

Vol. 24, Week 16

October 24, 2018

In This Week's Box

- Winter squash, Fairy
- Brussels Sprouts
- Leeks
- Kale, Toscano
- Onions, yellow
- Potatoes: Simons Gardens Gold Rush

In 11/14 or 11/16 Box

- Cabbage, red
- Turnips, Purple Top
- Rutabagas
- Winter squash, Butternut
- Celery
- Onions, garlic & shallots

A DAY IN THE LIFE

David has already moved on to next year, plowing, tilling and planting next year's garlic field. He has been mowing down the cover crops of oats and peas that add organic matter and nitrogen to the soil for next year's early fields. He has also plowed up two new areas of our land to put up another permanent hoop house for early crops and a temporary one for cherry tomatoes. The sole surviving bee hive is strong and they have enough honey for the winter and we are leaving all their honey for them and none for us or you. They have earned it this year.

Me? I am still in the present. Not a great place to be as every time I go out to the fields or into the coolers I see the loss of fall crops. David refers to me as the CSA box architect but I am also the accountant for the farm and the household.

We earn 100 percent of our income from farming. About 72 percent is from our CSA membership, 20 percent from restaurant sales and 8 percent from farm stand and farm market sales. The CSA is our number one priority so in a lean year such as this one, everything goes to the CSA except for a few crops that we grow for for

restaurant sales. The farm stand and market accounts for minimal crop use and income (some bunches of greens, a few cabbages, pretty many peppers, squash and potatoes, and lots of garlic and onions). My latest estimate of the financial loss due to crop loss is 10 to 15 percent of our gross income. Serendipity played a part in our ability to continue to pay our bills this fall. The employee we hired to replace Heather, who was working for us four days a week last year, backed out the week before she was to start working. Heather was able to fill in one day a week so we saved three days of payroll. Our Tuesday and Thursday worker shares also picked up the slack both with their proficiency and positive attitude and we are so grateful for both.

FIELD NOTES

Yippee! Our only "hill" on the farm, a slightly higher area that also has a south facing slope dried out enough for David to plow and till it and we are on a mission to get as much garlic planted before the next wave of rain and cold weather arrives this weekend. Onward to next year.

We use the "hill" for garlic, early potatoes and sweet potatoes as we have always been able to count on it being able to dry out enough to not cause things to rot.

But this year, unlike all others, our "hill" let us down and the sweet potatoes did rot. I was particularly attached to the sweet potatoes as we harvested cuttings from the Simon's seed potatoes, planted them in trays, kept them warm in the germinating chamber for three weeks, moved them to the greenhouse, watered them for another month as they grew and finally clipped off the shoots when they were 8 inches tall. The shoots were put in a bucket of water for a week until they sent out

roots. Then we planted them into the field. They grew despite the weeds, but as with many of our fall crops the wet fall did them in. The loss of the sweet potatoes may have been the most severe blow this season.

BOX NOTES

The potatoes are a russett variety, great for baking, roasting & mashing.

The Fairy squash is one of our favorite squashes and this year it is particularly good. We usually ship it out with our last box as it is a great pie pumpkin substitute but we are not sure of its storage life this year. If you see soft spots developing please use ASAP or bake and freeze it for soups or baking.

At the end of the season I have often seen kale tops being sold at Outpost so I thought, why not do that for the CSA. So before last Saturday's very chilly mid twenties night, we decided to lop off all the tops of our Toscano (Lacinato) kale plants as they are the most sensitive to cold weather. When we pick individual leaves to bunch we avoid picking leaves that have bug chewed holes, yellowing on the edges, and smaller leaves. By receiving the tops you will get all of the above. Everything is edible, just not pretty and not up to our usual standards. But such is this year; it is what it is.

Most of the Brussels sprout plants, although in a different field from the fall crops, succumbed to the same saturated ground pressure and many plants died or the plants did not produce large sprouts. They have experienced multiple freeze/thaw nights/mornings. Please use ASAP or freeze for later use for Thanksgiving.

This year's leeks got lost and buried in the weeds.

Well, then again, there is always next year.

Optimistically yours, Sandy & David

Food Facts: Brussels sprouts

by Jackie Jones, MS, RDN

Brussels sprouts are a member of the Brassicaceae family of vegetables and closely related to kale, cauliflower and mustard greens.



They are one of the better green vegetable sources of protein, and just one serving meets the daily vitamin C and vitamin K requirements—translation: they are really good for you. One cup of raw Brussels sprouts contains about 38 calories. They have no fat (most veggies don't) and are a great source of fiber. (Brussels sprouts should not be overcooked as this reduces nutrient levels.)

Ask anyone what their least favorite vegetable is and 9 times out of 10 they will respond with “Brussels sprouts”. I confess that I used to reply the same way to that question. I think maybe that is because I didn't know how to cook them and that I just thought of them as “tiny cabbages”. Once I learned to experiment with them and try new recipes, my whole family has learned to love them. You and yours can too.

Quick tips to enjoy Brussels sprouts:

- Drizzle the roasted sprouts with olive oil, cracked black pepper, and minced garlic.
- Slice them thin and mix in raw with salad greens.
- Add candied walnuts and dried cranberries to roasted sprouts for a festive side dish.
- Panfry sliced Brussels sprouts to get a crunchier texture.

SLICED BRUSSELS SPROUTS

from Pinehold member and friend Patricia Heim

- 1 cup diced carrots
- 3 Tbs. olive oil, plus oil to roast the carrots, divided
- 1/4 cup packed brown sugar, plus additional to top carrots
- 4 cups sliced Brussels sprouts
- 1/2 cup chopped red onion
- 1/4 cup cooked diced bacon
- Salt and pepper to taste

Preheat oven to 350 degrees. In medium roasting pan, toss carrots with a little oil and then sprinkle a little brown sugar on them. Roast in oven for 20 minutes or until al dente. Turn after 10 minutes.

Heat the 3 tablespoons olive oil in a large sauté pan and add Brussels sprouts, reserved carrots and red onion and sauté until tender, about 6 minutes.

Add remaining brown sugar and the diced bacon and cook another 3 minutes over medium heat. Add salt and pepper to taste.

BRUSSELS SPROUTS, LEEKS AND LIME-GINGER BUTTER

from Fine Cooking magazine

- 2 Tbs. unsalted butter
- 1 Tbs. minced, peeled fresh ginger
- 1 medium lime, finely grated to yield 1 tsp. zest and squeezed to yield 1 Tbs. juice
- 3 Tbs. olive oil
- 1-1/4 lb Brussels sprouts, trimmed and cut in half
- Salt

3 medium leeks, white and light-green parts only, cut into 1/2 inch thick rounds, washed well but not dried

Brown the butter in a small skillet, about 5 minutes. Add ginger and stir for a few seconds, then remove pan from the heat. Add zest and juice and stir to combine.

Heat oil in a skillet, add Brussels sprouts and 1 tsp. salt. Toss well to coat. Cover pan with lid ajar and cook, stirring occasionally until sprouts start to brown. Uncover, turn heat to low and add leeks. Cook until leeks are limp and sprouts well browned. Remove pan and pour butter mixture over, stir to coat. Serve warm.

SQUASH GINGER NUT MUFFINS

from Outpost Natural Foods

- 1 1/2 cups all purpose flour
- 1/2 tsp. salt
- 3/4 cup sugar
- 1 tsp. baking soda
- 1 cup squash or pumpkin (Fairy squash works great.)
- 1/3 cup butter, melted
- 2 eggs, beaten
- 1/4 water (A little less maybe. Fairy squash is moist.)

- 1/2 tsp. nutmeg
- 1 tsp. ground ginger
- 1 cup walnuts, chopped
- 1 Tbs. candied ginger, chopped with 2-3 Tbs. dried cranberries

Sift together dry ingredients in one bowl. Mix wet ingredients with spices in another bowl. Place chopped walnuts and cranberries in another bowl.

Add wet to dry and fold in nuts. Bake at 350 degrees for 25 to 30 minutes.