

Pinehold Gardens *Field Notes*

Vol. 24, Week 11

September 19, 2018

In This Week's Box

- Winter squash, Acorn
- Onion, Expression
- Cantaloupe, Verona
- Broccoli
- Garlic, German Red
- Beets, red
- Sweet peppers, Carmen frying

In Next Week's Box?

- Winter squash, Jester
- Assorted kale
- Watermelon
- Broccoli
- Onion
- Green beans
- Potatoes
- Salad turnips?

A DAY IN THE LIFE

I continue to take it one day at a time. While the hospice care decisions for my dad are emotionally draining, I try to remember all the good days dad spent at the farm. Dad was a obsessive record keeper and counter, and he always pointed out if the number of seeds in his hand was the right amount to finish seeding a tray or the number of garlic bulbs he picked out to fill a restaurant order was the exact amount he needed. I and the whole crew now shout out "Neal moment" if a count or weight works out exactly.

FIELD NOTES

Most everyone that talks to us about the farm assumes or maybe hopes that the past week of warm dry weather would have helped the farm recover from the previous weeks of wet weather. Unfortunately that is not the case. Most of the plants that wilted after the final downpour on September 5 never recovered although there are pockets of surviving plants of most everything. Things that appear to be almost a total

loss are cauliflower, winter radishes, collards and rutabagas. Some things were not affected at all.

The strangest, most puzzling losses to us are kale and peppers. Our farm is usually deer heaven in the winter as they come in to eat the bountiful amount of leftover kale out of the snow. And we had been joking that we should rename our farm Pepper Mountain because of the abundance of peppers we have had over the past five years. After doing some research we found out that if the roots of peppers are flooded for five to six hours, and temperatures are between 75 and 92 degrees, pepper plants are at risk of infection by fungi in the soil that causes wilting, root rot and crown rot. The

CSA will continue to receive whatever peppers are in good shape. The specialty peppers that we grow for our restaurant accounts did not fare well at all which translates into a significant financial loss for the farm.

I have been trying to explain how fungi that lives in the soil can kill a plant or rot a carrot with this example. People get more colds and the flu in the winter. You are in an environment, closed up indoors, that is conducive to bacterial and viral growth and transmittal. With many soil-borne diseases, losses are greatly dependent on environment, time of infection, and the general vigor of the crop and in this case it was the saturated soil combined with high dew points and morning fog that created a ripe environment to attack weakened plants.

But we do have some very bright shining spots on the farm. Our winter squash crop was pretty good and our cantaloupe and watermelon harvest was great, both paradoxically were probably helped by the moisture. And



Food for the soul. The rains had their way with some of the vegetables, but as to seemingly flout their superiority, the flowers survived and offered welcome respite to a weary Monarch.

while disease did get to them it wasn't until after the fruits were developed.

BOX NOTES

The broccoli field survived but is being compromised by Alternaria leaf spot which not only affects the leaves but can cause rot in some of the florets of the head. The disease is favored by warm temperatures (60-78 degrees) and at least 12 hours of relative humidity of 90 percent. I have personally washed and sorted each of the broccoli heads, looking for signs of rot. We feel confident that most of the heads are free from rot. Just the same, I would eat it sooner rather than later.

Acorn squash will store for about a month.

We had wanted to deliver the watermelon this week as you received a cantaloupe last week but watermelons store longer and the cantaloupe is very juicy from the rain so we thought its storage life might be shortened by that. Cantaloupe can be frozen for use in smoothies.

Food Facts: Acorn Squash

by Jackie Jones, MS, RDN



Acorn squash is a fall squash with a very mild buttery taste. Some would say that it is slightly sweeter than pumpkin but doesn't have the flavor intensity that pumpkin has. It is a very nutritious food--High in anti-oxidants like vitamins A and C, and a good source of potassium and fiber. One cup (cubes)

has about 56 calories.

Baked Acorn Squash

1 large Acorn squash, cut in half from stem end to blossom end, seeds removed

1 Tbs. butter

Rather than butter, cooked pinto beans with salsa verde

Place the squash cut side down in a baking dish large enough to hold both halves. Place in a preheated oven at 350 degrees. Squash should be soft in 35 to 40 minutes. Check by pressing on the outside of the squash.

Food Tips: BROCCOLI



A head of broccoli is really buds of the flowers of the plant. It is the family of vegetables that include cauliflower, cabbage, Brussel sprouts and kale. Like all the plants in this family, broccoli is healthy

and if prepared correctly can taste good too. After you take the broccoli out of the box, wash it and place in a plastic bag and put in the refrigerator if you aren't going to eat it that day. Broccoli will stay ok in the refrigerator for a week or so but it doesn't improve with age. Broccoli is also easily frozen. Just wash it, cut into useable pieces and blanch them in boiling water for a minute or two, place in ice cold water and drain. Then lay the broccoli out on a cookie sheet, let dry for awhile and then freeze. After frozen, place in freezer bags and store.

It's best to eat as soon as possible, however. The best cooking methods are steaming, stir frying and roasting. To roast toss with oil and salt and bake in a 425 degree oven until the broccoli pieces just begin to caramelize. (See recipe below.)

BROCCOLI SALAD

1 lb broccoli florets

2 large carrots, sliced thinly

4 cloves of garlic, minced

4 Tbs. olive oil

Salt and freshly ground pepper

1 Tbs. Parmesan cheese

1 Tbs. lemon zest

1 Tbs. freshly squeezed lemon juice

Options: Toss in chopped red peppers, walnuts or pine nuts or even thin apple slices.

In a bowl combine broccoli, carrots, garlic, olive oil, salt and pepper. Toss to distribute.

Arrange vegetables in a single layer on a baking sheet. Bake in 450 degree oven for about 15 to 20 minutes or until the vegetables are tender-crisp and lightly browned.

Transfer vegetables to a large bowl. Add Parmesan cheese, lemon zest and lemon juice. Toss lightly and serve hot or at room temperature.

