

Pinehold Gardens *Field Notes*

Vol. 25, Week 3

July 24, 2019

In This Week's Box

(Only weekly members)

- Head lettuce, romaine
- Garlic, Italian Red
- Radishes
- Cucumber, ours or Simons Gardens
- Basil
- Beets with greens

Next Weeks Box?

(Everyone gets a box)

- Garlic
- Potatoes
- Escarole
- Summer squash or cucumber
- Barese chard
- Tomato

A DAY IN THE LIFE

Whew! We persevered as we had to keep planting and made it through last week's heat. We have one more busy week ahead of us with the harvesting of our 12,000 heads of garlic and then we will just need to keep up with weeding, no small task, but at least we will be able to focus on only a few things, harvesting, weeding and irrigation, instead of running in ten different directions at once.

FIELD NOTES

Finally we caught a break with the weather. It rained 0.70 in. on Thursday morning right before Friday's furnace blast of heat. And then on Saturday we received another inch. Unlike other unfortunate locations in the state we had no hail, wind or torrential rains. Mitchell Field set a daily record on Saturday with 2.01 inches and Shorewood received 4 inches, according to our site host. But it was so dry before those rains that we are back to irrigating. The timing of the rain was also perfect for germinating winter radishes, turnips,

rutabagas and beets. Yesterday we replanted the fall carrots as the rain softened the ground enough that David could till a finer seed bed. Carrots are difficult to get started as they need moisture every day for 7-10 days until they germinate so David will be turning on the sprinklers every morning.

It has been a buggy year. From cutworms and slugs and cabbage looper caterpillars and now potato beetles in epic numbers. I have spent a half hour each day knocking them into a pail of soapy water.

BOX NOTES

The garlic has just been dug so it is fresh, juicy, uncured Italian Red garlic, which means the wrappers around each clove are still waxy, not papery.

The romaine lettuce is one of my favorite varieties, Monte Carlo. It will grow without problems in all weather and is very sweet. It disappeared from the seed catalogs a couple of years ago

and luckily it came back into circulation a couple of months ago.

The radishes are spicy, most likely from the hot weather. The greens can be used to make pesto.

STORAGE NOTES

Basil - Do not refrigerate as it is very cold sensitive and it will turn black. Cut off the ends and place in a jar of water on your counter. If you are lucky it might send out roots.

Garlic - If you don't plan on eating it right away, leave the stem on and place it in a dry place to cure. After a couple of weeks the wrappers will turn from waxy to papery and the stem can be cut off, or left on.

Cucumber - It will be fine on your counter for a couple of days. After that put it either in a plastic bag or in the vegetable drawer of the frig.

Radish - Like carrots, if you leave the tops on, the radish will dehydrate.



Garlic harvest commences and tomato harvest is not far behind. We grow a number of different varieties of garlic and tomatoes. The variety that reliably matures first is called Italian Red and that is what you are getting today. It's a particular pungent garlic, especially fresh, and is easy to peel, again especially fresh. And all our slicing tomatoes are grown in our greenhouses. It is safer for them, more protected from disease, and also allows us to get an earlier start on growing them.

Food Tips: Garlic



Really fresh garlic such as the head delivered in this week's box is particularly juicy and fragrant — and nothing like store-bought items.

Fresh local garlic is the real thing. Much of the store bought variety unless otherwise noted is older, soft neck garlic, probably from China. It is likely soft neck because that variety stores a long time. Our garlic is all of the hard neck variety, named so for the long stem it sends up that supports the scapes we've delivered. The scapes, of course, are the flower of the garlic plant.

I don't know if there is any other plant so globally familiar as the garlic. It's readiness to go wild and come up wherever old heads or cloves have been tossed may be one reason. And it is also a biennial meaning it sets small seeds every other year, producing still more wild garlic plants.

But it is also relatively easy to grow and thrives in varied climates, which will always help in the spread of plants.

We cannot underplay the strong flavor it imparts, of which there are lovers and those less enamored. Cooked, especially roasted, garlic sweetens. Used raw it is pungent. Some people cannot eat raw garlic because of its affect on their digestive system. They don't know what they are missing.

Garlic raw can go from mild to quite hot. We grow a variety called Asian Tempest and we will let its name let you wonder for the time being where it stands on this continuum. You may have your an opportunity to judge later for yourself.

Simple Cuke, Fennel Salad

- 2 cups sliced cucumbers
- 1 cup sliced fennel with fronds
- Small head lettuce, washed and torn into bit-size pieces
- 2 cups sliced cucumbers
- 1 Tbsp. extra virgin olive oil
- 1 Tbsp. white wine vinegar
- Salt and Pepper, to taste

In a large bowl, combine the cucumbers, fennel, and lettuce. Add the oil and vinegar and seasoning, toss to combine. This salad is also very good with fresh basil.

Cesar Salad

From *How to Cook Everything*, Mark Bittman

- 1 clove garlic, halved
- 2 eggs or 1/2 cup pasteurized egg product
- 2 Tbl. freshly squeezed lemon juice
- 6 Tbl. extra virgin olive oil
- 2 Tbl. minced anchovies or to taste
- Dash Worcestershire sauce
- Salt and freshly ground pepper to taste
- 1 head of romaine lettuce, torn into pieces
- Garlic or other croutons
- 1/2 to 1 cup freshly grated Parmesan cheese

Rub inside of salad bowl with the garlic clove. Bring a small pot of water to a boil.

Pierce eggs with a pin or needle to make a tiny hole and cook in the water for 60 to 90 seconds. Crack them into the salad bowl, scooping out any white stuck to the shell.

Beat the eggs with a fork, adding lemon juice and then the olive oil. Stir in anchovies and Worcestershire. Add salt if needed. Add lettuce and toss, topping with Parmesan and croutons.

Grilled chicken is a nice addition.





If you haven't used your fennel yet, here's an excellent opportunity to use it. And don't worry if you did, we probably will be delivering fennel again.

Apple Fennel Rustic Pie

From Pinehold Member Jeff Suita

- 1 pie crust, approximately 12 inches in diameter
- Approximately 1/2 cup
- 1 Granny Smith apple, halved, cored, and sliced 1/8 inch thick
- 2 tablespoons unsalted butter, divided
- 1 medium fennel bulb, halved, cored, and sliced 1/8 inch thick
- 1/2 Vidalia or other sweet onion, sliced 1/8 inch thick
- 1/4 cup of shredded Asiago cheese
- Herbes de Provence, approximately 2 tablespoons or to taste
- Kosher salt and freshly ground black pepper, to taste.
- Flour for dusting.

With our good friend Ken's encouragement, we are attempting to make nocino — a black walnut liqueur. It's green young black walnuts steeped in vodka with spices and lemon. It will be months or may be year before it's ready but we hoping for our first sips this winter.

Beet and Horseradish Risotto

From friend Annie Wegner LeFort

- 1/2 cup olive oil
- 1 large red onion, chopped
- 3 garlic cloves, crushed
- 2 cups risotto rice (arborio)
- 5 1/2 cup hot vegetable broth
- 1/2 cup roughly chopped fresh dill (or 2-3 Tbs. dried)
- About 1 lb. cooked beets, peeled and nicely diced
- 2 Tbs. horseradish sauce
- 1/2 cup salted almonds
- Salt and pepper
- Mixed Salad Greens, to serve (optional)

Heat the oil in a large, heavy-based saucepan. Add onion and garlic, saute gently for 5 min. until softened but not colored. Add rice and stir well to coat grains with oil.

Add hot broth, large ladleful at a time, stirring until each addition is absorbed into the rice. Continue adding broth in this way, cooking until rice is creamy but grains still firm. This should take about 20 min. Stir in beet, dill, horseradish, nuts. Season to taste with salt and pepper and heat through gently 2-3 min. Cover pan and leave risotto to rest for a few min. before serving with mixed salad greens.

If you have a pizza stone, place it on a rack in the middle of your oven; if not, have ready a sheet pan large enough to hold the pie crust. Preheat the oven to 400 degrees, allowing the stone (if using) to heat thoroughly.

Melt 1 tablespoon of the butter in a skillet. Sauté the onions and fennel – seasoned with herbes de Provence and salt and pepper, to taste – together until slightly softened. Set aside. Place the pie crust on a piece of parchment paper dusted with flour. Place a layer of sliced fontina cheese on the crust, and sprinkle with herbes de Provence, leaving about a 1-1/2 inch border at the edge of the crust. Top the cheese with the reserved onion and fennel mixture. Arrange the apple sliced atop the onions and fennel.

Fold the edge of the crust over a few inches at a time so that it forms a raised edge and just covers the edge of the filling.

Dot the top with bits of the remaining butter.

Sprinkle the top with the shredded Asiago cheese, and another dusting of herbes de Provence.

Bake for 45 to 60 minutes, checking regularly to see that the crust is not getting overly dark. (You may wish to cover the edges with foil or a silicon shield for some of the baking time to minimize over-browning.)

Allow the pie to rest for 10-15 minutes before serving.

Makes 6-8 dinner-size servings.

Jeff's Notes:

- A mandolin slicer is a great tool for getting consistent thickness when slicing the ingredients.
- This was an improvised pie that used a bunch of ingredients that we had hanging around one evening. The lesson here might be that just about anything can make a tasty pie. Experiment!