild plant called "smallage". Our celery has an assertive celery taste and makes



an excellent vegetable to add to soups and salads. It makes an excellent cream-based celery soup. **Store:** In a plastic bag in the refrigerator. **Preparing:** Chop or dice stems as needed. Use the leaves and any other unused portions in your homemade stock. **Use:** As the key ingredient in a celery soup, or diced into salads and soups. Don't forget everyone's favorite: "ants on a log" peanut butter and raisins on celery stalks.