

# Pinehold Gardens *Field Notes*

Vol. 22 Week 11

September 14, 2016

## In This Box

- Spaghetti squashes
- Celery
- Red & green kale
- Carmen Italian peppers
- Ace bell peppers
- Carrots
- Expression onions
- Field grown slicing tomatoes
- Cherry tomatoes for some sites
- Parsley and garlic chive flowers

## Next Week?

- Tomatillo salsa bag (tomatillos, hot peppers, garlic, onion, cilantro)
- Beets with greens
- Stir fry bag (pac choi, turnip, radish, onion, sautee pepper)
- Misc peppers
- Green tomatoes
- Green beans, summer squash?

## A DAY IN THE LIFE

Ironically we do most of our cooking in the winter. In the summer we make bountiful salads, have plenty of fresh tomato pasta dishes and quick French bread pizzas. But we have very little time and energy to cook all the wonderful recipes that we include in the newsletters. Larger farms have on-farm chefs that cook lunch for the owners and workers.

So our Sundays in September, which is the only day we sometimes manage to take off from farming, are spent canning tomatoes, tomato sauce, dilly beans and dilly carrots and freezing roasted peppers, chopped peppers, green beans. We also make grape jam, peach puree and pear sauce.

And this year we have added pureeing and freezing food for our highlighted photo girl of the season, Piper, our great niece, who just turned 9 months old. She has a wide and varied palate and we haven't found a vegetable she hasn't liked.

## FIELD NOTES

Yesterday's harvest day temperature was 74 degrees, 20 degrees cooler than last week Tuesday. Many years we get our first frost next week and there is a freeze warning for the northern

Great Plains tonight. We need a favor from the weather gods this year — an extended fall growing season.

Only 1.25 inches of rain fell last Wednesday, a good amount except that a lot of our tomatoes have now split.

We could use more sunny days since the number of daylight hours is so short, especially for the broccoli, cabbage and cauliflower which are just poking along. We feel they got off to a really slow start as they were planted at the beginning of the rainless month and tried to get growing during the fourth hottest August on record. On the other hand, late plantings of beans, Zephyr summer squash and cucumbers are doing really well for this time of year. Also it looks like it will be a good sweet potato year.

We have finally finished curing, which essentially means drying, all of our onions and they have been packed into crates for future deliveries and winter storage.

It was necessary to clear the onions out as we are 10 percent into the winter squash harvest which also need to cure, i.e. toughen up their skins and sweeten their flesh.

## HONEY

Some of you did not get a chance to read the newsletters so we are going to still deliver honey to the dropsites **next week**. The cost is \$10.75 per pint and \$5.75 per half pint. There's a limit of two pints per member. Please pay by a check made out to Pinehold Gardens. Just email us your order and mail your check or drop it in the cash box at the farm.

## BOX NOTES

Today's box theme of a soup box is very appropriate for this week's fall like weather.

Finally kale season has returned. Remember to place the kale in a plastic bag as it quickly wilts. To cook, remove the stems, chop and sauté in olive oil or add it raw to a soup.

The peppers in the box are the same as last week, both sweet. A great substitution for the tofu in last week's stuffed pepper recipe is Portobelo mushrooms. If you have already chopped and froze some peppers for your winter soups and chilies try grilling and freezing some. Cut the peppers in half, remove the stem end and seeds, toss with



A lick is not as good as a chomp but with no teeth yet it will have to do.

some olive oil and place directly above the hot coals. We grill the skin side first, letting the skin blister black in places and then flip it over and let it continue cooking for a minute or two. We then freeze them as is without even bothering to remove the skin. Or puree for a delicious roasted red pepper sauce.

The condition of the carrots continue to be a mystery to us. Except for the beginning of the year we have yet to harvest a carrot patch without having to sort out culls.

Remember celery can be frozen by just chopping and bagging. No blanching needed.

## TOMATO UPICK

Unless you hear otherwise from us **the first upick day will be this Saturday, Sept. 17 from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m.** It will also be the following Saturday the 24, from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. If those days or time do not work for you please email us and we will set up another time. We provide the bucket for picking the tomatoes into and then you will transfer them to a box for transporting them home. Even though the tomatoes are mulched with straw you will need to walk about 600 feet to get to where the tomatoes are located. Closed toed shoes, i.e. not sandals, are recommended. The tomatoes are huge so it does not take long to fill a bucket, but feel free to hang around if you like.



Spaghetti Squash

We are entering the winter squash season this week with spaghetti squash.

While not quite pasta, the thin ribbons that result from baking and then shredding the squash yields a mild tasting vegetable with a pasta-like texture.

**Store:** On the counter top is fine. **Preparation:** Slice in half, scoop out the seeds and bake cut side down. **Use:** Like pasta with tomato or roasted pepper sauce, butter or garlic and oil.



This Italian Wedding soup is really a “marriage” of greens and meat, made by members Joan and Don Wick and a kind of minestrone with escarole.

## Celery Soup

From member Cameryne Roberts, a co-owner of Lulu's and Juniper 21

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| 1 chopped head of celery, including leaves but save some for the garnish | 1/2 cup half and half or heavy cream       |
| 1 chopped large potato   | Optional: 1/4 cup dill                     |
| 1 chopped medium onion   | Garnish:                                   |
| 1 stick of unsalted butter   | Celery leaves, chopped, julienned or whole |
| Salt   | Flaky sea salt                             |
| 3 cups of vegetable stock  | Olive oil                                  |

Combine celery, potato, onion and butter in a saucepan and cook until onion is soft. Season with salt to taste.

Add stock and simmer until potatoes are tender. Don't over cook. You want the fresh taste of the celery.

Add the half and half or cream and stir until just warmed through. Puree in batches in the blender with the dill until smooth and even in color. Strain then if you like. Garnish and serve.

## Minestrone

There's about as many minestrone recipes as there are people who enjoy the mixture of tomato, beans, greens and pasta. Many include ham or meatballs. Here is a basic recipe for you to build upon based on one from *How To Cook Everything*, but consider this just a beginning.

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| 1/4 cup extra virgin olive oil                         | Salt and pepper  |
| 1 medium onion, diced                                  | 6 cups stock   |
| 1 celery stalk, diced                                  | 1 cup or more chopped tomato                           |
| 1 carrot, diced  | 1 1/2 - 2 cups chopped greens such as escarole or kale |
| Optional: 1/2 cup chopped prosciutto                   | 1/4 cup parsley  |
| 1 1/2 - 2 cups chopped hard vegetables, such as potato | Options: 1 -2 cups cooked white beans, 1/2 - 1         |

Saute onion, carrot and celery. Add the potatoes and stock. Simmer until potatoes can be just be poked with a fork then add the greens and parsley. Season with salt and pepper and serve with Parmesan cheese, garlic chive flowers or a dollop of pesto. The soup is usually better the next day when flavors seem to meld better.