

Pinehold Gardens *Field Notes*

Vol. 21 Week 4

July 29, 2015

In This Box

- Escarole
- Fennel
- Basil
- Taglio Swiss chard
- Tomato or cherry tomatoes
- Zephyr summer squash
- Dunja zucchini
- Red Long of Tropea onion
- Some sites-eggplant

Next Week?

- Green cabbage
- Potatoes
- Dill and Parsley
- Radishes
- Head lettuce
- Tomatoes or cherry tomatoes
- Green beans?

A DAY IN THE LIFE

The local grocery stores, Pick 'n Save, Woodmans and the new one on the block Meijers are all vying for your food dollar. Stores are being redesigned, organic products are being featured more prominently and billboards and commercials include lots of cows and fields and farmers. The most confusing billboard to me is the Meijers' one that says "Fresh Produce Daily". How is one supposed to interpret that? Produce added to the shelves from their cooler? Produce delivered every day? But what is fresh is the real question. Is a head of lettuce being shipped by truck from California really fresh? What about vegetables being flown in from another country?

We can assure you that the vegetables in your box are fresh. The only items that are not picked the day before are the storage type crops such as potatoes, onions and winter squash or crops that need to be harvested frequently before they get too large such as zucchini and cucumbers. Rodale's Organic Life magazine listed us as Wisconsin's favorite farmstead store for the freshest chemical-free produce. We have no idea how we made the cut, but we make the freshness and quality of our produce a very high priority on our farm.

GLEAN THE BEANS

The Provider variety of beans that were in your box the last two weeks are still providing,



Sunday, Sept. 13, will be our People's Sunday Supper, when anyone can enjoy a beautiful and delicious experience. The menu and price has been decided and you will receive details next week about signing up.

hence the name, but have grown rapidly in this hot weather and are too large in size for inclusion in the CSA boxes. When a bean gets large the seeds inside get large and the bean itself is not as tender. They are still very edible and great for soups or stews. We always blanch and freeze some for the winter. If anyone would like to come and pick some, please come on Thursday between 9 a.m. and 7 p.m. or Saturday from 9 a.m. and 1 p.m. You could easily pick a few pounds in a half hour. And yes, they are free.

FIELD NOTES

If one goes back and reads the Field Notes of the past many years, you will find that I mention rain and the lack of or surplus of it a lot. Last year, the summer of no summer (remember the cancelled fire works and air show because of the fog from the cold lake) it rained multiple times every week. This year we have the opposite problem of very little rain, only 1.5 inches in the last 35 days. And I also always mention that plants need about an inch of rain a week, so we are short 3.5 inches, which is a lot more than our irrigation system can provide, but most of the plants are holding their own. Making sure the young transplants survive and getting the newly seeded fall crops to germinate is the biggest challenge. I do wish that the television weather people would mention the lack of rain occasionally. They should at least tell people to water their trees.

BOX NOTES

The zucchini and summer squash season is at peak and we have made a special effort this past week to pick them frequently for a nice sized and not super sized squash.

The onion, a speciality Italian variety is best cooked, not eaten raw.

The Taglio Swiss chard is a very mild chard that tastes more like spinach than chard. The stems have been voted by our crew as better than celery.

To store your basil do not refrigerate it as it is very cold sensitive. Cut off the bottom of the stem and place it in a glass of water or vase. Sometimes it will actually start to root.

The carrots are trying to grow in soil that has become very hard from the lack of rain and some forked carrots are the results.

WE NEED PINT CONTAINERS

We reuse the pint containers that the cherry tomatoes are delivered in. Also if anyone has been buying blueberries we also reuse those containers. Just leave them at your dropsite. Thank you.

HONEY

Our honey is sold out for now, but hopefully we will have another harvest in September. You will be receiving a confirmation email with your amount due and how to pay and the honey will be delivered next week.

Summer Pasta

from *The New York Times*

Olive oil	About 2 c. basil leaves
1 small onion	1 lb ziti or other dry pasta
2 lbs. summer squash (green or yellow squash or both), sliced into ¼-inch slices	About 1 c. ricotta
Salt and pepper	Pinch of red pepper flakes
2 garlic cloves	Zest of 1 lemon
	About 1 c. Parmesan

In a skillet, cook onions in olive oil until soft. Reduce heat to keep onions from browning and add summer squash. Season with salt and pepper. Cook until rather soft — about 10 minutes. Crush basil and garlic and little salt with mortar and pestle into a paste or use a small food processor. Stir in 3 Tbl. of olive oil

Put pasta in boiling water, and salt if preferred. Add ½ cup of the pasta water, then ricotta, red pepper flakes and lemon zest to summer squash. Add basil paste and half the Parmesan, heating and stirring quickly to incorporate. Serve over pasta with more Parmesan. Serves 4 to 6.



Escarole

Escarole is really a broad-leaf endive, which is a family of greens that also includes radicchio

and chickory. Curly-leaf endive is also called frisee. They range in bitterness with escarole being the wildest. **Store:** Drain excess water and keep in a plastic bag, sealed in the refrigerator. **Preparing:** Use all of the leaf if cooking it but you may want to trim the white stem off if using raw in a salad. **Use:** It can really perk up a lettuce salad but it is also a hardy enough green to saute with meat and other vegetables.

Jeff's take on Fennel: Fennel can be an intimidating ingredient, it has a very strong anise flavor and can taste like black licorice if not handled correctly. Fennel is a great, aromatic ingredient that lends a nice backbone to tomato sauces for pasta. It is a very nice side dish on it's own though. I have three main ways that I like to prepare fennel; I roast it, grill it, or saute it. Cut up the grilled fennel and serve it with grilled meat or fish. I like to eat it with cooked Jasmine Rice or grilled potatoes. The fennel fronds are very aromatic and tasty. You can store them in a bottle with either white vinegar or rice wine vinegar. This will give you fennel vinegar and it makes for a very quick and tasty dressing.



Member Chris Quinn and Fennel: Here is what I usually do with fennel. The recipe is a bit precious, one can obviously use regular green olives and regular salt instead of the fancy Bon Appétit versions. Also, it divides well and sometimes I make a half recipe. Sometimes, I also use chicken breast instead of thighs. I usually serve it over rice.

www.bonappetit.com/recipe/chicken-tagine-with-fennel-and-olives

Escarole and Potato Hash

by Deborah Madison,
Vegetable Literacy

3 waxy potatoes	slivered
Salt	2 or more anchovy fillets (optional)
1 large head escarole, leaves separated and coarsely chopped	Generous pinch of red pepper flakes
2 Tbsp olive oil	¼ cup water
1 large clove garlic,	

Boil potatoes until just tender. Drain the potatoes, cut them into somewhat larger than bite-sized pieces.

Separate the escarole leaves at the base and wash well. Chop coarsely.

Heat the oil in a skillet or Dutch oven over medium heat. Add the garlic, anchovies and pepper flakes, mashing the anchovies into the oil. Add the potatoes and the escarole and season with salt (remember the anchovies are already salty). Raise the heat to medium-high and cook, turning the leaves and potatoes every few minutes with tongs. After about 5 minutes, add the water and cook until the escarole is wilted and tender. Salt and Pepper to taste.