

Pinehold Gardens *Field Notes*

Vol. 20 No. 15, Week 13

October 1, 2014

In This Box

- Yellow and green romano beans
- Spinach
- Fennel
- Red beets
- Broccoli
- Shallots
- Red & white Russian kale
- Sweet peppers: bell & Carmen

Next Week?

- Green cabbage
- Kohlrabi
- Potatoes
- Carrots
- Onion
- Garlic
- Parsley

A DAY IN THE LIFE

This past week's weather with the sun, the southwest breezes and the gorgeous sunsets, was wonderful! Unfortunately Tuesday we are back to washing vegetables in cold weather in cold water. Our well water is pretty much a constant 50 degrees, very pleasant in summer, no so much in fall. It is one of the consequences of being a late season farm. I have tried neoprene gloves made for food workers that work in huge freezers, and they often leak. I have tried lined dish washing gloves but they don't keep you warm at all. I have cotton liners that fit inside large rubber gloves, pretty klutzy, but they keep our hands dry and warmish. I have fuzzy lined rubber gloves that keep you warm but are made for Herman Munster (most work gloves, shoes, pants, etc. do not come in women's or small sizes) and you can't pick up or feel anything with them on. A friend told me to go to a scuba diving store. I'll try that next. There is a real niche that is not being filled in the clothing world as all of our farm friends are on the same mission. I bet it is something you would never think about.

FIELD NOTES

One thing that grew exceptionally well this year was weeds. The fields that were planted in vegetables this year that could not be mechanically cultivated or hand weeded because of the muddy conditions will not be used next year as many weeds went to seed. The fields that were not in vegetable production this year

went through a bare fallow period in summer and are now being planted into a cover crop. With the wet spring and summer the usual cover crops of spring oats and peas and summer buckwheat were not planted on all the fields, but at least they went through a bare fallow period. Bare fallow means that you let weeds germinate and then you shallowly cultivate the field to kill the weeds. Although weed seeds can live from a few years to decades, this practice decreases the population. Cover crops are used to increase the organic matter, which improves the soil structure. making the soil better for plant roots and therefore growth. Cover crops also creates a better environment for the beneficial fungi and bacteria that live in a healthy soil. Certain cover crops such as field peas (not your garden variety) and hairy vetch also add nitrogen, a necessary nutrient for plant growth, to the soil. This fall David is planting winter rye and vetch, both of which will survive the winter by going dormant and then will start growing again in the spring. Besides planting the cover crops for next year's crops, David made the raised beds for the next year's garlic that will be planted in a couple of weeks.

BOX NOTES

When life gave us lemons we made lemonade. When 2.5 inches of rain fell hours after we had just replanted the potatoes that had rotted in June and the newly planted potato seed immediately rotted, we planted the whole area into spinach and carrots. The spinach, as usual, germinated erratically, but we planted enough to include a nice bag of it in this box. We personally choose to enjoy it raw in a salad as fall spinach, which turns thick and crisp with the cool nights, is a treat that cannot be purchased in a store, but it also made great pesto. The carrots are still growing and will be in our last deliveries.

Included today are two varieties of shallots: the mild red Camelot and the stronger yellow Saffron. Delivered without their wrappers they will not store long but will



A HELPING HAND OR TWO is always appreciated at Pinehold, and Amanda Raduenze, Sandy's niece, was ready and willing to lend hers and learn a new farming skill. On a grey, cold day, she took over some field work for David, in this case disking, so David could help harvest cabbages.

keep in the paper bag for a few weeks. Remember shallots can be used like onions, but sparingly, chopped finely into a vinaigrette, or browned in a skillet into crispy shallot rings for steamed or braised broccoli.

Since it is apple season a simple apple and fennel salad can be made with lemon juice, olive oil, salt and pepper and served with goat cheese crumbled on top.

If you do not consume the beets right away they should be put in a plastic bag and put in the refrigerator. They will keep a long time.

We are so lucky to have had the warm weather this past week. Both the bell and Carmen peppers ripened to a beautiful sweet red. Peppers are one of the toxic twelve vegetables according to the Environmental Working Group (www.ewg.org/foodnews). It is no wonder as a pepper takes three months to mature and ripen to red giving insects and diseases plenty of time to attack the fruit. We send you the blemish free fruit and freeze the seconds for our winter meals.

If you would like to save your beans or broccoli for later use, blanch them in boiling water for three minutes, shock in an ice cold water bath, freeze on a cookie sheet and then bag into freezer bags. Be sure to cut up the broccoli into florets and the stem into one inch long sections.

This is probably the last delivery of beans. It has been a great bean year. I knew they didn't like the hot summer a few years back as the beans all curled, but I didn't know how prolific they could be in a cool year, a pleasant surprise.

Sweet Peppers

While the bell pepper or more commonly even the green pepper is ubiquitous in grocery stores year



around (of course, what isn't), all peppers are in the family of other hot climate vegetables such as tomatoes,

eggplant, chilies or hot peppers and tomatillos that are best enjoyed seasonally. The sweet peppers, such as the bell pepper, also includes pimento, banana and shishito peppers. They are native to Central and South America where seeds for them were carried back to Europe and from there spread worldwide. Green peppers are unripe peppers.

When peppers ripen, they turn their mature color which is most often red, but could be yellow, chocolate brown, or orange. Their sweetness makes them great for snacking raw and intensifies when cooked.

They make great additions to soups, chilies, and stew. Sauteed they make a great sandwich as well.

Store: While they will stay fine on the counter top for a few days, they are best kept in the refrigerator in the crisper drawer They can also be simply chopped up and frozen on the cookie sheet, without blanching, then bagged for winter use. **Prepar-**

ing: Wash and discard seeds. **Use:** Soups and stews, roasted and blended for a sauce, sauteed.

Rainbow Trout and Kale

from Peter Sandroni, chef, LeMerenda

1 trout fillet (serves 1 to 2 people)	1lb potatoes, roasted, cut into 1/2 in. pieces
1 Tbl. flour	1 or 2 shallots, julienned
4 Tbl. butter	1 garlic clove, minced
3 or 4 stems of kale, destemmed and torn into pieces	salt and pepper to taste

Clean and roast the potatoes at about 350 degrees for about 30 minutes, more if larger. Use 2 Tbl. of butter to saute the shallots and when soft add the garlic, saute a minute more. Then add the kale and cut up potatoes until kale is wilted. Set this aside.

In a large pan, use remaining butter to saute trout. Season trout with salt and pepper and dredge in the flour. Add trout to saute pan skin side down and cook until golden brown. Place kale on the plate and trout on top of the kale.

Fennel: Our very good friend Martha Davis Kipcak loves the flavor of roasted vegetables She lays them in a single layer in a 375 to 400 degree oven with olive oil, salt and pepper until they begin to carmelize. This method is especially good with fennel, which she slices and roast with oil, salt and pepper until carmelized and aromatic.

Fennel, Beet and Orange Salad

from *The New York Times*

2 medium beets, roasted, peeled, halved and cut into half moons	1 Tbl. chopped cilantro
1 fennel bulb (1 to 1 1/2 pounds), quartered, cored and sliced thinly	Dressing: 2 Tbl. lemon or lime juice
1 Navel orange, peeled and cut into thin rounds or sections	1/4 tsp. sugar 1/2 tsp. lightly toasted cumin seeds, crushed salt to taste
2 Tbl. chopped fresh mint	1 garlic clove, minced or puree (optional) 1/4 cup olive oil

Combine beets, fennel, orange slices or medallions, mint and cilantro in a large bowl.

Whisk together lemon juice, sugar, cumin, salt garlic and olive oil.

Toss with salad and serve. Serves 6 but holds well in the refrigerator.