

Pinehold Gardens Field Notes

Vol. 18 No. 15 Week 14 of 16

October 10, 2012

In This Box

- Fairy squash
- Red Pontiac potatoes
- Parsley
- Winterbor kale
- Carmen peppers
- Broccoli for some
- Red & yellow onions
- Watermelon radish
- Hot peppers

Next Week?

- Fairy & Butternut squash
- Potatoes
- Tomatillos
- Apple peppers for roasting
- Carrots
- Onions
- Broccoli, for some

A DAY IN THE LIFE

The chicks are here! We have 40 little peepers living in a clean stock tank in our garage. The two-day-old chicks arrived at our post office last Friday morning. The little balls of fluff have already started growing their wing feathers. In about five months they will start laying eggs, which we eat and sell to a few year around customers. Once they join the girls and Junior, Big Guy and Silvio in the coop, our coop will once again be maxed out.

For the past three years we have been at the Milwaukee County Winter Farmers market during November and December. This year we have only decided to attend in November. Personal obligations (mom is doing much better), and a limited

selection of items because of the early freeze and the difficulties we had with getting many specialty fall crops to germinate led to this decision.

It is a wonderful market with a great manager, quality sustainable and organic vendors and lots of dedicated shoppers. We will miss being there.

We have been putting in place plans that will give us other options to sell our produce. This year we added a few new restaurants and became the main produce supplier for La Merenda.

And for the last few years we have been selling during the winter months to a few people who either pick up at the farm on Saturdays or that we deliver to in the Bay View area. This year we are looking to increase the number of people that might be interested in this type of service. Besides winter storage crops from our coolers and root cellars, we also have hoophouse crops including early spring greens. Those customers also are first on the waiting list for our eggs. More information will be included in the last newsletter.

The winter restaurant and delivery options have also been made possible by Pinehold member Meredith Skelton who has sold us her beloved van that she so generously lent to us while we were getting our car repaired. We finally have an enclosed vehicle instead of just relying on an open pickup truck.

This weekend is the last South Shore Farmers Market. Despite the pre-

diction of rain, I am sure all the farmers would appreciate your support.

FIELD NOTES

This past week was spent preparing for the expected freeze. With the help of Rita Collen we harvested thousands of peppers. David row covered the head lettuce and the winter market beets and double row covered the beans and Swiss Chard. Sunday night the field temperature was 25 degrees.

Only a little over a tenth of an inch of rain fell last night leaving the fields bone dry. We irrigated the teenage heads of lettuce yesterday and will be irrigating the broccoli today.

David has prepped the former winter squash field for planting garlic starting in a week or two. We will be looking for volunteers to help. We will keep you posted.

BOX NOTES

The fall varieties of potatoes are producing much better yields than expected. This week's potato choice is the Red Pontiac, an old fashioned all purpose, long term storage potato with red skins, deep eyes and bright white flesh. It being an all purpose potato is can be used for making mashed potatoes.

Because the drought created a situation of uneven watering, some of these potatoes, especially the larger ones, may have grown too quickly at times and created a hollow heart in the tuber. This is only cosmetic. Simply cut it out.

It is can also be used for potato salad. I love Beans &

Barley's house potato salad. A hint that I learned from their recipe is to cut unpeeled potatoes into 1 inch cubes and then steam the potatoes instead of boiling the potatoes and then cutting them up. The potatoes take up less water and hold together better. The recipe also calls for tossing the potatoes in a tablespoon or two of vermouth while they are still hot. The dressing for 4 cups of potatoes is 1/2 cup of mayonnaise, and a 1/2 tsp each of celery seed, dill weed and salt and a 1/4 tsp of pepper. Besides the potatoes 1/4 cup of thinly sliced radishes, green onions, parsley and a hard boiled egg is included.

The peppers in the bag are hot pepper varieties that you have received before Poblano (green and milder than the red one you might have received when we delivered tomatillos), Jalapeno and Hungarian. The long green or red pepper is a Hatch chili pepper from Piper Farms in Racine. Scott wanted everyone to try this special pepper usually only grown in Hatch, New Mexico.

The Fairy squash is a variety that we trialed two years ago and started including it in the CSA boxes last year. The catalog describes it as early, prolific, disease resistant, storable, and delicious. We totally agree. Great for soups, pies, muffins, sweet breads, or baked like a regular squash for a side dish.

The watermelon radish is a wonderful winter radish. This year its normally cream-green smooth skin has cracked. Some may look ugly but they still taste great.

Roasted Radishes and Potatoes with Brown Butter, Lemon, and Radish Tops

(From Bon Appetit)

About 10 small radishes or 5 medium (tops included if you have them...or you can substitute kale, chard, beet greens)
5 medium red potatoes, scrubbed

1 1/2 T. olive oil
Coarse kosher salt
2 T. (1/4 stick) unsalted butter
1 t. lemon juice

Preheat oven to 450°F. Brush heavy-duty rimmed baking sheet with olive oil. Cut off all but 1/2 inch of green radish tops; reserve trimmed tops and rinse them well. Coarsely chop radish tops (or other greens of your choice) and set aside. Cut radishes lengthwise in half and place in medium bowl. Cut potatoes likewise and add to bowl. Toss with olive oil. Place radishes and potatoes, cut side down, on prepared baking sheet; sprinkle lightly with coarse salt. Roast until radishes and potatoes are crisp-tender, stirring occasionally, about 18-20 minutes. Season to taste with more coarse kosher salt, if desired.

Melt butter in heavy small skillet over medium-high heat. Add pinch of coarse kosher salt to skillet and cook until butter browns, swirling skillet frequently to keep butter solids from burning, about 3 minutes. Remove skillet from heat and stir in fresh lemon juice.

Transfer roasted radishes and potatoes to warmed shallow serving bowl and drizzle brown butter over. Sprinkle with chopped radish tops (or other greens) and serve.

NOTE: The radish greens or other optional greens can be steamed or used raw depending on your taste.)

Fairy Squash and Sweet Red Pepper Casserole

3 1/2 pounds fairy squash
1 c. red sweet pepper, cut into 1-inch pieces
3 tablespoons olive oil
2 large garlic cloves, minced
3 tablespoons minced fresh parsley leaves

1 1/2 teaspoons minced fresh rosemary leaves (or 3/4 t. dry)
Freshly ground black pepper to taste
1/2 cup freshly grated Parmesan (about 2 ounces)

Preheat oven to 400°F.

With a sharp knife cut squash crosswise into 2-inch-thick slices. Working with 1 slice at a time, cut side down, cut away peel and seeds and cut squash into 1-inch cubes (about 9 cups).

In a large bowl stir together squash, bell pepper, oil, garlic, herbs, black pepper, and salt to taste. Transfer mixture to a 2- to 2 1/2-quart gratin dish or other shallow baking dish and sprinkle evenly with Parmesan.

Bake casserole in middle of oven until squash is tender and top is golden, about 1 hour. Serves 6 as a side dish.

Broccoli and Chicken Salad with Lemon Dressing

1 lb. red potatoes, unpeeled, cut into 1/2-inch cubes
1 c. sliced carrots
2 c. broccoli florets
2 c. 1/2-inch pieces skinless roasted chicken
1/4 c. chopped onion

2 T. olive oil
1 T. thinly sliced garlic
2 1/2 T. lemon juice
1 T. chopped fresh thyme or 1 t. dried
2 T. soy sauce
1-2 T. honey

Add water to large Dutch oven to depth of 1 inch; bring to boil. Spread potatoes and carrot evenly on steamer rack. Place steamer rack in Dutch oven. Cover and steam vegetables until almost tender, about 9 min. Add broccoli florets to steamer rack; cover and steam until all vegetables are just tender, about 3 minutes. Transfer vegetables to large bowl and cool to room temp. Add chicken and red onion to bowl of vegetables. Combine oil and garlic in small saucepan. Cook over low heat just until garlic begins to sizzle, about 1 minute. Remove from heat and cool slightly. Whisk in lemon juice and thyme. Pour warm dressing over salad and toss to coat. Season salad to taste with salt and pepper.

What to do with sweet peppers and hot peppers?

Freezing hot and sweet peppers:

Cut off tops and remove seeds. Cut into slices or rounds (rounds can be great for hot peppers, slices for sweet peppers). Pack into freezer quality bags or containers. Use in soups, dips, casseroles, chili or anything that requires a cooked pepper. I use kitchen shears to cut them into bite-size pieces for use.

Drying hot peppers:

Remove seeds (if desired) and use whole or in rings or slices. Lay on a dehydrator tray to dry or on a silicone baking sheet or parchment in a 200F oven. Either leave oven on and occasionally check progress of drying or turn oven off and use residual oven heat to dry (still checking occasionally). When FULLY dry, pack into jars and keep in pantry.

Hot and Sweet peppers can also be roasted and canned.