

Prairieland Community Supported Agriculture
Week 14 – Aug 2, 2006

From the Farm:

Both the temperatures and the volume of the harvest are at peak, making for very happy shareholders and very exhausted farmers. The combination of heat and humidity has the Moores changing clothes three times a day to keep dry. Diann is enduring temperature shocks of 60 degrees as she bags produce in the walkin cooler in her coat and steps out into the heat to pick more. Of course, one of the hottest picking spots continues to be the hoophouses from which this week's tomatoes, eggplant, cucumbers, and cherry tomatoes originated. Those of you who have visited the farm may remember that unlike the smaller greenhouses, the hoop houses don't have fans. Thankfully they don't have thermometers either, says Diann, "This week, I just don't want to know."

Aaron and Wes baled hay over the weekend, and Aaron continued to rake hay with the tractor (no cab) Monday and Tuesday. Jim put the cattle into the timber pasture to get them shade. And any rack wagons that aren't being used for hay are providing shade for the sheep. The turkeys and chickens already have their shade structures and the pigs are making due in the tall grass.

Keep your fingers crossed that the storms expected tomorrow cool things to more manageable levels.

Because of the heat, many items in the share will need special attention this week. Please remove your green beans from their bag prior to storage. Dry them on some paper toweling or a flour sack towel prior to refrigerating them to remove any condensation that may have occurred in their bags. Green beans stored damp will spoil. Additionally, please get your blueberries and carrots into refrigeration ASAP to help them stay in condition.

Blueberry Update

Because everyone took only the blueberries that belonged to them, blueberries are again in the share this week. Thank you. Please continue to be mindful of your fellow shareholders by taking only the quantities listed on the signs at pickup.

Moving? Need to Sell Your Share?

If you need to sell your share for any reason, please call me at 355-6279 or email me info@prairielandcsa.org

Totebag Update

We are still well short of the 40 bags we need to make the order. If you are interested and haven't yet responded, please call 355-6279 or email info@prairielandcsa.org

In This Week's Share:

Blueberries, cucumber, red cabbage, Asian bicolor eggplant, zucchini, yellow summer squash, tomatoes, cherry tomatoes, carrots, and green beans.

As mentioned above, please remove your green beans from their plastic bag to remove any sweating prior to refrigerating them. There are several tomatoes this week as they were beginning to ripen too fast and needed to be picked.

Have recipes? Please send them to info@prairielandcsa.org or call 355-6279. Thanks to shareholder Jill Schreiber for passing along several this week, including beet recipes for those of you who haven't gotten around to using yours yet.

Blueberries

Toss them over ice cream, soy ice cream, or cereal. Or pair with some of the peaches coming into the Urbana Farmers' Market from Southern Illinois. You can find organic peaches at Claybank farm's booth. There also are conventionally produced peaches from Sager and Calhoun.

Red Cabbage

Before you turn up your nose at this vegetable try Urbana pickup site co-host/volunteer extraordinaire Sonia Newmark's easy recipe that can be eaten cold on sandwiches or in place of cole slaw. Even kids will eat red cabbage prepared this way. In addition to being yummy, it's one of those recipes that you can walk away from to do important things like collapse on the couch with a glass of lemonade.

Danish Red Cabbage

1 large red cabbage

1/4 c butter

3 T sugar

3 T vinegar

100 ml cranberry juice

salt to taste

Thinly slice cabbage as for slaw, and place in a large saucepan or Dutch oven. Add remaining ingredients. Cook at very low heat for 1.5 hours. The cabbage should have at least an inch of liquid throughout the cooking time, add more cranberry juice if necessary. Then, remove the lid and cook a half hour more, until some but not all of the liquid has evaporated. Serve warm as a side dish. Or, eat cold as a salad, on sandwiches with hard boiled egg, or in place of coleslaw as part of a California reuben. Keeps for several days.

If you can't bring yourself to turn on the stove, try

Ginger-Red Cabbage Slaw

1, 1lb head red cabbage

1 jar pickled ginger

2 T plus 1 t sugar

1 1/4 t kosher or sea salt (or to taste)

toasted black sesame seeds and/or green onion slices for garnish

Cut cabbage in half. Remove core. Cut each half in half again. Slice as thinly as possible into shreds. Mince 1 T pickled ginger. Pour out ginger juice and reserve. Combine cabbage, ginger, ginger juice, sugar, salt in a non-aluminum bowl. Set aside for 10 to 20 minutes. Toss again. Transfer to a glass baking dish. Press cabbage into marinade. Cover and refrigerate overnight or for up to two days before using, tossing occasionally. Goes well with smoked meats and smoked and/or bbq tofu.

Red Cabbage and Green beans

Penne and Green Bean Salad

6 ounces penne pasta

1/2 pound fresh green or Roma beans, trimmed and cut diagonally into 1-inch pieces

1/3 cup Italian salad dressing, or herbed vinaigrette

1/2 t dried tarragon, crushed
1/2 t fresh ground black pepper
1 c finely shredded red cabbage
2 oz Gorgonzola or other blue cheese (optional)

Cook pasta, adding beans during last 5 minutes of cooking. Drain. Rinse with cool water. Whisk together dressing, tarragon, and pepper. Toss dressing with pasta, beans, and cabbage. Sprinkle with crumbled cheese if using. Serves 3.

Green beans and Cherry Tomatoes

Steam or blanch using the directions in Recipes from America's Small Farms. Briefly toss 1/2 to 3/4 pound cooked beans in 1 T of olive oil heated with 1 clove chopped garlic. Drizzle with balsamic vinegar. Top with halved cherry tomatoes. Kids won't eat green beans? Hide them in the Basic Fritata on page 24 for Sunday brunch.

You can also roast your green beans...

1 lb green beans
1/2 head of garlic
1 - 2 Tbs olive oil
salt and pepper to taste
balsamic vinegar for drizzling

Wash and trim the beans, and separate and peel the cloves of garlic. Toss the remaining garlic and beans in a bowl with the olive oil, salt and pepper. Spread evenly over a baking sheet and roast beans at 400 degrees for about 40 minutes. Stir and turn them at least once half way through, drizzling with balsamic vinegar. Roasting time will vary with bean size—they are done when they are slightly blistered and wrinkled, with light-brown spots. Serve as a room temperature appetizer alone, or on top of crusty bread plain or with goat cheese. They also are good cut into 1 1/2 -inch pieces and tossed with cooked pasta, chopped basil, and your favorite cheese. Alternatively, dress them with a chopped tomato, 1 clove garlic, 1 Tbs. of chopped fresh basil, and 1 Tbs each of olive oil and balsamic vinegar, or to taste, as former PCSA board member Andrea Rundell suggests.

Zucchini and Yellow Summer Squash

When I visited my sister in Phoenix two weeks ago and it was 117, we cut summer squash into 1/2 inch thick chunks, sprinkled it with salt, pepper, and ground chile. We put the squash on a plate, covered it, and microwaved for 1 minute (your time may vary) until it was just tender, serving it with some ranch dressing as an appetizer.

Asian Eggplant

This is a great dressing for grilled eggplant.

2 T minced garlic
1/3 c packed cilantro leaves and stems
1/2 c unseasoned peanut butter
1/2 c soy sauce
1/4 c sugar
1 t rice vinegar

Place all ingredients in a food processor. Process until smooth. Drizzle over eggplants. Serve this dish with sliced tomatoes and Asian noodles.

Carrots

Don't worry about peeling these beauties. Simply use a scrubber pad (3M ones work

well) to remove any surface dirt. Slice onto salads, use for crudite with dip, or tomorrow when the heat breaks, try in Jill Schreiber' Roasted Root Vegetable recipe:

Roasted Root Vegetables

1. Preheat oven to 500 degrees.
2. Cut assorted vegetables in chunks. Jill uses whatever she has on hand - beets, potatoes, turnips, onions, carrots, etc. and place in one layer in a 13 x 9 x 2 baking pan coated with cooking spray. Blend 1 1/2 c low-sodium chicken broth, 1/2 c dry white wine (red works, too), and 1 T lemon juice. Pour over veggies.
3. Sprinkle with 3 cloves garlic (minced), 1 t. oregano, 1/2 t. thyme, and 1/4 tsp. black pepper. Bake, uncovered, for 40 to 45 minutes, basting the veggies occasionally with the pan juices. Yummy!

Jill also passed along this recipe from an NPR story...

Beet Roesti with Rosemary

from Michael Romano in Mark Bittman's new cookbook, How to Cook Everything

"An almost unbelievably sweet and wonderful side dish. The sugar in the beets caramelizes, and the flavors of the rosemary, beets, and butter meld beautifully. With thanks to Michael Romano, the brilliant chef at New York's Union Square Cafe, who shared this recipe with me almost 10 years ago

- 1 to 1 1/2 pounds beets
- 1 t coarsely chopped fresh rosemary
- 1 t salt
- 1/4 cup flour
- 2 t butter

1. Trim the beets and peel them as you would potatoes; grate them in a food processor or by hand. Begin preheating a medium to large non-stick skillet over medium heat.
2. Toss the grated beets in a bowl with the rosemary and salt, then add about half the flour; toss well, add the rest of the flour, then toss again.
3. Place the butter in the skillet and heat until it begins to turn nut-brown. Scrape the beet mixture into the skillet, shape it into a nice circle, and press it down with a spatula. Turn the heat to medium-high and cook, shaking the pan occasionally, until the bottom of the beet cake is nicely crisp, 6 to 8 minutes. Slide the cake out onto a plate, top with another plate, invert the two plates, and slide the cake back into the pan. Continue to cook, adjusting the heat if necessary, until the second side is browned. Cut into wedges and serve immediately. See <http://www.npr.org/templates/story/story.php?storyId=4670696> for picture.

Questions about a recipe or produce storage? Email info@prairielandcsa.org or call 355-6279