



PRAIRIELAND COMMUNITY SUPPORTED AGRICULTURE

WEEK 17 - ABOVE AND BEYOND...

For those of you not keeping track, the Moores have maintained an incredible and variety of produce for the CSA this year despite record flooding, over a month of drought, weeks of abnormally cool temperatures, and a record early freeze. This has come at the expense of their farmers market stand, which has had noticeably less produce this year. Whenever there has been a question of whether to put an item in short supply through the CSA or take it to market, the CSA shareholders have taken priority with them. For this, we all can be very grateful. Hats off to our farmers!

On the Farm:

Temperatures on the Moore farm did indeed drop below 32°F last week. In fact, they dropped so far below that the ground was covered white and the family had to scrape the windows of their trucks. At least one planting of beans was too small to harvest and was reduced to brown ooze. However, more sizeable beans and several crates of cucumbers are still holding in cold storage. The squash and gourds have all been collected and are on rack wagons in the shed, biding their time for the shares.

Warmer temperatures this week are giving the fall crops a much needed boost and are helping to make up for recent cooler weather. Lows in the lower 40s are projected through next Tuesday for the Moore's area (an hour north of Champaign), which should help the kale and other greens, as well as put some size on the brussel sprouts.

In the coming weeks, we'll begin receiving much of the storable produce: lima beans that can be shelled and dried, beets that can keep for months in the refrigerator, and winter squashes that can decorate your table until you decide to eat them.

41% of 2004 Shares Now Sold!

If you haven't yet reserved your 2004 share, please do so ASAP so you don't miss out. All that is needed at this time, is your completed contract and a \$25 deposit. This money helps the Moores buy seed and bulbs. Some crops such as garlic need to be ordered and planted this year for 2004.

To reserve your share, go to www.prairienet.org/pcsa and click the contracts link. There you will be able to sign up online. (If you don't have web

access call 239-3686 for a printed contract.) You'll also be able to pay with your credit card via Paypal if you desire.

In Your Share Today

Your share contains green beans, Roma beans, cucumbers, kuri squash, delicata squash, hearts of gold squash, acorn squash, spaghetti squash, potatoes, and salad mix. Cook your squash now, or use them as fall decorations until you are ready to eat them.

Recipes

If you have recipes you'd like to share, please email PCSA@annabarnesmedia.com Additional recipes and storage information are at (www.prairienet.org/pcsa) as are past copies of the newsletter.

Curried Squash and Mushroom Soup

from The Moosewood Cookbook

3 small acorn, hearts of gold, and/or kuri squash
2 1/2 c water or stock
2 T butter
1/2 c chopped onion
1 med. clove garlic, crushed
1 1/4 t salt
1/2 t ground cumin
1/2 t ground coriander
1/2 t ground cinnamon
3/4 t ground ginger
1/4 t ground dry mustard
few dashes of cayenne
6 oz fresh mushrooms, sliced
1 c orange juice
optional: fresh lemon juice
optional garnishes: yogurt, toasted almonds

Split the squash lengthwise and bake face-down on an oiled sheet at 375°F until soft, about 30 minutes. cool and scoop out flesh. You will need about 3 cups. Purée with the water or stock in a food processor until smooth. Heat butter in a soup pot; add onion, garlic, salt, and seasonings. Sauté until onion is soft. Add mushrooms, cover and cook 10 minutes. Stir in squash purée and orange juice; heat gently. Adjust seasonings to taste. Stir in lemon juice, if desired. Soup does not have to be served immediately, and

continued

will hold on stove top. Serve as is, or topped with yogurt and/or almonds.

Baked Delicata Squash

1 delicata squash
1-2 T butter
coarse salt
freshly ground black pepper

Cut off the ends of squash, cut in half lengthwise. Remove the seeds by scraping with a spoon. Leaving the skins on, cut the squash into 1/2-inch wide lengths. Place these on a baking sheet, dot with butter, and sprinkle generously with salt and pepper. Roast at 375°F degree oven until soft, and slightly browned. Optional: sprinkle with fresh or crumbled dried rosemary before baking. Alternatively, omit salt and pepper and other herbs, sprinkle with brown sugar and top with applesauce if desired.

Spaghetti Squash 101

Baked - Prick squash with a fork so the skin won't burst while cooking. Bake in a preheated 350 oven for 40 minutes or until flesh is tender. When cool enough to handle, split lengthwise, remove seeds. Use fork to comb out strands.

Boiled - Heat a pan of water large enough to hold the squash. Note: fill the pan with the squash in to prevent boil over. When the water boils, drop the squash in and cook for 20-30 minutes until a fork can easily be inserted into its flesh. When cool enough to handle, split lengthwise, remove seeds. Use fork to comb out strands.

Microwaved - Cut squash in half and seed. Place 1/2 cut side down in a microwave-safe dish. Add 2 T water. Cover and microwave 10 - 14 minutes or until tender. When cool enough to handle, split lengthwise, remove seeds. Use fork to comb out strands.

Top squash with butter or olive oil and grated cheese, or use tomato-based pasta sauces. White clam sauce also can work well. Spaghetti squash also can be baked with sauce and cheese like a traditional pasta casserole or gratin.

Produce Storage and Preparation Tips:

Cucumber - Store these in your refrigerator produce away. Slice and eat as is or use in salads.

Green Beans - Remove tips. Snap into pieces if desired. Steam, or blanch beans (boiling water followed by ice water). Steamed or blanched beans are excellent for salads or accompaniments to dips. Combine beans with squash and potatoes for an

excellent low-fat curry. Cook each separately to yield 1 cup each. In a bowl, combine 1 1/4 c non-fat yogurt, 1 1/4 c water, 1/4 t tumeric, 1 t ground chili, 1 t ground coriander, 1/2 t salt, and 1 t soft brown sugar. Heat 2 T oil in a heavy pan over medium-high heat. Add 1t cumin seeds. Cook until fragrant. Reduce heat, stir in yogurt mixture. Cook 3 min. Add 1 T chopped cilantro, 1-2 fresh green chilies sliced, and cooked vegetables. Cook 5-7 min. more, stirring occasionally.

Potatoes, New Orleans Red - Store new potatoes in a cool dark place. Use boiled, baked, mashed, grilled, or roasted. Properly stored, you'll be able to use them in stews later this fall.

Roma beans - Remove tips. Slice these Italian-style green beans on the diagonal into 1-2" pieces. Steam, or blanch (boiling water followed by ice water) as you would traditional green beans until tender crisp.

Salad Mix - If you aren't eating these right away, soak for 10 min. in cold water. Drain. Remove excess water with salad spinner or a thin towel. Store in a plastic bag with room for the greens to move around.

Winter Squash

Acorn, Hearts of Gold - Cook now or use as seasonal decorations until you are ready to eat them. Most winter squashes, except of the Spaghetti Squash are interchangeable in recipes, so feel free to experiment. These varieties will store well at room temperature for over a month, or at 50-55°F for most of the winter. Use these for stews and soups. Or, brush with melted butter and sprinkle with basil, dill, and thyme; and bake cut-side down in a 375°F oven for 35 minutes or until tender. Remove from oven, turn, add 1T bleu cheese crumbles and return to oven until melted.

Delicata - Cook with now or use as seasonal decorations until you are ready to eat them. These will store at room temperature for about 4 to 6 weeks, but aren't as good for long-term storage. Delicata has one of the most delicate flavors of the winter squash. It is equally good baked in sweet or savory preparations.

Kuri - Cook now or use as seasonal decorations until you are ready to eat them. These will store well at room temperature for over a month, or at 50-55°F for most of the winter. Curry squash has less fiber than other squashes, making it ideal for puréed soups.

Spaghetti Squash - These will store like their harder winter squash cousins, Acorn, Curry, etc., however, the preparations for these squash are different because of their threaded flesh. See "Spaghetti Squash 101" for cooking tips.