

Pinehold Gardens Field Notes

Vol. 18 No. 15 Week 13

October 3, 2012

In This Box

- Butternut squash
- French Fingerling potatoes
- Celery
- Carrots
- Beets
- Bell peppers
- Red & yellow onions
- Toscano and Russian kale

Next Week?

- Fairy squash
- Potatoes
- Winterbor kale
- Peppers (last week)
- Watermelon radish
- Onions
- Broccoli, we hope

A DAY IN THE LIFE

October. A new month.
A better month.

Food issues continue to plague my mom. She has lost 8 pounds since she has been at the rehab center. In a family meeting this past Monday morning the staff suggested giving her a drug that would stimulate her appetite. In the meeting they couldn't tell me the side effects so I looked the drug up on line. It's actually an antidepressant that has a side effect of weight gain. Other side effects are constipation, dizziness and confusion. It has not been approved by the FDA as an appetite stimulant. Mom said no. Her doctor previously had said no, yet that was still the rehab center's staff suggestion. Instead we decided to move her to the dining room

where people eat on their own without the help of aids and choose what to eat from a menu. Mom had never needed assistance with eating. I think they are just trying to drive me nuts or turn my hair gray.

Other than that things are going well. David's dad continues to be very active as he approaches his 91st birthday next month and luckily has not broken any bones during his two falls into the bushes as he meticulously still maintains his yard.

We're just very busy and have two very long days coming up as we row cover and harvest crops before the three nights of freezing temperatures this weekend.

FIELD NOTES

The fields are very dry. We have been irrigating our broccoli, romanesco, lettuce and kale fields trying to coax them into growing faster. We have over a 1,000 broccoli plants, hundreds of romanesco, and many beautiful small heads of lettuce that we are hoping mature in the next three weeks before the CSA season ends. We never have had to irrigate in September. But having to irrigate is thousands of times better than having to harvest beets, carrots and potatoes out of mud or having carrots and potatoes rot from too much rain in the fall so I am definitely not complaining about the lack of rain.

But it sounds like rain is on the way. Two days ago the Climate Prediction Center changed the long-range forecast for October from above normal temperatures to below

normal temperatures and above average precipitation. I told the crew yesterday as they were dunking kale into the tubs of cold water and hand washing thousands of carrots to remember this sunny 65 degree day next week when its only going to be 50 degrees.

BOX NOTES

You will be receiving a winter squash or two in all of the remaining deliveries. Remember to store squash in the basement which if unheated is usually around 50-60 degrees and dry in the winter. A perfect place to store winter squash. This week's variety is butternut squash, which ages very well. Butternut squash is traditionally used in soups and stews as it holds together fairly well when cut into cubes. People also slice it thin and use it in gratins along with or in place of potatoes. It can also be baked like all squashes, or peeled and steamed.

This weekend's expected freeze will kill all the peppers plants. We have harvested all the bell peppers and they are in your box today. Thursday and Friday we will harvest the Carmens and hot peppers and they will be in next week's box. It's been a wonderful pepper year for all farmers. Usually we don't get to enjoy red peppers until late September or some years, not at all. Remember all you have to do to freeze peppers is to chop them up and put in a freezer bag.

Locally grown celery, unlike blanched California celery, is stronger flavored and has a stringier texture.

It's wonderful in soups and stocks. To freeze, just chop and freeze, don't blanch.

The beets are not washed. To store, trim off most of the green stems and place in a plastic bag in the fridge.

Toscano kale is also known as lacinato or dinosaur kale. It is my favorite kale as it is more tender and I believe sweeter than the others. I just sauté it with onions and eat it as a side dish or add an egg to it for a quick scrambled omelet. Some restaurants, and David, eat it raw in a salad letting the dressing — really the acid in the vinegar — “cook” the kale just a bit.

If you are making kale chips, the Russian kale is the best variety to use as it is the flattest.

Gotta run. Time to pick up dad so he can spend some time at the farm. Sandy

Butternut Squash with Maple Syrup

1 large butternut squash
2 T. olive oil

2 T. maple syrup
sprinkle of cinnamon

Peel squash, cut in half, remove seeds. Cut into 1-inch chunks. Boil or steam until tender when pricked with a fork. Transfer to serving bowl, drizzle with olive oil and maple syrup, sprinkle with cinnamon to taste. Mash or leave in chunks, whichever you prefer. Serves 4.

Beet and Horseradish Risotto

1/2 c. olive oil
1 large red onion, chopped
3 garlic cloves, crushed
2 cups risotto rice (arborio)
5 1/2 c. hot vegetable broth
About 1 lb. cooked beets, peeled and finely diced

1/2 c. roughly chopped fresh dill (or 2-3 T. dried)
2 T. horseradish sauce
1/2 c. 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.

Red Lentil Burgers with Kale Pesto

(Adapted from onegreenplanet.org. This can be made without a food processor as well, but it will require more chopping and mixing.)

2 c. dry red lentils (cooked in 4 c. water)
1 c. raw almonds, pulsed into a rough meal
1/2 c. sunflower seeds
1 carrot, shredded
2 small potatoes, shredded
1 T. olive oil
1 T. chia seeds

1/4 c. water
1 t. paprika
1 t. ground cumin
1 t. ground coriander
Black pepper to taste
2 T. soy sauce
1-2 T. honey

Kale Pesto:

3-4 c. washed, chopped kale
4 T. honey
1 T. dry basil (or 1/4 c. fresh, chopped)

1 t. dry oregano
1 T. olive oil
1/4 t. salt
1/4 c. water 1/2 T. cumin

Preheat oven to 350F. Line baking sheet with parchment paper. Mix chia seeds with 1/4 c. water. Set aside so mixture can gel. Wash and cook lentils. Set aside and let drain and cool as much as possible. Cook carrot and potatoes w/ spices in olive oil just until softened, about 5 min. Do not overcook. Combine drained lentils, almond meal, chia gel, soy sauce, honey in food processor and mix until uniform but slightly chunky mass is formed. Combine lentil mixture, sunflower seeds, and cooked vegetables in a bowl. If mixture is too wet, add more almond meal. If too dry, add more water. Do not leave it too dry or the burgers will fall apart in the oven. Measure about 1/4 c. and shape into patties. Repeat with remaining mixture. Bake patties about 20 min. on each side or until each side is crispy.

Kale pesto: Mix all ingredients except water in food processor. Blend until paste texture is achieved. If too dry, gradually add water, 1 T. at a time, until desired consistency is achieved. Serve pesto on top of burgers over a bed of rice.

Black Bean Soup

1 T. olive oil
1 onion, chopped
3 cloves garlic, sliced
4 small celery stalks, chopped
1 bell pepper, seeded and chopped
2 qts. vegetable broth

2 (15-oz.) cans black beans, rinsed/drained
or dried/soaked/cooked black beans
1 t. ground coriander
1/4 t. cayenne pepper
1 T. balsamic vinegar
1 T. cilantro leaves, chopped

Heat oil in large saucepan over medium-high heat. Add onion; cook 5 min., stirring occasionally. Add garlic, carrot, celery, and peppers; cook until soft, about 5 min. Add broth, beans, coriander and cayenne pepper; simmer uncovered 10 min. Stir in vinegar. Transfer to blender or food processor; process to desired consistency. Reheat if necessary. Ladle into shallow bowls, garnish with cilantro. Serves 4 to 6.