

# Pinehold Gardens *Field Notes*

Vol. 20 No. 6, Week 4

July 30, 2014

## In This Box

- Provider green beans
- Tasty Jade cucumber
- Crisphead lettuce
- Fresh garlic, Italian Red
- Escarole (in plastic bag)
- Red Long Tropea onion
- Kohlrabi
- Slicing tomato or cherry tomato

## Next Week?

- Cucumbers
- Tomatoes
- Onions
- Carrots
- Fennel
- Beans
- Swiss chard
- Potatoes?

## A DAY IN THE LIFE

We are pooped. Really, really pooped. I feel that July is the hardest month for us. Except for the Sunday we took off for my dad's birthday, we have just finished a string of 12, 14-hour days. But many huge tasks were completed. The garlic harvest of 12,000 heads was accomplished in two of those 14-hour days. Transplanting our fall crops took another. Word about our Saturday morning on-farm stand is finally getting out thanks to many referrals from you so preparing for that is taking more time on Fridays. David is busy preparing fields for the rest of the fall crops and next year's crops, replanting everything that rotted or got washed away two weeks ago and setting up irrigation as it seems to have decided to stop raining at Pinehold Gardens. In any spare moments we have been harvesting hundreds of pints of black currants that we grow for specifically for our restaurant accounts. All of this is in addition to our regular weekly CSA and restaurant schedule. As I have said before none of this could be done without the help of our workers shares, volunteers, family members and friends. Yesterday a record number of people, 29, joined us to harvest the CSA box, pick currants and weed. It was a wonderful day filled with beautiful clouds and conversations. But when their four-hour shift

was done, we were still at it, but without Energizer Bunny batteries to keep us going. Caffeine does help. Sleep would help more.

I am really looking forward to August. This Friday at 4:30 you can find me cheering on Pinehold members and friends Crystal and Scott Schaeffer whose dog who is competing in the dog dock dive at State Fair.

## FIELD NOTES

It is a great onion, garlic, lettuce and bean year. It is not a good melon, pepper, eggplant and squash year. The cool nights and mornings are just not conclusive to pollination or rapid growth. The official low temperature of 56 degrees two nights ago missed the record low by 3 degrees. I bet it was in the 40's in our fields. David can see the effects of the cool mornings as the bees are slow to come out and about, sometime lingering until mid-morning. That is unusual for these hard working girls.

When we were planting potatoes on Saturday, two weeks after the last rainfall, the ground 4 inches below the surface was still wet and felt really cold. David and I wondered when the four feet of frozen ground actually thawed out this spring and I began to wonder if some of the rotting seed problems this spring and early summer were not only from rain, but also from the very cold soil. It probably was.

Speaking of rain, yes, we need some to help those young fall seedlings get a foot hold and to get the newly planted seeds to germinate. We were irrigating right through the very light rainfall last night. But well water is no replacement for rain water. It is more acidic and if it accompanies a thunderstorm it also carries nitrogen with it. Nature's fertilizer. Except for last night, no rain has fallen here in the last two weeks.

## BOX NOTES

The tomatoes have started to ripen in the hoophouse. Everyone should either receive one slicing tomato or a partial pint of cherry tomatoes. Some of the



**IN PRAISE OF A PORCH.** We occasionally take the time to retire to the front porch of our home. It is not the most used room in our home, but it is the best place to escape if for only a brief respite to watch the clouds and the world pass by. It is a shame that such a place and such a pastime seems to have eluded home builders and families these days. We encourage you to try it, and if you don't have porch, the front yard will do.

slicers might need to sit on your counter for a couple of days to fully ripen.

The leaves in the plastic bag are escarole. They have been rinsed, but should be washed again.

The weird looking bulb with the leaves attached is the kohlrabi.

## COOKING TIPS

The beans we've been delivering are from our first planting. The second planting is now producing beans so barring any unforeseen tragedy there should be a steady of supply of green beans for a little while. Please don't feel overwhelmed because green beans can be easily frozen for use this winter. Simply wash them, nip the stem tip off and blanch them for a few minutes — no more — in boiling water. Shock them in pan of very cold water. Drain them and then lay them out on a cookie sheet to freeze. When frozen, scrape them up and place them in a freezer bag.

The red Tropea onion in this week's box is a beautiful and flavorful onion. It can be used raw in potato salads if you like the onion's flavor but mellows sweetly when cooked. There is a thin tougher skin on the outside of the onion which should be removed.

Escarole in the bag is another slightly bitter green that makes a great addition to a lettuce salad or it can be slightly wilted in a pan with oil or butter or with a hot dressing. It actually goes well with fruit such as berries, peaches and oranges and a light vinaigrette. Keep it stored in it's plastic bag in the refrigerator.

## Recipes: Variation On An Escarole Theme

### Braised Escarole with Prosciutto

*How To Cook Everything*, Mark Bittman

1-2 T. olive oil  
4 garlic cloves, peeled  
3/4 lb escarole roughly chopped  
1/4 c. chopped prosciutto or other dry-cured ham

1/2 c. chicken, beef or vegetable stock  
Salt and freshly ground pepper to taste  
1t. fresh lemon juice or white wine vinegar

Cook and just brown escarole leaves in olive oil. Add ham, stock and some salt and pepper. Cover and cook on the lowest heat possible until very tender. Turn the heat to evaporate any liquid. Serve with a drizzle of lemon juice or vinegar.

### Braised Escarole with Oranges

*How To Cook Everything*, Mark Bittman

1-2 T. butter  
4 garlic cloves, peeled  
3/4 lb escarole roughly chopped  
1/2 c. Orange juice

Salt and freshly ground pepper to taste  
1-2 T. brown sugar or honey  
Garnish with orange wedges

Cook and just brown escarole leaves as above in butter. Add orange juice, brown sugar or honey and some salt and pepper. Cover and cook on the lowest heat possible until very tender. Turn the heat to evaporate any liquid. Serve with wedges of oranges.



Garlic

The “stinking rose” as garlic has sometimes been called, has a long culinary and cultural history, dating back to ancient Sanskrit writings. It’s relished

both for its flavor in foods as well as its health benefits some of which is being supported by scientific evidence. Raw garlic is pungent and juicy, even hot. Cooked until soft it sweetens, and cooked until brown it takes a bitter sweet flavor. **Store:** NEVER put garlic in the refrigerator or seal it in a plastic bag. While whole store it in a drawer in a paper bag. Think cool, dark and dry. Chopped or with skins removed, store it in olive oil or butter. **Preparing:** Fresh garlic is easy to peel. Separate the clove from the head and slightly crush the clove with the flat side of knife. The skins should be easy to lift off. **Use:** Garlic heads can be roasted whole and squeezed from their skins as paste for bread or topping for potatoes. Chopped or minced garlic can used raw to flavor butter or oil or sauteed for practically anything you cook.

**Kohlrabi:** The large white bulb with leaves attached is a kohlrabi. A member of the cabbage family, it is actually closely related to broccoli. Like other members of this family of vegetables it is very nutritious. The kohlrabi bulb should be peeled at either steamed or boiled or eaten raw in slices or grated for a slaw. The leaves are also edible and we are told are used by supporters of juicing. Store it like any other brassica family vegetable in a sealed bag in the frig.

From the Pinehold *Archives*

### Buttered Parmesan Kohlrabi

by Jack Bishop,  
Vegetable Every Day

A medium sized bulb  
1-2 Tbl. butter  
fresh  
1-2 Tbl. of

Parmesan  
Salt and pepper  
Fresh minced  
parsley

Peel the kohlrabi and shred it. Add butter to a pan and cook shredded kohlrabi until soft, about 8 minutes. Add salt, pepper and cheese and toss to melt the cheese. Add parsley and toss and serve.