

Pinehold Gardens *Field Notes*

Vol. 22 Week 8

August 24, 2016

In This Box

- Yellow & green Romano & Jade green beans
- Watermelon, yellow or orange
- Red radishes
- Red Norland potatoes
- Parsley
- Red Ace & Chioggia beets
- Field grown slicing tomatoes
- Cherry tomatoes for some sites

Next Week?

- Our canteloupe
- Celery
- Romano beans
- Swiss chard
- Onion
- Carmen peppers
- Lettuce?

A DAY IN THE LIFE

We are in a transition period. The weather seems to have taken a turn towards fall. The daylight hours are about an hour and half less than on June 21, the longest day of the year. The crickets are almost deafening at night. The bees got irritated with David today as he started to remove some of the boxes of honey from their hives that they thought they had stored up for their winter supply of food.

And our Tuesday morning worker share crew shrinks in size as our two teachers and two school counselors go back to school. We will also be losing two crew members in fall, permanently, as they move to new homes away from Milwaukee. At least we will have more places to visit as I am sure we will stay in touch.

FIELD NOTES

We got about 0.75 inches of rain. Hopefully more on the way. Whew. Crisis averted. Not really a crisis, but we have had some very stressful times around here this past month. We grew up as Memorial Day gardeners where you plant your garden on Memorial Day and harvest as things ripen. CSA farming is a whole different animal. There are crops that are only planted once, such as peppers, tomatoes, winter squash, melons and onions, that take much of the season to mature. Then there are many crops that are planted or should be planted every few weeks such as beans, carrots,



Bean pickers all. Everyone pitched in this week to pick 190 pounds of beans for delivery. Back breaking work, we try and pick only the mature beans to ensure a supply for other deliveries. This week's green bean is the Jade variety — our favorite .

beets, and lettuce. Also we planted more than an acre in fall crops on July 15, exactly when it decided to stop raining for a full month. Through persistence and hard work David kept the plants alive with irrigation and they appear to be on their way to doing very well.

EXTRA GARLIC

Every year we offer the small heads of garlic to our members at no extra charge. Just send us an email and next week we will leave a bag of about 10 heads at your dropsite with your name on it.

BOX NOTES

Last week we nicknamed the box the coleslaw box. This week we are calling it the picnic box by including the ingredients for the crowd pleasing Beans & Barley potato salad recipe and a watermelon. The potatoes are the same variety we delivered the first two times, Red Norland, the classic salad potato variety. The radishes and parsley are key ingredients in the recipe.

The watermelons we grow are called ice-box sized or personal-sized melons. And they have seeds, an abundant supply of them. There is a strong correlation between the weight of a mature watermelon and both the number and weight of mature seeds present in the fruit, according to www.pollinator.ca. Seedless watermelon require even more pollinator visits to set marketable fruit, because pollen must be carried from a pollenizer variety further away.

Experiments have shown that adding honey bees can increase melon weight or number of melons per plot. Coincidentally we have two new hives of very active honey bees this year

Also seedless melon seeds are very expensive and difficult to germinate and the plants themselves need warmer conditions than we experience at Pinehold in a usual year. So enjoy sitting in your yard and have a seed spitting contest like we all did at picnics when we were kids.

We only had a dozen cherry tomato plants in our hoophouse with the remainder of the house devoted to slicing tomatoes to ensure we had enough tomatoes for all of our members. Starting this week field grown cherry tomatoes will be circulating through the drop sites. It has been years since we were able to grow cherry tomatoes outdoors because of late blight. Cherry Bomb is a new blight resistant variety and it is delicious.

Along with the classic red beet there will be one or two Chioggia beets in the bunch. Chioggias are an heirloom white and pink striped beets with a much milder flavor than red beets.

Romano beans are great in soups, but can also be used as you would any string bean.

The hoophouse tomatoes have succumbed to disease but our field tomatoes have started to produce just in time.

The beet greens have Cercospora leaf spot that was caused by high temperatures and high humidity. Not pretty, still edible. Juicing? Smoothies?

Melons



Our summer fruit of choice are melons which come netted with a buff or beige skin such as cantaloupes or a smooth green striped or solid dark green skin such as watermelon. Cantaloupe have a seed cavity while watermelons have their seed peppered along the mid-section of the fruit.

The smell of a cantaloupe is usually the first indication of its sweetness. This first step may be difficult with grocery store melons because they are often sprayed with bleach or a substitute to prevent mold, masking the odor. With watermelons, a ground spot and a good thump on the center indicates a good fruit. Melons in general offer a lot of vitamin C and A. **Preparing:** Slicing with a knife and scooping our flesh with a melon baller. **Use:** Besides the obvious ones, melons can be used in cold soups, salads and desserts. Best if served at room temperature. Melons can even be grilled just like a squash. Try it with a little salt or ground chile. **Store:** If for more than a day or two, place in the refrigerator.

Burrata with Romano Beans and Eggplant

from Melissa Clark of *The New York Times*

1 1/4 lb. eggplant
1/2 tsp. kosher salt
8 cloves garlic, smashed
and peeled
1 1/2 cups cherry tomatoes, halved
1 lb. Romano beans, or
combo with green beans
1/4 cup pitted, sliced
kalamata olives

1 Tbs. capers, drained
1/4 cup fresh mint, torn
1/4 fesh basil, torn
2 tsp. red wine vinegar
Salt and pepper
12 oz. burrata (or feta
or mozzarella cheese)

Salt eggplant and place in colander for 20 - 30 minutes.

Cover garlic in oil and heat in a sauce pan until soft and pale golden. Let cool, then mash garlic and strain oil into a jar or bowl. (Spread garlic on bread later.)

Toss eggplant with olive oil and roast in a 450 degree oven until golden. Place in bowl with tomatoes and 3 Tbs. of garlic oil. Meanwhile boil the beans until just tender then cool in cold water and cut into 1 inch pieces. Toss with olives, capers, mint, basil, vinegar and a little more garlic oil. Place cheese in the center of serving plater and surround with salad.

Serve with crusty toasted or grilled bread.



Beans and Barley House Potato Salad

4 cups red potatoes, cut
into 1 inch pieces
1-2 Tbs. vermouth
1/4 cup radishes,
thinly sliced
1/4 scallions, thinly sliced
1 each hard boiled
eggs sliced

1/4 cup chopped parsely
Dressing:
1/2 cup mayo
1/2 tsp celery seed
1/2 tsp dill weed
1/2 tsp. salt
1/4 tsp. pepper

Steam pototoes until tender, place on cookie sheet and splash with vermouth. Let cool.

Combine the rest of the ingredients and then add potatoes and toss. Serves 6.