

Pinehold Gardens Field Notes

Vol. 18 No. 5, Week 3

July 25, 2012

In This Box

- Mokum carrots
- Field grown cucumber
- Estiva tomatoes
- Basil
- Zucchini or Yellow summer squash, rotating by site
- Winner kohlrabi
- Oak leaf lettuce
- Daikon radish
- Cherry tomatoes for the last dropsites

Next Week?

- Red and Gold beets
- Estiva tomatoes
- Onions
- Green cabbage
- Head lettuce
- Collard greens or chard

A DAY IN THE LIFE

What do farmers do when there is a heat advisory and you are supposed to limit outdoor activities? Well, on Monday David, Ken and I spent 11 hours transplanting the fall crops of broccoli, kale, and brussels sprouts, as well as 2 more deliveries of lettuce. We also seeded rutabagas and turnips. The rain last week halted our field work and with CSA harvest, packing and delivery taking up Tuesday and Wednesday and with more rain predicted, Monday was our only choice.

During tomorrow's heat advisory I will be packing and delivering boxes. David will be weeding and fixing tractors.

FIELD NOTES

We have enough rain now. More than 4 inches of rain had

fallen since Friday the 13th. Another two-tenths fell this morning. We have been in the path of a narrow band of rain that is bringing us more moisture than recorded at the official reporting stations, Mitchell Field, 9 miles to our north. This is more typical weather for our farm and if we hadn't been in a drought, we might be loosing root crops and plants to rot and disease.

And when its wet we can't mechanically cultivate or hand pull weeds and the weeds love this hot, steamy, wet weather. We should measure the growth of pigweed, lambsquarters and velvet leaf, but we believe its about 3 to 4 inches per day. David had to set the tractor mower high to cut the tops of the weeds off our onion patch, which had been nearly weedless a month ago.

While we got the bulk of our transplanted fall crops planted on Monday, we still have many crops to plant including carrots and spinach. Mid July through mid August are the key planting times for fall harvested crops. After that the days grow too short too quickly for plants to mature.

EXCHANGE BOX

Whoops, we forgot to leave an exchange box at each site last week. There will be one this week, but please try each new vegetable at least once, i.e. don't automatically leave your radish and kohlrabi behind).

WHY DOES OUR FARM SIGN SAY CLOSED?

Some people who pick up their boxes at the farm were confused that our sign says closed. If you pick up at the farm you can pick up anytime after 3 p.m. on Wednesday through 7 p.m. on Saturday. We have a farm stand on Saturdays from 9 am - 1 p.m. so our sign only says open when the farm stand is open.

BOX NOTES

Do not put your basil in the refrigerator as it is very cold sensitive and it will turn black. Trim the ends, like you would a flower, and put them in a shallow dish or glass on the counter or table with water.

We decided to include the Daikon radish in each box instead of putting it in the exchange box. We had six of our workers taste it yesterday and only one, who doesn't care for radishes at all, didn't like it. The hot weather has made it rather spicy. Peeling it will tone it down some. Here are their suggestions for cooking and eating. Raw, plain or with butter and salt. Grate with the kohlrabi and carrots for an alternative slaw. I don't eat sushi, but I found out that the spiraled white threads that are always served with sushi are Daikons. Sometimes they are pickled and then spiraled. Many people steam slices and serve them with butter or sauteed in butter works well too. Add them to a stir fry.

The beautiful red tomatoes are from our hoophouse. They are just starting to ripen and there will be plenty in the

following weeks. Some have green shoulders and rings just under the surface when you slice them open, so they could ripen a day or two longer. We believe as a result of the heat they are turning red outside before they fully ripen inside.

This was our first year growing Romano beans. While the first picking two weeks ago was wonderful, they didn't like the greenhouse temperature of 120 degrees. Blanch and freeze for winter soups or boil and then sauté to eat now as they are rather fibrous.

The heat also shortened the greenhouse cucumber season. This week might be the last delivery for cucumbers as field crop suffered from an onslaught of cucumber beetles.

The tough outer skin of the kohlrabi needs to be removed with a knife. It can be eaten raw, shredded into a slaw (save it to combine with the upcoming cabbage), or everyone's favorite, shredded and sauteed with butter and served with Parmesan cheese.

OPEN HOUSE HOURS

People can stop by the farm anytime except Sundays, but during the work week we might not have time to chat.

We have general open house hours when we can spend some time with you on Saturdays from 2 to 5 p.m.. Stop by and visit or get your hands dirty and help us weed.

Spicy Romano Bean Dip

1/2 lb. romano beans, trimmed
1/2 c. fresh parsley or cilantro (washed and chopped)
1 lime, juiced
1-2 T. olive oil
2 green chilies, chopped (more or less depending on preference)
4-6 garlic cloves, minced

In a food processor, combine all ingredients and blend until smooth. Chill and serve with toasted pita bread triangles. Serves 2-4.

Marinated Carrots and Kohlrabi

3 small kohlrabi (or 1-2 large), peeled and cut into matchsticks
2 medium carrots, peeled and cut into matchsticks
1/4 c. olive oil
1 T. lemon juice
1 T. sherry or white wine vinegar
1/2 t. sugar
1 1/2 t. capers, rinsed and drained
1/4 t. dried thyme
Salt and pepper

Cook the kohlrabi and carrot in boiling water for 2 min. Drain well and place in a jar or bowl. Whisk together remaining ingredients. Pour over vegetables and cover. Refrigerate 48 hours, stirring vegetables occasionally. Drain some of marinade before serving (can save marinade to later make a vinaigrette). Serve as part of an antipasto platter or as a salad. Serves 3-4.

Cucumber-Tomato Sauce for Fish

2 T. grapeseed oil
1 cucumber, peeled, seeded, and sliced 1/4-inch thick
1 c. chopped tomato
1 t. fresh tarragon leaves (or 1/2 t. dried)
1/4 c. sour cream
Salt and pepper

Heat oil in a large skillet or saute pan. Add cucumber and saute until lightly browned. Remove from pan and set aside. Add tomato, tarragon, and sour cream to pan and bring to boil. Reduce heat and simmer for 5 min., or until sauce has thickened. Add cucumbers back to sauce, season with salt and pepper and serve with your favorite mild-flavored grilled, baked, or pan-fried fish fillets. Enough for 6 servings of fish.

Tomato-Basil Vinaigrette

1 slicing tomato, halved and seeded
1/4 c. fresh basil leaves
1 clove garlic
1 T. grated Parmesan
3 T. red-wine or balsamic vinegar
1/2 cup olive oil
Salt and pepper

In a food processor combine combine all ingredients and blend until smooth. Season with salt and pepper, to taste. Serve with fresh lettuce