

Pinehold Gardens *Field Notes*

Vol. 20 No. 5, Week 3

July 23, 2014

In This Box

- Provider green beans
- Tasty Jade cucumber
- Red Crisphead lettuce
- Fresh garlic, Music variety
- Red radishes, bunch
- Basil
- Dill
- Ailsa Craig fresh onion
- Zucchini
- Summer squash-rotating by site

Next Week?

- Escarole
- Cucumber
- Onions & garlic
- Kohlrabi
- Lettuce
- Zucchini/summer squash
- Green beans
- Tomato/cherry tomatoes?

A DAY IN THE LIFE

David and I are both very aware of the sounds that surround us. The mornings are much quieter now as the birds have stopped mating. The sound we miss the most is the wren and his incessant trilling around nesting time. He took forever to find and coax a mate into his home. And then he had his family to protect and really took a disliking to our cat Cooper. If the wren was making a racket, you knew that Cooper would be close by.

The robins raised at least three broods this year and every night one robin kept singing until dark and started again around 4:30 a.m.

We still hear the occasional crow, the beautiful song of the song sparrow that seems to like to keep David company, the chipping of the cardinal in the morning and guttural call of our two Sandhill Cranes as they fly into our field. Today, a sure sign that summer has finally arrived, the cicadas starting buzzing.

A sound we are really missing is the sound of the Spring peepers and American toad from the field across from our house. With this wet, cool spring there was plenty of standing water and at night the sound was almost added to the days caucaphony. Two Saturdays ago the Roundup Ready soybeans that were planted in the field adjacent to the pools of standing water were sprayed with

Roundup at noon. Ten hours later 2.5 inches of rain fell in 1.5 hours and there was a lot of runoff from the soybean field. We haven't heard a peep or croak since. Coincidence? Did they too stop mating? Did they move on? We don't know. What do you think?

FIELD NOTES

Most of the plants are glad to finally have some heat and sun. The nights have been so cool that even the bees aren't getting up early enough to pollinate the squashes so even zucchini production has slowed down. The peppers and melons, which are just starting to blossom, love this weather.

The Saturday evening of 2.5 inches of rain would make or break some crops. The onions loved the water, so did the beans and beets. But we lost one planting of beans to seed rot and many of the potatoes we had just planted that day, including the ones that we replanted to replace the ones that rotted in June, rotted. Darn. Beans can be replanted. And we have some potato seed left but it is getting late in the season to plant potatoes. Other small seeds like carrot and rutabaga, were pounded into the ground and are not germinating well so those have been replanted.

BOX NOTES

The Ailsa Craig onion is a mild onion also known as the Exhibition onion as it has won many State Fair awards. They are sweet, mildly pungent and store only a few weeks. Cut off the green tops, which are edible like the tops of a green onion, and store in a plastic bag in the frig.

The radishes were grown in our hoop-house. We had some space leftover after planting the cucumbers and it was so cool out we decided to give it a try. We never grow summer radishes as the heat and longer daylight hours usually make them bolt. Also the outdoor insects chew the leaves to bits.

The basil was harvested from the hoop-house and it loved the environment as it grew into tall tender plants.

The cucumber was also harvested from our hoop-house. It should be the first of many weeks of cucumbers if they yield like previous years. It should be put in a plastic bag and stored in the refrigerator.



ABUNDANT RAIN AND GOOD SOIL, along with hours of weeding, has yielded one of the best onion crops in a long time. Seemingly a low value crop, how many dishes do you make that include an onion? Friends Chris Granlund and Dave Glenn trimmed the onions then bagged beans for today's delivery.



tor. It will store for about a week.

This is the best early green bean harvest we have ever had. They were planted the first week of June before the rains started and germinated well. They grew into tall plants loaded with flowers from top to bottom, unusual for this variety. They must have loved the cool weather. Keep them in the plastic bag in the frig and they should store for a week. But you will be getting more.

The lettuce is a crisphead variety, the only type of lettuce that will tolerate summer heat and not bolt (go to seed).

COOKING TIPS

The Ailsa Craig onion can be eaten raw or cooked, but it is fairly moist and will not easily brown. Remove the greens from the radishes and store separately from the roots, both in plastic bags. Radish greens will only store a few days, while the roots will last for many weeks. See the recipe section for a radish pesto recipe.

Radish Leaf Pesto

2 c. radish leaves, washed and stems removed
4 garlic cloves, peeled
1/4 c. blanched almonds, coarsely chopped

1/3 c. extra-virgin olive oil, divided
1/2 c. freshly grated Parmesan or part-skim mozzarella



This pesto has an intense spicy flavor; you may not find it interchangeable with basil pesto. I suggest using it as a base for bruschetta topping.

Place the radish leaves, garlic, and almonds in a food processor and process until everything is chopped to a rough or fine consistency, depending on your preference. With the machine running, add half the olive oil in a slow, steady stream. Turn off the processor and add the cheese. Process until the cheese is absorbed. With the machine on, slowly add the remaining olive oil. Add salt and pepper to taste. Transfer to a small bowl. If you do not plan to use it immediately, cover with a thin layer of olive oil and store refrigerated in a tightly closed

container. To freeze, portion into ice cube trays (use trays dedicated to making pesto) or mini muffin pans. Once frozen, remove from trays/pans and store in a freezer bag. Label and date. To thaw, put in a small dish and let sit several minutes before using.

Fresh Garlic: Fresh garlic means freshly dug garlic and used before it is seasoned. The seasoning or drying process allows the outside skins of the garlic to turn papery. For us, garlic is at its best when it is fresh. Simply pluck out a few cloves and crush them with the side of broad knife. Remove the waxy skins, chop in a leaf or two of basil and add to a tomato or cucumber sandwich with goat cheese or mozzarella.

From the Pinehold *Archives*

Dilly Beans For Fresh Use

by *Annie Wegner LeFort*

| | |
|--|----------------------------------|
| 1 lb whole green beans, trimmed and blanched | 1/8 tsp cayenne pepper, optional |
| 4 fresh dill heads, chopped | Pickling solution: |
| 4 cloves garlic, minced | 1 cup white vinegar |
| | 1 cup water |
| | 2 Tbsp salt |

Combine the pickling solution ingredients and set aside. Mix the green beans, dill, garlic and cayenne pepper. Pour the pickling solution over the green beans while the beans are still warm. Marinate for at least one to two hours.

Cucumber Salad

By Pinehold member *Tammy Peacy*

1 cuke sliced or diced
Tahini,
Lemon juice

A clove of garlic, minced
Salt to taste

Drizzle cuke with tahini and splash with lemon juice. Mix with garlic and salt to taste

Basil



Basil along with parsley maybe the most ubiquitous herbs in the summer. Almost always used fresh, basil has a anise and clove

flavor that pairs well with tomatoes and cheese. **Store:**

Basil is best kept fresh with its stems, trimmed, in jar or glass of water. Use it right away as it won't stay

fresh long this way. It can also be frozen in water or olive oil. It does not dry well. **Preparing:** Cut out the largest stems otherwise chop or pulverize in a blender

as in pesto. **Use:** As we said it is best used fresh, but turned into a pesto with garlic, walnuts or pinenuts, olive oil and Parmesan cheese, it can be used as a swirl or condiment to a soup or stew or a sandwich spread.