

# Pinehold Gardens *Field Notes*

Vol. 21 Week 14

October 7, 2015

## In This Box

- Cauliflower
- German Butterball potatoes
- Argenta Swiss chard
- Lexton leeks
- Garlic
- Jade green beans
- Carmen sweet pepper
- Broccoli
- Parsley

## Next Week?

- Beets with greens
- Purple Top turnips
- Celery
- Red onion
- Russian kale
- Honey Bear & Jester winter squash
- Peppers
- Potatoes

## A DAY IN THE LIFE

Poor Spookers. She's pretty sad looking right now as she is in the middle of molting. She must not feel top notch either as she isn't walking about grazing and eating clover. She shakes and feathers just fall off her. Kinda like Charles Shultz's Pigpen character.

Spookers is the chicken I have become the most attached to, which is a very bad idea. You just never know if a fox or dog will come into the yard or a hawk will swoop in, or an owl needs to feed her young. An owl once carried a full grown chicken down the block to her nest in our neighbors' yard.

Spookers is a mixed race chicken that was hatched by a teacher around seven years ago. She had a black Java father and a brown Americana mother. She turned out to be black but with the beard of the Americana. So being different with no flock of her own she was picked on by the other hens. Then she developed a neurological disease that other hens have died from, but with the help of herbs, she survived, but blind with a head twitch. Now she really was different from the others and hid in corners or under bushes. So we would take her out to graze on the clover in our lawn. Two years ago, one Sunday morning David had her out and we heard some crows

making lots of noise. I ran out and Spookers was in the fox's mouth. I, crazy woman, ran screaming at the fox, drop her, drop her, and the fox did. Antibiotic and gauze healed the gash in her back. Then last summer David comes to me and says I think we have to put Spookers down. She has what we technically call poop butt, but also had maggots. I can't change a baby's diaper, but I can deal with animal bottoms.

This summer has been a good summer for her. We believe the hen that is her aunt, has begun hanging around her, keeping her company and we think protecting her. Spookers knows her name, comes when I call her and likes to be held. So knock on wood, she will start feeling better soon, her feathers will grow back and she will be with us for another year. But eight is very old for a chicken.

P.S. I have not gotten to know any of the 48 chickens we purchased three years



Good ol' Spooky, putting on a new coat of feathers just in time for Halloween.

house to protect them from frost.

We have dug a few sweet potato plants up and there are some nice sized ones in the ground although we are hoping more of them grow larger. They got off to a slow start with the lack of rain at the beginning of the season.

## CSA Deliveries

**We have four deliveries left: Oct. 14 and 21. We skip the last week in October and then have one Nov. 4 and one Nov. 18**

ago when we expanded our flock. Between a couple of fox attacks and mysterious deaths, we only have about 30 left and their laying days are about over. Unfortunately we can't afford to keep 30 pet chickens, which is why I don't know any of them.

## FIELD NOTES

We are just about finished with the potato harvest and will be moving on to the root crops of turnips, rutabagas and winter radishes. We should follow the saying "You should make hay while the sun shines" and try to harvest as much as possible before the cold sets in. Washing turnips in cold water in cold weather is not fun.

The winter squashes have been curing in the sun on our hay wagons, developing more flavor as they cure, but will soon need to move into our green-

## BOX NOTES

The rain last week really helped the cauliflower mature and we were surprised to see it when we were walking the fields on Monday deciding what to put in the box this week.

The broccoli is not as happy. The varieties we grow to harvest last are meant to survive a frost, even a freeze. Either it did not like the warm weather in September or there wasn't enough rain as the heads were filling out so there are some strange looking heads in the boxes. Also some of the heads have some yellow buds, although the head is small and the florets are tight. All heads are fine to eat.

We have tried to balance the boxes so you will either receive a large cauliflower and a small broccoli or the reverse.

The Argenta chard, with a Bright Lights stem added for color, is from a late summer planting and is very tender and very mild tasting.

The German Butterball potato is one of our favorite varieties. It can be baked, mashed or roasted. It has a fluffy, buttery texture and stores for months. You will be receiving more in a couple of weeks.

## Braised Leeks

from *How to Cook Everything*  
by Mark Bittman

4 Tbsp. extra virgin olive oil or butter	½ cup of stock, beef, chicken, fish or vegetable
3 to 4 leeks, trimmed and cleaned	Freshly squeezed lemon juice
Salt and freshly ground pepper	Chopped parsley

Put oil or butter in a skillet that will hold the leeks in one layer and has a cover. When the skillet is hot, add the leeks and brown lightly, turning once. Add salt and pepper.

Add stock and bring to boil. Reduce heat, cover and simmer until leeks are tender. When done, reduce any liquid but keep the leeks moist. Sprinkle lemon juice and garnish with parsley.

### Options:

Substitute red wine for the stock. Add thyme and bay leaf with the wine

Instead of stock add chopped tomato.

Use olive oil and add black olives, about 1 cup.

Before adding stock, whisk in about a 1 Tbsp. of Dijon mustard.

Finally, consider a gratin. Place leeks in an oven proof dish and sprinkle with cheese rather than lemon juice and brown under a broiler.



**Leeks:** The smell of fresh leeks is tantamount to the scents of oven-warm bread and bacon sizzling in the pan — it immediately gets your juices flowing. Leeks are the sweet, mild member of the onion family. While most often justifiably relegated to a potato-leek soup. They are more versatile than that. They can even turn a good mac and cheese into a great one. **Storing:** Keep in a plastic bag or container in the refrigerator. It will keep for a week or more.

**Preparation:** Wash leeks well. Slice in half and rinse out the layers as soil may have accumulated there. Use all of the white and pale green portions of the plant, saving the tougher leaves for stock. **Cooking Methods:** All of them: braising, sauteing, roasting and grilling.

## Cauliflower and Tomato Frittata

from Martha Rose Shulman  
*of the New York Times*

2 Tbsp. extra virgin olive oil	2 ounces feta, crumbled (about 1/2 cup)
1 to 2 garlic cloves (to taste), minced	¼ cup imported black olives, pitted and halved or coarsely chopped (optional)
1 cup chopped tomatoes, with juice	8 large or extra-large eggs
Pinch of sugar	Freshly ground pepper
Salt to taste	1 to 2 tablespoons chopped flat leaf parsley or a combination of parsley and mint or marjoram
1 sprig basil or ½ to 1 tsp. fresh thyme leaves	
½ medium head cauliflower, cored and cut or broken into small florets (about 3 cups florets)	

Heat 1 tablespoon olive oil over medium heat in a heavy 10-inch skillet. Add garlic and cook, stirring, until it begins to smell fragrant, about 30 seconds. Add tomatoes with liquid, sugar, salt and basil sprig or thyme. Simmer over medium heat, about 20 minutes. Remove basil sprig. Taste and adjust seasonings.

While sauce is simmering, steam cauliflower until tender. Drain on paper towels. Add to tomato sauce and break up into small pieces with the back of your spoon. If possible, refrigerate uncovered overnight or for a few hours.

Beat eggs and stir in salt (about 1/2 teaspoon), pepper, tomato sauce with cauliflower, feta, olives and herbs.

Heat remaining olive oil over medium-high heat in a clean skillet. Pour in the egg mixture. Swirl pan to distribute eggs and filling evenly over the surface. Once a few layers of egg have set, turn heat down to very low, cover and cook 10 to 15 minutes. Uncover pan and place under broiler, for 1 to 3 minutes. Do not brown. Serve hot, warm, at room temperature, or cold.

## Potato Leek Soup

from Pinehold Member Jeff Marquardt  
A Julia Child recipe

This is such a great recipe, it makes me sad that I can take no credit for it. The great Julia Child's Potato Leek Soup recipe is comfort in a bowl, It's perfect for this time of year and this box. It could not be easier to make either. It is also incredibly versatile. You could add roasted florets of broccoli or cauliflower, mushrooms, or

2 Tbsp. neutral oil, such as  
canola or grapeseed oil  
4 to 5 medium potatoes\* (1 pound),  
peeled and roughly chopped  
3 large leeks (1 pound), cleaned  
and thinly sliced

1 medium white or yellow onion (optional)  
6 cups vegetable stock (or light chicken stock)  
Kosher salt, to taste  
1 to 2 tablespoons freshly squeezed lemon juice  
½ cup heavy cream  
½ cup crème fraiche  
½ cup minced parsley

Heat the oil in a large (6-plus quart) stockpot or dutch oven over medium heat. Add the leek, onion and potato. Cook, stirring occasionally, until the vegetables have begun to soften and brown slightly, about 8 to 12 minutes (this time will vary greatly depending on the surface area of the bottom of your pot).

Add the vegetable stock, and bring to a boil. Reduce the heat to low, and simmer for 30 to 40 minutes, or until the vegetables are tender.

Blend until smooth, either using an immersion blender or by carefully transferring to a blender in batches.

Add the cream, and season to taste with salt (I start with 1 teaspoon and go from there, tasting frequently) and lemon juice.

Ladle into bowls, add roasted vegetables (optional), and garnish with a dollop of crème fraiche and a healthy sprinkling of minced parsley.

For the optional roasted veggies. Heat oven to 425 degrees.

Broccoli or Cauliflower: Cut into medium sized florets, toss with vegetable oil and a little salt. Roast on a baking sheet for 7-10 minutes, you're looking for them to be slightly softened and roast on the edges.

Potatoes: Cut into half-inch pieces and toss with vegetable oil and a little salt. Roast on a baking sheet for 10-13 minutes, stirring every 5 minutes, or until they are lightly browned on the edges and soft through the middle.

Mushrooms: Cut white button mushrooms or crimini mushrooms into half inch wedges and toss with vegetable oil and a little salt. Roast on a baking sheet for 5-7 minutes or until slightly dry and browned on the edges.

## Potato and Greens Torta from the Pinehold Archives

1 ½ lbs. potatoes  
Salt  
1 Tbsp. grapeseed oil  
4 garlic cloves, minced  
¼-½ tsp. crushed  
red pepper  
8 cups combination of  
greens (chard, col-  
lards, kale), chopped  
½ cup milk

About ½ cup shred-  
ded fontina cheese  
About ½ cup fresh  
grated Asiago  
cheese, divided  
2 large eggs, light-  
ly beaten  
Dash hot pepper  
sauce (optional)  
Freshly ground

Preheat oven to 375 F. Bring potatoes to a boil, cook until tender, about 15 minutes. Drain and allow to cool slightly. Peel potatoes and press through a ricer or pulse in a food processor with skins on and put in large bowl.

In large skillet, heat oil over medium. Add garlic and crushed red pepper, cook about 1-2 min. Stir in greens in batches, tossing until wilted then add more greens until all are incorporated. Cook 2-4 minutes. Cool slightly and add to potatoes with milk, fontina, eggs, and hot sauce (if using). Season generously with salt and pepper. Stir mixture Grease a pie plate and add breadcrumbs. Shake to coat bottom and sides. Add potato mixture. Bake 25 min. or until fairly firm. Remove from oven and scatter top w/ Asiago. Set aside and let stand for at least 10 minutes before serving.