

Pinehold Gardens *Field Notes*

Vol. 20 No. 7, Week 5

August 6, 2014

In This Box

- Nelson carrots
- Tasty Jade cucumbers
- Provider green beans
- Ailsa Craig sweet onion
- Assorted Swiss chard
- Fennel bulb
- Zucchini or Zephyr squash
- Slicing tomato or cherry tomatoes

Next Week?

- Potatoes
- Tomatoes
- Head lettuce
- Carrots
- Yellow and green beans
- Collards or kale
- Baby leeks, onions & garlic
- Cucumber

A DAY IN THE LIFE

Our good friend Martha Davis Kipcak is getting married this weekend. I met her at the West Allis Farmers Market more than 10 years ago when Deb Deacon, the most passionate advocate of farmers markets we know, was taking chefs on a tour. At that time Martha was a private caterer. Since then Martha has bought from us when we were selling at the South Shore Market, became a CSA member when we stopped attending the market last year and is now serving on the Board of Directors for the Milwaukee County Winter Farmers Market along with David. Martha now describes herself as a food advocate and started her own business, Mighty Fine Foods, with Martha's Pimento Cheese as the first product.

But it is not these "business" relationships that cement our friendships with so many. Almost without exception we become true friends with almost everyone we have met while we have been farming — from fellow farmers, to people we meet at conferences, to people who buy from our farm stand, to our worker shares, and of course the many CSA members that we have gotten to know over the years. In hindsight, it is obvious now how or why this happens. I often tell of the first conference that I went to at Michael Fields Agricultural Institute. It was an Urban Rural Day that was trying to connect city people with farmers. This was about 20 years ago, be-

fore there were "foodies" and before local food was popular. I met some CSA farmers and I came home and realized that I belonged somewhere. I am so glad, and David is too that we followed the path I found on a fluke when I decided to drive to East Troy that day. Otherwise we wouldn't be sharing a beautiful, happy day with our friend Martha.



SUMMER ON THE FARM. Our friend, photographer and food writer Craig John took this photo early one morning, capturing the peace and fertility of Pinehold. We are grateful for his effort in showing us what we sometimes miss. You can see more of Craig's work at juicygarlic.com and read some kind words he wrote about our farm.

FIELD NOTES

It seems that I am always mentioning rainfall. Too much, too little, never just right. But the definition of scattered showers is just getting too wierd. In the last three and a half weeks we have gotten two showers of two tenths of an inch of rain. My parents, directly 9.5 miles to the north of us got two inches of rain just last Friday. We don't need two inches of rain, but it would be nice to not sleep to the sound of our pump running all night as we are irrigating 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

Obviously the cucumber hoophouse is hitting peak production. Each eight foot tall trellised vine is producing at least four, one pound cucumbers a week. And considering that cucumbers are mostly water, that hoophouse gets its share of irrigation time.

Next week the tomato hoophouse should start to approach peak production and you will be receiving more slicing tomatoes.

The fall field of kale, broccoli and cauliflower is doing very well, thanks to David's weeding and irrigation efforts.

It is also, as we have mentioned before, a very good bean year. It's good soil, we know, but we think the cool weather has helped a lot.

We lost a couple of plantings of carrots to washed away seed and weeds when it was too wet to weed. So we were pleasantly surprised by the quantity and quality of the bed of carrots we harvested today.

BOX NOTES

This is the last delivery of Provider green beans. Being the last picking from older plants,

they might be a little less tender than the beans you received two weeks ago. It is a nice cool week, a Minestrone soup kind of week.

The white bulb with the fuzzy fronds is the fennel bulb. See the "food bits" column on the recipe page.

The carrot tops should be removed from the carrots and the carrots should be put in a plastic bag for storage in the frig. The same goes for the fennel. Both the carrot tops and fennel fronds are edible.

Everything else in the box except for the tomato and onion should be stored in plastic in the refrigerator. Once the onion is cut open we also store that in the refrigerator. Tomatoes should never be refrigerated. They lose their flavor and turn mealy.

COOKING TIPS

When cooking Swiss chard remember to cook the stems first. Zucchini and squash can be grated and stored in the freezer in a zip loc bag for making zucchini bread in the winter.

We have solicited cucumber recipes from members and friends to help you out with this week's cucumbers. Annie Wegner has this simple suggestion for cucumber water that she enjoys with her daughter Vera. They put big handfuls of herbs like mint, lemon balm, etc. with thinly sliced cukes into mason jars and then the refrigerator for a very refreshing drink on a hot day.

Annie's Garlic Carrots

by Pinehold member Martha Davis Kipcak

1 pound organic carrots, trimmed,
cut into 3 or 4 inch sticks
3 T. apple cider vinegar, prefer-
ably organic and unfiltered

3 T. mild oil, such as grapeseed or canola
3 good sized garlic cloves, minced
1-2 t. Jane's Krazy Mixed Up Salt (a blend of
herbs and salt found at any grocery store)

Combine all ingredients, mixing well. Marinate overnight in the fridge or eat right away. Serve cold or at room temperature.

Martha reminds us of the words of Paul Cezanne: "The day is coming when a single carrot freshly observed will set off a revolution."

Shredded Green Beans with Lemon-Lime Zest and Snipped Chives

From the website, *In Sonnet's Kitchen*, recommended by Annie Wegner LeFort

3/4 pound green and/or yellow
beans, tops and tails trimmed
2 Tablespoons extra-virgin olive oil
2 Tablespoons water

Grated zest of 1 large lemon
Grated zest of 1 lime
1/4 cup chopped fresh chives
Sea salt and freshly ground black pepper

Slice the beans on a diagonal into roughly 1/8-inch pieces. If you are using a food processor, do them a handful at a time. Either way the result should be tiny, angular zeros.

Heat the olive oil in a large skillet over medium-high heat. Add the beans and stir until coated with oil, then add the water. Cover and cook 2 or 3 minutes, until the beans are brightly colored and tender; give the pan a good shake midway through to ensure even cooking. Remove from the heat and stir in the zests and half the chives. Season to taste with salt and pepper and serve garnished with the remaining chives.

Fennel



While maybe not ambrosia, fennel was for the ancient Greeks, a food of the gods. A wild

plant in many parts of the world, it is cultivated in the West for its sweet, anisey flavor. In many ways its texture is similar to celery and the two can be used interchangeably but the tastes are distinctly different. **Store:** Keep the fennel bulb in a plastic bag in the frig but store the fronds separately and use quickly.

Preparing: Separate the bulb from the fronds. Trim the bottom and the top. Cut into quarters and slice thinly or chop. **Use:** Braise, roast or saute the bulb.

Also good grilled. Use frons as garnish.

Zucchini: Who does not recognize zucchini? It is as about as familiar in the garden or the kitchen in the summer as dew is on the grass. And while it is mostly water it does have a store of vitamins A and C and calcium but a nutritional powerhouse it is not. What it does excel in, however, is its versatility. It can be baked or fried into chips and fries. It can be sauteed with tomatoes and tossed with pasta. It can be sugared and baked in to cakes and faux apple cobblers. And it can be diced and potted with other ingredients for a summer minestrone. But it also can be simply sliced, sauteed and placed on toasted bread with tomato and cheese, especially chevre or mozzarella, for a quick delicious sandwich. You can store the zuch on the counter top for a short while but best used fresh or diced or shredded and frozen for winter use.



Moroccan Cucumber and Tomato Salad

by Pinehold member, Rita Collen

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| 1 large cucumber, peeled and diced | spoon finely grated onion with its juices.) |
| 2 tomatoes, chopped into small dice
(or ½ pint cherry tomatoes, halved) | 1 T. olive oil |
| 1 t. finely chopped parsley | 1 T. white vinegar |
| 1 t. finely chopped cilantro | Salt to taste |
| 2 T. finely chopped onions (or substitute 1 tea- | Pinch white pepper |
| | 1 t. ground cumi |

Combine the cucumber, tomatoes, parsley, cilantro, and onion in a bowl. Toss to combine. Mix the olive oil, vinegar, salt, pepper and cumin and pour the mixture over the salad ingredients in the bowl. Toss to coat. Serve chilled for best flavor.

Tabbouleh

by Pinehold member Martha Davis Kipcak,
owner, Mighty Fine Foods

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| 1 cup bulgur wheat | 1 cup chopped fresh mint leaves |
| 1 ½ cups boiling water | 1 cup chopped flat leaf parsley |
| ¼ cup freshly squeezed lemon
juice (about 2 lemons) | 1 hothouse cucumber, unpeeled,
seeded, med-diced |
| ¼ cup good olive oil | 2 cups cherry or grape tomatoes,
cut in half |
| 1 ½ t. Kosher salt | 1+ t. freshly cracked black pepper |
| 1 cup minced scallions, green and
white (1 bunch) | |

Place the bulgur in a large bowl, pour in the boiling water and add the lemon juice, olive oil and 1 ½ tsp salt. Stir, then allow to stand at room temp for about an hour.

Add the scallions, mint, parsley, cucumber, tomatoes. Toss well. Season to taste with lots of cracked black pepper and salt only if needed. May need more fresh lemon juice to make it sparkle.

Cover and refrigerate until ready to serve. The flavor improves over time. Serves 6-8.

Cucumber: About as much a summer fruit — yes, it is a fruit — such as the tomato, the cuke is about 3,000 years old, came from India, and is now a global food. Mostly water and some trace minerals, it is actually fairly high in vitamin E. Fresh farm cukes are different in taste and texture than the waxed, tough skinned store-bought variety. The are best eaten fresh in salads, on sandwiches or just to quench your thirst but can be stored on the counter top or in the frig for a few days before losing their freshness.

Cold Cucumber Soup

by Pinehold member Patricia Heim,

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| 3-4 medium cucumbers | 2 cups plain yogurt or kefir |
| 1 T. olive oil | 2 T. fresh chopped mint |
| 4 green onions | Salt to taste |
| 1 cup vegetable broth | Fresh mint for garnish |

For a spicy version add 1/4 tsp each cumin and curry powder, and a pinch of cayenne powder.

Peel cucumbers. Slice lengthwise. Use a spoon to scoop out and discard the seeds. Coarsely chop and set aside. Heat olive oil in a saute pan. Saute onions for about 2-3 minutes. Remove from heat.

In a blender combine cucumbers, onions and the remaining ingredients.

If you want the spicy version, add the additional ingredients at this point. Process until smooth. Chill several hours or overnight.