

Pinehold Gardens *Field Notes*

Vol. 20 No. 11, Week 9

September 3, 2014

In This Box

- Lacinato kale
- Red Norland potatoes
- Red bibb lettuce
- Conservor shallot
- Slicing & paste tomatoes
- Sweet peppers
- Leeks, a few
- Radishes, a few
- Cucumber or pickles
- Spaghetti squash

Next Week?

- Gold beets
- Carrots
- Celery
- Tomatoes
- Garlic
- Kale
- Onion

A DAY IN THE LIFE

This past Saturday, after setting up our farm stand we left, leaving Amanda, my niece, in charge of the farm for the day and headed to Spring Green to American Players Theatre. We saw a wonderful, beautifully acted production of Romeo and Juliet, a timeless play because of its timeless story, unfortunately all too appropriate for the hatred and disagreements going on in the world today.

But in our world for the afternoon, after a rainy drive, the skies cleared as we stepped out of the car and we could get lost in the words of a young William Shakespeare, challenging the customs and culture of his time.

FIELD NOTES

Our best crop this year could be our onion and shallot crop, that is if we can get the tops to dry down and the onion skins to cure. Normally as an onion matures, the tops or leaves of the onions fall over naturally or you can help them along by gently stepping on them. Then the warm late summer sun and southwest breezes dry the leaves and the neck of the onion dries nicely and seals up the top of the onion. What is missing from this picture is the sun and the breeze, and of course, lower dew points and dry weather. We were starting

to see rot on some of the outer skins and necks so we are scrambling to remove green topped onions from the field and get them indoors in our germinating greenhouse where multiple fans are doing their best to accomplish what should be done naturally outdoors.

This has been one tough year. We are on the cusp of multiple crop failures and it is really showing up in this week's box. You wouldn't know since you only know what is in the box rather than what should be in the box. So here is what is missing: Melons (weeds, rot from sitting on wet ground, lack of pollination, drowned young transplants, no warm weather in July during fruit set), basil (downy mildew), more paste tomatoes (blight), Jade green beans (seed rot) and multiple varieties of potatoes (seed rot and blight).

The fall fields are looking great though with broccoli and Romano beans a couple of weeks away from harvest and as usual we have a lovely crop of multiple varieties of kale. Knock on wood, the fall carrot crop is also doing well.

BOX NOTES

As I was running towards the house through the totally unexpected torrential rain storm that dropped a half an inch of rain in 7 minutes on Monday night I said to myself, wow, it is going to be a muddy mess for harvesting. Once again the worker shares made the produce look beautiful.

The great tasting, tender bibb lettuce heads got beat up the worst by the rain and standing water so they are very delicate and fall apart easily. Combined with the few radishes and field grown cucumbers, a delicious salad is at hand.

The potatoes are the same variety that was delivered two weeks ago, the classic red "new" or salad potato. Be sure and keep them in the paper bag in a cool, but not refrigerated place.

The shallots are freshly harvested and most



IN THE WORLD OF ALLIUMS, which includes onions and leeks, shallots seem to hold a special place among cooks and chefs. Shallots have a flavor that falls somewhere between garlic and onion, a rather mild flavor that is especially sweet cooked. This year's crop is particularly nice both in size and quality. Check out the Conservor shallot in this week's box. Photo: Steve Carini. (You may see more of Steve's work at LaMerenda restaurant and the new Engine Company No. 3 restaurant on 2nd. and National Ave. which opens for breakfast and lunch Sept. 8.)

of the skins are still moist or were removed because of excess moisture under the skins. Just keep them in the open in a dry spot. Shallots are favored by chefs and a little goes a long way. So use it like an onion, but use less.

The paste tomatoes are from the blighted patch. Between last week and this week we harvested 1.75 pounds of the tomatoes that avoided blight per member, leaving about 5 pounds per share of the tomatoes with visible signs of blight in the field.

The leeks are a young summer leek, similar to a young green onion. Large fall leeks will be in your boxes in late October.

Lacinato kale is most everyone's favorite kale as it is tender and sweet. It also goes by the name dinosaur or Toscano. Be sure to store it in a plastic bag. It is similar to and sometimes referred to as black kale. It is usually cooked but it is also excellent raw in a salad especially if you let it sit in the vinaigrette for a bit or massage the dressing into the leaves.

The peppers are all sweet peppers. The long yellow one is a Cubanelle type and the long green one is an Italian type, both suitable for frying, eating raw, or using like a regular pepper. There is also a classic green bell pepper.

We hope you had a great summer. Here's to a long warm fall.

Black Tuscan Kale (Cavolo Nero) with Raisins from Pinehold member Martha Kipcak

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| 1 pound black Tuscan kale or ordinary green kale | 3 garlic cloves, lightly crushed and peeled but left whole |
| 3 Tbsp olive oil | 3 to 4 Tbsp raisins |
| 1 whole dried hot red chile | 2 cups veggie stock |
| | Salt to taste |

Once cooked, you may add a cupful of ricotta cheese to the dish and use it to make turnovers with any pastry dough or as a topping for baked potatoes or a base for grilled chicken or fish.

Cut the leaves crosswise into very fine strips. Put the oil, chile, and garlic in a wide, medium pan and set over medium high heat. The garlic will soon start sizzling. Stir until the garlic is golden on both sides. Now put in the raisins and stir once.

Put in the kale and stir a few times. Put in the stock and bring to a boil. Cover, turn the heat down to low, and simmer 20 to 30 minutes, or until the kale is tender. Uncover and if there is any liquid left at the bottom, turn up the heat to high and boil it away. Taste for salt, adding as much as needed. Remove the chile before serving. Adapted from Madhur Jaffrey's *World Vegetarian*.

Summer Kale with Leek from Pinehold member Martha Kipcak

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| 2 pounds summer kale | and cut into fine slivers |
| 1 good sized leek | 2 cups veggie stock |
| 3 Tbsp olive oil | Salt to taste |
| 3 garlic cloves, peeled | |

Cut the leaves crosswise into ribbons. Cut off and discard the very green section of the leek. Cut the remaining white and pale green parts into halves lengthwise and then crosswise into ½ inch slices. Wash thoroughly in a sinkful of water. Lift out of the water, leaving all dirt behind, and put in a colander to drain.

Put the oil and garlic into a wide, medium pan and set over medium-high heat. As soon as the garlic begins to sizzle, put in the leek. Stir and sauté for a few minutes, or until the garlic and leek are golden. Now put in the kale. Stir once or twice. Put in the stock and bring to a boil.

Cover, turn the heat down to low, and cook 20-25 minutes, or until tender. Taste for salt, adding as much as you need (depends on the saltiness of your stock). Adapted from Madhur Jaffrey's *World Vegetarian*.



Save The Date: Sunday, Sept. 7

Why? Pinehold Gardens Harvest Festival Open House

Time: 11 a.m. to 4 p.m.

What's Up? Kyle Pett, chef de cuisine at La Merenda, will be creating a dessert with Pinehold fruit. Also: A kids cooking class and a canning demonstration.

To do: Bring yourself, family and friends and a generous dish to pass.



Spaghetti Squash

When the days get shorter, winter squash seems to be on our minds, but even know when sum-

mer seems to still cling to our days, there's a winter squash that seems perfect: Spaghetti Squash. The earliest of the winter squashes and mildest in flavor, the squash get's its name from it's fibrous flesh that resembles spaghetti. **Store:** Keep at room temperature for weeks. **Preparing:** Wash off and roast whole or in halves. **Use:** After removing seeds, scoop or fork out and serve with a tomato sauce or with butter and salt.