

Pinehold Gardens *Field Notes*

Vol. 16 No. 10

September 22, 2010

In This Box

- Potatoes
- Alliums: garlic, onion, shallots
- Herbs: Cilantro, Dill, Basil
- Peppers
- Tatsoi
- Mustard greens

Next Week?

- Red radishes
- Salad turnips
- Winter squash
- Frying peppers
- Kale

A DAY IN THE LIFE

This past Monday we gave our last school group tour and talk of the year. Bill Koehn's class from St. Coletta school came here via a program offered by the Urban Ecology Center at Washington Park. Bill is one of our summer worker shares and we miss him dearly when he returns to school. His students are cognitively disabled and are fortunate to have Bill as a teacher and administrator of St. Coletta. The kids came prepared with many questions including what do bees eat in the winter and what do we do to the fox when it eats our chickens. It

took a bit of convincing that if a fox is hungry because she has babies and a chicken flies out of its pen we might lose a chicken.

It's been a busy tour year for us. We started out with a Daisy troop in May, two Urban Ecology Center Play With Your Food day camp groups in the summer, students from MATC's Speciality Foods class in the fall, and a group of high school students this past Saturday from Chicago's Center for Conservation Leadership who in partnership with the Urban Ecology Center is studying leadership roles in environmental stewardship.

A TASTEFUL EDUCATION

This school food is not what you think. MATC's culinary school located at the 6th Street campus in downtown Milwaukee offers a fine dining

restaurant Tuesdays through Thursdays starting at noon during the school year. Chef John Reiss is helping the students learn to cook seasonally using local food. The meal we had was great, proving that good teachers and fresh local food can make for a real culinary learning experience. Take a look at the menu on their website and make a reservation soon.

HONEY UPDATE

David has removed the last frames of honey from the hives for the year leaving the bees with plenty of their own honey for their winter supply of food. Their pollen and nectar supplies are decreasing although today we saw them all over the tomatillo flowers. There are still asters, clover and some cultivated flowers around, but not for much longer. Many bee keepers feed their bees a sugary syrup in the late winter and spring. We feel that their honey is healthier for them and that they deserve to keep it. As David says they are some of the hardest working girls around here.

We still have honey for sale with varying colors and tastes.

CARRYING YOUR BOX

When you pick up your box, please carry it by both handles or place your hands on the bottom. Besides the handles ripping when the box is carried by only one handle, it was painful for me to see a box being carried away



Photo: Michelle De Vorse

Recipes of the Week

MOROCCAN COUSCOUS PEPPERS, Annie Wegner

| | |
|---|----------------------------|
| 2 bell peppers, red or green, about 1 lb. | ¼ tsp ground cumin |
| Cooking oil | ¼ tsp pepper |
| ½ cup chopped onion | ¼ tsp ground turmeric |
| ¼ cup sliced mushrooms | ½ cup uncooked couscous |
| ¼ cup sliced celery | 1 tsp olive oil |
| ½ cup peeled, chopped apple | 2 Tbsp raisins |
| 1 garlic clove, minced | 1 Tbsp pine nuts, toasted |
| ¾ cup chicken or vegetable stock | 1 Tbsp chopped fresh herbs |
| ¼ tsp salt | |

Preheat oven to 350F. Cut off tops of peppers; save chopped tops for another use, discard seeds and membranes. Cook peppers in boiling water 5 minutes.; drain and set aside Heat a large skillet over medium high heat, add cooking oil. Add onion, mushrooms, celery, apples, and garlic; saute 3 minutes. Remove from heat, set aside. Combine stock, salt, spices in medium saucepan. Bring to boil; stir in couscous and oil. Remove from heat; cover, let stand 5 minutes Fluff with a fork. Add onion mixture, raisins, pine nuts, herbs; stir well. Divide couscous mixture between peppers. Place stuffed peppers in baking dish: bake for 15 minutes. Serves 2. Note from Sandy: I also make open faced stuffed peppers.

TATSOI AND BUCKWHEAT NOODLES IN SEASONED BROTH, Annie Wegner

| | |
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| 8 oz. soba noodles | 4 cups water |
| 2 Tbsp toasted sesame oil | ½ cup soy sauce |
| 1 onion, cut into thin half-moons | ½ lb. firm tofu, cut into ½-inch cubes |
| 2-3 cloves garlic, minced | 1 Tbsp freshly grated ginger |
| 1-2 bell pepper(s), cut into matchsticks | 2 cups chopped tatsoi |
| 5 mushrooms, cut into bite-size pieces | |

Cook soba noodles in boiling water for exactly 8 minutes. Drain, rinse with cold water, drain again, set aside. Heat oil in a 4-quart. pot. Add onion and garlic; saute over medium heat until onion begins to soften. Add peppers and mushrooms; saute a few minutes more. Add water, soy sauce, tofu, ginger. Bring heat up until mixture begins to simmer. Cover and let simmer 10 minutes Add tatsoi and simmer until leaves are bright green. Serve this dish with a handful of noodles in each serving bowl. Ladle broth and vegetables over noodles.

LEMON BASIL POTATO SALAD, Annie Wegner

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|---|--------------------------|
| 6-8 cups small potatoes, washed and cut in half | ½ tsp sea salt |
| Dressing: | 1 tsp lemon zest |
| 3-4 garlic cloves | ¼ cup olive oil |
| ½ cup tightly packed fresh basil | ¼ cup fresh lemon juice. |

Place potatoes in a pot of salted water and bring to a boil (alternatively, you can roast them at 450 with a little salt). Cook until tender; drain and let cool slightly, put into a bowl. While potatoes are cooking, place garnish, basil, salt, and lemon zest on a cutting board. Chop together to a pastelike consistency. Combine garlic paste with oil and lemon juice. Pour dressing over slightly warm potatoes; toss gently. Serve immediately or chill to serve later.

SUGGESTIONS FOR HERBS

Cilantro and Dill...and other herbs: To preserve, either dry on a sheet tray in a sunny window, tossing every day or two until completely dry, grind or leave whole; store. Or puree with a little water and freeze in ice cubes trays until frozen. Transfer portions to freezer bags and use in a soup, dressing, casserole, etc.

SUGGESTIONS FOR COOKING WITH TATSOI AND MUSTARD GREENS

Tatsoi--stir-fry, soups, mixed in with other greens in a salad, steamed and dressed with a light Asian dressing. Use the leaves and the stems
Mustards--great in place of chard or kale in a recipe, great in soups, egg dishes (quiche, etc)

imagining everything rolling to one end and possibly squashing the tomatoes that had been placed carefully and colorfully on top. Although there are less fragile items this time of year, please be considerate of your box and its contents.

FIELD NOTES

The green beans are two inches long. The broccoli is starting to form heads. Cross your fingers that both mature before a frost. August planted radishes and turnips look great with some close to harvest size. The potato yield, however, continues to depress us.

Weeds and grasses continue to grow like mad and need to be removed from areas that we will be planting next year, but harvesting comes first.

BOX NOTES

The box takes you on a tour to Asia, Europe and Mexico, full of frills.

Tatsoi is another new crop for us. An Asian green, it has a mild taste and is used in salads and stir fries.

The potatoes are a mix of Carolas, our favorite yellow potato and a new variety, Prairie Blush, a chance offspring of a Yukon Gold potato propagated by one of our potato seed suppliers, Wood Prairie Farm in Maine. Their catalog suggests baking, or steaming the Carola or in creamy soups, while the Prairie Blush is more of an all purpose potato that can also be boiled as it has a waxier texture than the creamy textured Carola.

The small green pepper is a Jalapeno which has a nice chili taste without a lot of heat, according to David.