

# Pinehold Gardens *Field Notes*

Vol. 23 Week 9

September 6, 2017

## In This Box

- Celery
- Carmen sweet peppers
- Toscano and Dazzling Blue kale
- Jade green beans
- Expression onion
- German Red garlic
- Bergham's Green leaf lettuce
- Hoophouse grown tomatoes
- Carrots, including "Barbie-size"

## Next Week?

- Beets
- Kohlrabi
- Potatoes
- Onion
- Peppers
- Green beans?
- Kale
- Broccoli?

## A DAY IN THE LIFE

Sadly, especially during the farming season, we rarely take the time to appreciate how fortunate we are to live where we live. As I was drinking my coffee on Sunday and watching David through the kitchen window as he cut the 1/2 acre of grass that surrounds our house, I was reading a New York Times article about the cost of housing in cities such as New York and San Francisco, often for apartments no larger than half the size of our house but with rents seven times or more the size of our mortgage. Made me wonder what is the value of a home.

Monday night as we were laboring into the dark hours of the night on Labor Day preparing for yesterday's CSA picking day, I realized that it was really quiet with hardly any cars on Elm Road (a rarity these days) and that the moon was rising. I decided to sit in the chairs that overlook our fields for five minutes. It felt strange to sit and not be working.

For the time being, until more development encroaches towards our lot lines, we have open vistas of our field out to the south. We have abundant wild life, including migrating and year around resident birds, pesky deer, rabbits (depending upon the fox and coyote population), lightning bugs, crickets, cicadas, katydids, dragonflies, frogs, toads, snakes, Monarchs as well as and other butterflies, honey bees and native bees, too many wasps, and nesting Orioles

and Sand Hill cranes.

It's that we're so close to the city and yet sometimes, like that night, we can seem so far away. Work rarely allows us to take advantage of Pinehold especially during the warm season so these rare moments are like jewels, precious and protected in my memory.



## FIELD NOTES

We all donned sweatshirts yesterday and tomorrow we might add long underwear and rain gear to our wardrobe as the high is only supposed to be 63 with the possibility of rain. Remember summer? Those first two weeks of June when the temperatures were in the 90's for a few days? It is 62 degrees in our house and David asked if we should turn the heat on. We won't, but it is a ridiculous thing to think about on September 5th. Given that I have no clue why the peppers are turning a beautiful red. I thought they were heat loving plants. But then again we buy many of our seeds from Johnnys seed company in Maine and Carmen is a pepper they bred so it would be bred for a cold season climate.

But we do need everyone to keep their fingers and toes crossed that we don't have a frost until at least October.

We are still irrigating 24/7, concentrating on the crops that are forming heads such as broccoli and cauliflower, bean plants that are flowering and forming beans, the young plants of lettuce, pac choi and tatsoi that we transplanted a couple of weeks ago and especially the young carrots so we can all enjoy fall carrots, one of our specialities.

It is one of our busiest times of the year. Besides keeping up with the harvest and delivery for our CSA and restaurants, we are finishing harvesting our fall onions and shallots, only to move right on to harvesting our winter squash crop which right now looks great. Throw in David remov-

While the summer carrots have been a disappointment to us and to you as well, the two fields of early fall and late fall carrots look very promising. Everyone has helped keep the carrots weeded, a Sisyphean task, allowing these slow growing vegetables to sweeten with the cooler temps.

ing the full honey boxes from the hives that are now sitting in our kitchen waiting to be spun and our Sunday Supper this coming Sunday and there is no rest for the weary.

## BOX NOTES

We are calling this our Minestrone soup box, perfect timing for this cold weather. All the ingredients, except for more tomatoes are included in the box. Yes, among the semi-normal ones, those orange nubs are carrots, a necessary

ingredient in soup. The poor things were drowned, lost in weeds and now have been

## SUNDAY SUPPER UPDATE

We sent out an email confirming your reservation this past Sunday. If you need to change or cancel your reservation please let us know by Thursday evening. Sadly we were not able to add anyone from the waiting list.

in a field without irrigation and yet they grew, sort of.

The celery never grew to its potential size either so while it is short on stalks, it is full of leaves, perfect for soup stock. Remember that local celery is more fibrous than the blanched California varieties and more flavorful.

This week's kale is the variety Toscano otherwise known as Lacinato. The bunch also includes two stems of Dazzling Blue, a more flat version of Toscano. People love Toscano as it is one of the most tender and mild of the kales. It is great sauteed with onion and or garlic and added to eggs. Easily used in a salad as long as the acidic dressing sits for a while on the greens to wilt the leaves.

## Celery Soup

from Pinehold member Cameryne Roberts, co-owner of Lulus and Jniper 61

- |                               |  |
|-------------------------------|--|
| 1 chopped bunch of celery     | 1/4 cup fresh dill (optional)  |
| 1 chopped large baking potato | 1/2 cup half and half or heavy cream                                 |
| 1 chopped medium onion        | Garnish with julienned celery leaves, good olive oil and flaky salt. |
| 1 stick unsalted butter       |  |
| Salt                          |  |
| 3 cups vegetable stock        |  |

Combine chopped celery, chopped large potato, chopped onion, and butter in a medium sauce pan over medium heat. Season with salt to taste. Cook until onion is tender. Add stock and simmer until potatoes are tender. About 8 to 10 minutes. Don't over cook. Fresh taste of celery needs to come through.

Add the half and half or cream and warm through. Then puree in batches in blender with 1/4 cup of dill. You want a consistent smooth texture with a bright green look. Could take 10 minutes per batch. Strain the soup for a silkier texture.

Garnish with celery leaves, oil and salt and serve immediately.

**Celery** First of all, celery has few calories and very little nutrition but do not



hold that against it. What would soup and stew season be without fresh celery. It is the base

of the mirepoix — a mixture of carrot, celery and onion — which is the base of much of the food that comes out of Europe and therefore much of our cooking. Today's celery bunch falls short of the bunches we grew in the past because celery is mostly water and water in the form of rain this summer is something we were short of. The flavor, however, is just as good as bunches of past. Fresh local celery is almost a different vegetable from the bland varieties that are sold in grocery stores, A little can go a long way. It will store quite awhile in a plastic bag in the refrigerator — several weeks at least. It can also be frozen and used in dishes this winter.

## Barley and Red Pepper Casserole

from Pinehold member Rita Collen

- |                            |                               |
|----------------------------|-------------------------------|
| 1/4 cup butter             | sauce                         |
| 1 large onion, chopped     | 1 bay leaf                    |
| 2 cloves of garlic, minced | 1 tsp. dried thyme            |
| 1 1/2 cups pearl barley    | Salt and pepper               |
| 4 cups stock               | 1 red pepper, cut into strips |
| 2 tsp. Worcestershire      | 2 stalks celery, chopped      |

Saute onion and garlic in butter until soft. Add barley, Worcestershire and herbs cook for about 35 minutes until barley is tender. Add salt and pepper and allow to cool slightly. Stir in the red pepper and celery and spoon mixture into a casserole. Bake at 400 degrees for 20 to 25 minutes. Serve immediately or let it rest awhile to let flavor to blend.

## Minestrone Soup

from Ellie Kreiger, *Food Network Magazine*

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|--|--|
| 2 Tbs. extra-virgin olive oil  | 1 8-ounce can no-salt-added diced tomatoes                 |
| 1 large onion, diced   | 1 14-ounce can crushed tomatoes                            |
| 4 cloves garlic, minced  | 6 cups low-sodium chicken broth                            |
| 2 stalks celery, diced   | 1 15-ounce can low-sodium kidney beans, drained and rinsed |
| 1 large carrot, diced  | 1 cup elbow pasta  |
| 1/3 pound green beans, trimmed and cut into 1/2-inch pieces (about 1 1/2 cups) | 1/3 cup finely grated Parmesan cheese                      |
| 1 tsp. dried oregano   | 2 Tbs. chopped fresh basil                                 |
| 1 tsp. dried basil   |  |
| Kosher salt and freshly ground pepper  |  |

Heat the olive oil in a large pot over medium-high heat. Add the onion and cook until translucent, about 4 minutes. Add the garlic and cook 30 seconds. Add the celery and carrot and cook until they begin to soften, about 5 minutes. Stir in the green beans, dried oregano and basil, 3/4 teaspoon salt, and pepper to taste; cook 3 more minutes.

Add the diced and crushed tomatoes and the chicken broth to the pot and bring to a boil. Reduce the heat to medium low and simmer 10 minutes. Stir in the kidney beans and pasta and cook until the pasta and vegetables are tender, about 10 minutes. Season with salt. Ladle into bowls and top with the Parmesan and chopped basil.