

PCSA for November 17, 2004

This is the last pickup for 2004. If you are picking up in Urbana, go to 714 W Iowa; in Champaign go to 701 W Washington St. Produce will be in the garages of both locations from 4 to 7 pm. Please use the smaller service doors to access the garages.

THANK YOU!!!!

As those of you who participated in PCSA last year know, your shares made the difference between the Moores being able to farm and filing bankruptcy. Because the Moores are highly leveraged to bring Wes into the family business, the disastrous flooding of 2003 would have claimed their farm were it not for the stable income from the shares of PCSA. Thanks to your shares, the Moores were able to weather serious flooding once again this year and still focus on expanding the farming operation to bring in Wes. Those of you who know Wes personally know that he has overcome some big challenges already in his sixteen years. If you attended The Reading Group fundraiser at Pages for All Ages last night, you know that Wes has overcome dyslexia to become an honor roll student. Although Wes has received encouragement from several of his teachers for his academic efforts, he has received little support for his career choice. Several times in the last few years he has been told that he needs to choose another path because he will be unable to earn a living from farming. However with your support of the Moore Farm through PCSA, Wes is on his way to overcoming this challenge, as well. You have helped keep Wes' dream of farming alive. On behalf of the Moores, THANK YOU!!!!

Promotion Update

We are now only 21 shares short of our goal! Please continue to pass the word along to your friends and co-workers. If you have the means to send messages to email lists that you belong to or newsletters of organizations that you are active in, please do so. If you have a place to hang a flyer, you can use the one from the PCSA site: <http://www.prairielandcsa.org/pdf/2005flyer.pdf>

On the Farm:

Though their work for the 2004 season is over, the Moore's work for 2005 already has begun. Wes and Aaron were able to put up the second greenhouse this week. As you know from previous week's newsletters, the Moores already planted garlic for the 2005 season, as well. They will get just a few weeks break from produce farming before they have to begin seeding the spring crops in the greenhouses in between helping the ewes and nannies with their lambs and kids.

End of Season Survey

Each of you will be receiving a survey in the next few days by email, or mail if you do not have email. Please fill it out as soon as possible so that we can know which crops you liked best and how we can improve PCSA.

In Your Share Today:

The freeze was not as hard or long as expected. As a result, collards, broccoli, and cabbage were able to withstand it. Look for them, and potatoes and beets in your shares. Greens, squash, cruciferous crops, and root vegetables are the backbone of seasonal eating for fall and winter in the Midwest. Seasonal eating from local sources is critical to slowing the pace of environmental degradation from our current agricultural system.

As you make your food choices in the coming weeks, please remember that 85 of the water used in the U.S. is used to grow food, often in areas where food was never meant to be grown. An entire head of California lettuce provides only 50 calories of energy. Yet, it takes the equivalent of 400 calories of energy in the form of fossil fuel powered irrigation pumps and field equipment, as well as manual labor at harvest just to produce it. It takes another 900 calories in the form of fossil fuels to bring it to the Midwest, 900 more to take it to the East Coast. Clearly, we cannot continue to produce food this way, especially when you consider that lettuce is 95 percent water -- water

that is being exported at considerable energy expense from an already arid region which is experiencing long-term drought.

If you would like to stock up on seasonal produce for the weeks ahead and have not already done so, please call the Moores to check availability and make arrangements for delivery at (815) 432-6238. If you want to try your hand at canning or freezing in 2005, you may purchase additional PCSA shares at a discount. Email me if you are interested in an extra share at pcsa@annabarnesmedia.com

Recipe and Produce Storage Suggestions:

Beets

Yes, I am running Pasta with Rubies recipe again for those of you who still haven't tried your beets yet! This is a great dish for fall/winter. You'll find more fall beet recipes at <http://www.prairienet.org/pcsa/recipes/beets.htm>, including Beets with Horseradish Sauce and German-Style Pickled Beets with Anise with Dill. You also can toss roasted beet slices with shaved fennel, salt, and pepper, and top with cr me fraiche for a tasty fall salad.

Pasta with Rubies

1-2 large beets, roasted (see below)
1 lb pasta, fettucine works well
2 T olive oil
1 clove garlic, minced
1 t. dried rosemary, crushed
salt and peper to taste

To roast beets, brush or mist with olive or other mild oil and place in a heavy pan in a 350 to 400 degree F oven for 45 minutes or more depending upon the beets' size. When cool enough to handle, peel, cube, and set aside. Cook pasta and drain. Rinse pasta pan, dry, heat, add oil. Saute garlic and add rosemary, salt, and pepper. Add pasta, stir. Toss in beets. Serves 4.

Broccoli

Briefly steam or blanch broccoli. Note: steaming retains more vitamins. Top with browned butter and slivered almonds for a change of pace. To brown butter, place it in a small skillet. Heat it until it turns brown. Quickly remove it from the heat and pour over broccoli.

Store broccoli in your refrigerator crisper drawer.

Cabbage

Even people who don't like cabbage will eat this dish. I have literally seen 4 people devour the better part of a head of cabbage this way in a single sitting. Core cabbage. Slice into 1/2" ribbons. Poach cabbage in salted water or stock until tender. Remove from broth. Reserve broth for Caldo Verde or other cabbage-based soup. In a small skillet, heat 2 T of butter until brown. Toss in cabbage. Stir. Add 12 to 16 oz of cooked egg noodles and a pinch of salt. Stir to combine.

Fresh Sauerkraut

If you don't like sauerkraut it's probably because you've never had fresh sauerkraut or the fact that it's probably never been properly prepared. Sauerkraut, even fresh, needs to be drained and rinsed before being added to dishes. Making sauerkraut is actually quite easy.

Core cabbage. Slice into thin shreds. Toss cabbage with Kosher salt in a ratio of 2.5 #s of cabbage to 1.5 oz of salt. Place in a large nonreactive container (I use a large heavy glass vase). Weight the salted cabbage with a glass of water and a plate or small bowl, or use a ziploc bag full of water. Cover with a clean dish towel and allow to sit overnight to start the fermentation. The next morning, remove the glass and plate or bag. Divide the cabbage and accumulated liquid into sterile glass jars. Fill to within 1/2 inch of the top, making sure that liquid covers the cabbage completely. If you need to add additional brine, make it using 3 T Kosher salt to 1 qt water. Wipe

off rim of jar before screwing on lid. Screw on lid tightly. Store out of direct sunlight. Sauerkraut is ready in about two months when it turns golden and the bubbling stops. Note: The jar lids will be under pressure as fermentation continues. If a lid should buckle, remove it, add additional brine if necessary, and seal with new lid.

One of the best recipes for Sauerkraut is Kapusta Soup. Saute 1 piece of bacon in a heavy dutch oven. Add 1 finely chopped onion and 2 shredded carrots, along with 1 /2 a head of fresh cabbage. Cook until cabbage softens, about 5 minutes. Add 1 qt drained rinsed sauerkraut. Add one pork shoulder steak or two pork chops trimmed of fat and cut into small pieces. Trim meat from bones and add bones, as well. Add 6 cups water or stock. Simmer covered on low until any remaining meat falls off of bones, 1 to 2 hours. Serve with potato or rye bread.

Collards

With all the frosts, the collards are as mild as Swiss Chard, which makes them perfect for this recipe sent along by shareholder Andrea Rundell.

Collard Cheese Pie

Adapted from *The New Laurel's Kitchen*

6 c of collards, de-ribbed, chopped, cooked and well drained
2 c low fat cottage cheese
2 eggs beaten
juice of 1 lemon
1 /2 t salt
1 / 2 c whole grain bread crumbs
paprika

Heat oven to 350 degrees F. Beat together cottage cheese, eggs, lemon juice, and salt. Stir a cup of this mixture into the greens and press into a greased 8" square or round pan. Spread the remaining cheese mixture evenly over the top and top with breadcrumbs and paprika. Bake for 30 minutes or until set. Allow to stand before cutting into squares or wedges.

Potatoes

For an easy holiday dish, slice potatoes and sweet potatoes into wedges. Sprinkle with salt and pepper and fresh rosemary leaves or dried crushed rosemary leaves. Drizzle with olive oil. Bake at 400 degrees F for 30 to 40 minutes, or until crisp on the outside and tender inside.

Store potatoes away from light and onions in a cool, dry place to prevent sprouting.

Squash

If you still have squash around, use this storage tip to preserve them for several months. Place squash in old panty hose, knotting between each squash. Hang squash in stocking in an uninsulated closet for maximum airflow.

Shareholder Yetta Weiland recommends this recipe adapted from *The New Basics Cookbook*:

Baked Winter Squash Soup

1 acorn squash (about 2 pounds)
1 butternut squash (about 2 pounds)
4 tablespoons (1/ 2 stick) unsalted butter
4 teaspoons dark brown sugar
2 small carrots, peeled and halved
1 medium onion, thinly sliced
5 cups chicken or vegetable stock or canned broth
1/3 t ground mace
1/3 t ground ginger
pinch of cayenne pepper

salt to taste

Creme fraiche and/or snipped fresh chives for garnish

Preheat the oven to 350 degreesF. Cut the squash in half lengthwise. Scoop out seeds and discard. Place the squash halves, cut side up in a shallow roasting pan. Place 1/ 2 T of the butter and 1/ 2 t of the brown sugar in the cavity of each squash half. Arrange the carrots and onion slices around the squash. Pour 2 cups of the stock in the pan, cover it tightly with aluminum foil, and bake for 1-2 hours until squash is very tender. Remove the pan from the oven, and allow the vegetables to cool slightly. Scoop the squash pulp out of the skins and place it in a soup pot. Add the carrots, onions, and the cooking liquid. Add the remaining 3 cups chicken stock and the mace, ginger, cayenne, and salt. Stir well, and bring to a boil. Reduce the heat, and simmer, uncovered, for 10 minutes. Puree the soup, in batches, in a blender or food processor until smooth. Return it to the pot, adjust the seasonings, and heat through. Serve each portion garnished with a dollop of creme fraiche and/or a sprinkling of chives. Serves 6.

Shareholder Andrea Rundell recommends this pretty squash dish from The New Laurel's Kitchen cookbook:

Cranberry Squash

1 1/ 2 pounds raw winter squash, unpeeled, cut in serving-size chunks

1 /2 c raw fresh cranberries

1 small apple, chopped in 3/ 4 inch pieces

1 /4 c chopped raisins

If you use acorn, butternut, or other small squash, you can halve them, mix all the other ingredients together, and pile the mixture into the cavities. Otherwise, arrange pieces of squash in one layer in a baking dish with a cover (or use aluminum foil). Scatter cranberries, chopped apple, and raisins over and around squash. Otherwise, mix orange juice, grated peel, honey, butter (if desired), and salt together and pour over squash. Cover baking dish or squash halves and bake until squash is tender, about 25 to 45 minutes, depending on variety. Serves 4.