

Pinehold Gardens Field Notes

Vol. 17 No. 12, Week 10

September 14, 2011

In This Box

- Juliet saladette tomatoes
- Varna leeks
- Ace peppers
- French Fingerling potatoes
- Italian Red garlic
- Bridger onion
- Tango celery
- Estiva and Big Beef tomatoes
- Winterbor kale
- Basil
- Heirloom tomatoes — rotating by dropsite

Next Week?

- Swiss chard
- Potatoes
- Green cabbage?
- Onion
- Tomatillos
- Tomatoes
- Assorted peppers

A DAY IN THE LIFE

The daylight hours are shorter but our to do list is longer with the change of season. We are still irrigating, weeding, planting and harvesting. Add technical problems with our solar tracker and inverter (is there a solar technician and/or electrician among our members?), the deadline of erecting a complicated movable greenhouse and the canning and freezing of our winter supply of food and you get the picture.

CONVENTIONAL WISDOM

Excerpted from the New York Times, September 13 Business Day section. The

federal government will ban the sale of ground beef tainted with six toxic strains of E. coli bacteria that are increasingly showing up as the cause of severe illness from food. The six relatively rare forms of E. coli will be treated the same as their notorious and more common cousin, a strain call E. coli O157:H7.

“It is not illegal to sell fresh meat or poultry containing most toxic bacteria, like salmonella; they are frequently found on groceries’ meat, and thorough cooking typically kills the pathogens. Currently most packing plants divert meat containing E. coli O157. H7 for use in cooked product, and will most likely do the same with meat containing the new strains as well. The bacteria is killed by heating the meat to 160 degrees.”

FIELD NOTES

There is a chance for frost on Thursday and Friday mornings for out lying areas. While many think of us as being close to the lake we are not close enough to benefit from a warming lake effect. Also our fields are low lying and not surrounded by heat sinks like sidewalks, roads and parking lots, so the temperature drops fast and the cold air settles. The things that have zero tolerance for frost are basil, tomatoes and our beautiful zinnias. Peppers with leaf cover are iffy. The chard would prefer not to get that cold. The fall crops will be fine. Our last frost was May 17 giving us just under four months of frost free growing days. Yes, farm-

ing is indeed a risky business.

BOX NOTES

The potato variety this week is the French Fingerling. While technically classified a fingerling the tubers are larger and more oval shaped. The flesh is buttery yellow with pale red highlights, great roasted and in soups and stews and a favorite variety of many.

The leeks are a variety that we tried because they could be transplanted like green onions and didn’t need hilling, which means mounding soil around the leeks as they grow so that daylight doesn’t reach the stalk and it ends up blanched a white color. Since they weren’t hilled there isn’t much of a blanched white part, but there is a long tender light green stalk that should be eaten. The dark green upper portion can be used in stocks.

Winterbor kale is the variety that people often think of when they think of kale. It is heartier in texture than the other kales we grow and will hold up well in soups and stews.

The tomatoes in the quart containers are Juliets. We grew them for a number of reasons. They were the most disease resistant variety in Johnny’s Selected Seeds tomato trials including resistance to late blight and we were looking for a tasty alternative to cherry tomatoes. The crew yesterday thought the taste was fantastic. They are great for salsa, sauce and drying.

We were pleased that there were enough heads of celery to include it in this box, just

in time for a pot of soup on a cold fall night. Remember to freeze the leaves for stock. There is no need to blanch.

Also remember that chopped up peppers can also be frozen without blanching.

INTERNET PROBLEMS SOLVED?

Just when I was ready to trace all the phone lines in the house to see if line noise was causing our problems, the modem started to consistently connect. I have talked to four people including two businesses that have been having problems with the internet for about the last three weeks because of phone company line issues.

(Damn! It’s down again! And back up. Ugh.)

FUND-RAISING DINNER

The Real Farms Real Foods Dinner for the Farm Fresh Atlas of Southeastern Wisconsin will be held the evening of October 22 at the Oconomowoc Lake Club. The event includes an Hor d’Oeuvres grazing buffet featuring local farmers, a silent auction of locally produced goods and an amazing sit down dinner of locally raised food prepared by Chef Jack Kaestner of the Oconomowoc Lake Club, with the help of Peter Sandroni of La Merenda as well as other chefs who support local farms. The cost is \$65, \$40 for youth 4 to 12 and free for children under 4.

Tickets can be purchased on line at www.farmfreshatlas.org/south-east or directly from us.

Vegetable Salad with Creamy Feta Dressing

1 1/4 cup diced seeded tomato	Dash of ground red pepper
1 cup diced green bell pepper	1/2 cup (2 oz.) crumbled feta cheese
1 cup diced red bell pepper	2 Tbsp. boiling water
1/3 cup chopped fresh parsley	3/4 tsp. white wine vinegar
1/4 cup finely chopped baby leeks (white and tender green parts)	2 Tbsp. plain whole milk yogurt

Combine vegetables with ground red pepper and set aside. Place cheese, boiling water, and vinegar in a food processor; process until smooth. Add yogurt; process until blended. Pour cheese mixture over vegetable mixture; toss well. Serve immediately. (Alternatively, if you don't have a food processor, mash dressing ingredients then whisk to combine.) Serves 4.

Kale Salad with White Beans

Adapted from Local Flavors by Deborah Madison

1 cup cooked white beans, cooking liquid or liquid from can reserved	1 lb. kale, leaves stripped from stems and slivered
Salt and freshly ground pepper	2 large garlic cloves, minced and pounded with a pinch of salt
1 large onion, finely diced	1/2 cup chopped parsley
4 baby leeks, white and tender green parts, diced	1 Tbsp. olive oil, plus extra to finish

Chop all vegetables. Warm two tablespoons of oil in a heavy, wide skillet. Add onions and leeks, and cook over medium-low heat until onion is soft but not browned, about 12 minutes. Add kale, garlic, parsley, and salt. Cook w/ heat on low and pan covered until vegetables are soft and volume greatly reduced, about 30 min. Add beans, along with a cup or two of their liquid (supplement with stock or water if needed). Simmer until the greens are completely tender, and season with salt and pepper. Serve with, or over, garlic-rubbed toast, drizzled with olive oil. Serves 4.

Creamed Kale

1 lb. kale	1/2 cup whipping cream
2 Tbsp. butter	1/4 tsp. salt
1 small onion, chopped (about 1/2 c.)	1/8 tsp. ground black pepper
1 clove garlic, minced	

Trim stems from kale; chop leaves. In Dutch oven or roomy stock pot cook greens in lightly salted boiling water for 15-20 minutes. Drain. Place greens in large bowl of ice water. Allow to stand a few minutes to cool, stirring occasionally. Drain in colander, pressing out excess water. Arrange on tray or baking sheet lined with paper towels; pat dry and set aside. In a large skillet, heat butter over medium heat. Add onion and garlic. Cook and stir about 5 min. or until tender. Add cream, salt, pepper. Bring to boiling; reduce heat. Simmer, uncovered, 2 minutes or until slightly thickened. Add greens. Stir to combine; heat through. Serves 3 to 4.

"Pennsylvania Dutch" Potato Salad

1 1/2-2 lbs. potatoes, cut into bite-size pieces (about 1/2-inch)	2 medium onions, thinly sliced
1 T. butter	2 ribs celery, minced
1 T. extra-virgin olive oil	1/4 c. white vinegar
3 oz. bacon, cut into 1-inch pieces	2 T. sugar
	salt and pepper

In a pot, cover potatoes with highly salted water and bring to a boil over high heat. Reduce heat to medium and boil gently until potatoes are tender. Drain and set aside until cool enough to handle. While potatoes are cooking, make dressing. In large skillet over medium-low heat, heat the olive oil and add bacon, onions, and celery. Cover and cook slowly, stirring occasionally, until vegetables are tender, about 20 min. Add vinegar and sugar, remove from heat, stir until sugar is dissolved. Place potatoes in a large mixing bowl and pour dressing over them, toss gently but thoroughly. Season to taste with salt and pepper and serve warm. Serves 4.